**Olympic Games**

The world's greatest international sports games are known as the Olympic Games.

The Olympic idea means friendship, fraternity and cooperation among the people of the world. The Olympic Movement proves that real peace can be achieved through sport.

The Olympic emblem is five interlinked rings: blue, yellow, black, green and red. Any national flag contains at least one of these colours.

The original Olympic Games began in ancient Greece in 776 B.C. These games were part of a festival held every fourth year in honour of God Zeus at the place called Olympia. It was a great athletic festival, including competitions in wrestling, foot racing and chariot racing, rowing and others.

The games were for men only. Greek women were forbidden not only to participate but also to watch the Olympics.

The first modern Olympic Games were held in Athens in 1896. Then they were resumed in London after the Second World War. Since then the Olympics are held every fourth year in different countries.

The ancient Greeks had no winter sports. Only in 1924 the first Winter Olympic Games were held in France. Now they are being held regularly.  
  The International Olympic Committee decides upon the programme of the games, the number of the participants and the city-host for the Games. Over one hundred and fifty countries are represented in the International Olympic Committee now. Besides, each country has its National Olympic Committee.

Summer and Winter Games are held separately. There are always several cities wishing to host the Games. The most suitable is selected by the International Committee. After that the city of the Games starts preparations for the competitions, constructs new sports facilities, stadiums, hotels, press centres. Thousands of athletes, journalists and guests come to the Games, and it takes great efforts to arrange everything. There is always an interesting cultural programme of concerts, exhibitions, festivals, etc., for each Games.

Russia joined the Olympic movement in 1952. Since then it has won a lot of gold, silver, and bronze medals. In 1980 Moscow hosted the Twenty- Second Olympic Games. The latest Olympic Games were held in Sochi. Russian sportsmen got 33 medals for their records in many sports events.

**If I have a chance to visit the Olympic Games in Sochi in 2014 I would definitely watch such winter sports as skiing, ice hockey, biathlon, bobsleigh, curling, luge, short track speed skating, skeleton, ski jumping, snowboarding, speed skating and many others. As for me, I am fond of ice hockey. This game is the most popular in Russia and in our city. This game is very fast and can be dangerous. It need mobility, liveliness and much energy. It keeps a person in a good form too. There is a hockey club Avangard in Omsk.**

**Vocabulary:**

peace — мир  
fraternity — братство  
contain(s) — содержать  
ancient — древний  
B.C. (before Christ) — до нашей эры  
Zeus — Зевс  
to participate — участвовать   
to resume — возобновлять