

THE ARTICLE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2103/210327-olympic-torch-relay.html>

The torch relay for the Tokyo Olympics is finally under way. The 2020 Summer Games were postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic but organizers have been determined to ensure they go ahead in July. Members of the Japan women's football team ran as torchbearers in the first leg of the relay on Thursday. It began in Fukushima Prefecture, which was devastated by the triple disasters of the 2011 earthquake, tsunami and nuclear meltdown. The relay torch is made of aluminium recycled from prefabricated housing built for survivors of the triple calamity. Fukushima was chosen as the start of the relay to show the area has recovered, although many people say claims of recovery are a little premature.

The head of Japan's Olympic organizing committee, Seiko Hashimoto, opened the torch relay ceremony. She said in her opening address: "The flame will embark on a 121-day journey and will carry the hopes of the Japanese people and wishes for peace." Japanese people are being encouraged to look at live broadcasts of the relay and refrain from travelling to watch it amid fears of a spike in COVID 19 cases. Spectators must wear face masks, and are being urged to clap rather than cheer. Japan's Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga reiterated his commitment to stage a "safe and secure" Olympics in spite of the pandemic. He said: "We will do our utmost on coronavirus measures."

Sources: <https://www.npr.org/2021/03/25/981136160/torch-relay-kicks-off-for-troubled-tokyo-olympic-games>
<https://english.kyodonews.net/news/2021/03/3ba87be7576c-tokyo-olympic-torch-relay-to-begin-amid-covid-19-fears.html>
<https://edition.cnn.com/2021/03/24/sport/japan-olympics-fukushima-torch-relay-covid-hnk-intl-dst/index.html>

WARM-UPS

1. THE OLYMPICS: Students walk around the class and talk to other students about the Olympics. Change partners often and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, talk about these topics or words from the article. What will the article say about them? What can you say about these words and your life?

torch / relay / coronavirus / pandemic / disasters / earthquake / tsunami / recovery / committee / ceremony / flame / peace / spike / face masks / clap / cheer / pandemic

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. THE GREATEST: Students A **strongly** believe the Olympic Games is the greatest sporting event in the world; Students B **strongly** believe it isn't. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

4. SPORTING EVENTS: How good are these sporting events? What are the good and bad things about them? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners often and share what you wrote.

	How Good?	Good Things	Bad Things
The Summer Olympics			
The Winter Olympics			
The FIFA World Cup			
Wimbledon tennis			
Formula 1 racing			
The Tour de France			

5. TORCH: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "torch". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

6. EVENTS: Rank these with your partner. Put the best events at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- Marathon
- Weightlifting
- Sailing
- Archery
- Judo
- Gymnastics
- 100 metres
- Hockey

VOCABULARY MATCHING

Paragraph 1

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| 1. under way | a. Having made a firm decision and being resolved not to change. |
| 2. postponed | b. An event causing great and often sudden damage or distress; a disaster. |
| 3. determined | c. Having started and in progress; being done or carried out. |
| 4. devastated | d. Cause or arrange for (something) to take place at a time later than that first scheduled. |
| 5. prefabricated | e. Destroyed or ruined. |
| 6. calamity | f. Pre-made sections of (a building or piece of furniture) to enable quick assembly on site. |
| 7. premature | g. Happening or done before the usual or proper time; too early. |

Paragraph 2

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 8. address | h. A person who watches at a show, game, or other event. |
| 9. embark | i. A formal speech delivered to an audience. |
| 10. refrain | j. A sharp increase in something. |
| 11. spike | k. Recommend something strongly. |
| 12. spectator | l. Begin a course of action. |
| 13. urged | m. The biggest effort one is capable of. |
| 14. utmost | n. Stop oneself from doing something. |

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2103/210327-olympic-torch-relay.html>

1. TRUE / FALSE: Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- a. Japan's men's football team kicked off the Olympic Torch Relay. **T / F**
- b. The Olympic Torch Relay began in Tokyo and will end in Osaka. **T / F**
- c. The torch for the relay is made of recycled aluminium. **T / F**
- d. Many people say Fukushima hasn't recovered from the 2011 earthquake. **T / F**
- e. Japan's Prime Minister opened the Olympic Torch Relay ceremony. **T / F**
- f. The Olympic Torch Relay will take 121 days. **T / F**
- g. Spectators along the relay route should clap but not cheer. **T / F**
- h. Japan's leader said the utmost is being done for coronavirus. **T / F**

2. SYNONYM MATCH:

Match the following synonyms. The words in **bold** are from the news article.

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 1. under way | a. rise |
| 2. determined | b. disaster |
| 3. devastated | c. too early |
| 4. calamity | d. intent on |
| 5. premature | e. speech |
| 6. address | f. hold back |
| 7. journey | g. in process |
| 8. refrain | h. best |
| 9. spike | i. destroyed |
| 10. utmost | j. trip |

3. PHRASE MATCH: (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. The torch relay for the Tokyo Olympics is | a. rather than cheer |
| 2. determined to ensure they | b. of the relay |
| 3. in the first leg | c. ceremony |
| 4. the 2011 earthquake, tsunami and | d. premature |
| 5. claims of recovery are a little | e. secure Olympics |
| 6. opened the torch relay | f. on coronavirus measures |
| 7. The flame will embark on | g. finally under way |
| 8. urged to clap | h. nuclear meltdown |
| 9. stage a safe and | i. a 121-day journey |
| 10. We will do our utmost | j. go ahead in July |

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2103/210327-olympic-torch-relay.html>

1. Who was determined the Olympics would go ahead?
2. Who ran the first leg of the relay?
3. Where did the Olympic Torch Relay begin?
4. What is the Olympic flame made of?
5. What did many people say about claims of Fukushima's recovery?
6. Who is Seiko Hashimoto?
7. How long will the Olympic Torch Relay take?
8. What are Japanese people being encouraged to look at?
9. What should spectators do instead of cheer?
10. What did Japan's Prime Minister say he is doing about coronavirus?

AFTER READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2103/210327-olympic-torch-relay.html>

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'Olympic' and 'games'.

Olympic	games

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• finally• due• leg• meltdown• built• little	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• head• flame• live• face• stage• utmost
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THE OLYMPICS DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

1. What did you think when you read the headline?
2. What images are in your mind when you hear the word 'Olympic'?
3. What do you think of the Olympic Games?
4. What are the benefits of the Olympic Games?
5. What is your favourite event?
6. How successful do you think the Tokyo Olympics will be?
7. How has coronavirus affected the Olympics?
8. Do you think the Tokyo Olympics should go ahead?
9. What do you think of there being no international spectators?
10. What do the Olympics do for the host city?

Olympic Torch Relay starts in Japan – 27th March, 2021
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THE OLYMPICS DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

11. Did you like reading this article? Why/not?
12. What do you think of when you hear the word 'games'?
13. What do you think about what you read?
14. What do you think of the Olympic Torch Relay?
15. What does the Olympic flame symbolize?
16. What do you know about the history of the Olympics?
17. Why might Japanese people not want the Games to go ahead?
18. How good is your country at Olympic events?
19. Who is the greatest ever Olympian?
20. What questions would you like to ask the Olympics organizers?