

Year 5

Issues in Sport: Let Women Compete 1

Retrieval 2b

Throughout history, men founded most sports. Most of the participants in those sports were men, and most of the people running the sports were men. So it is no surprise that men's sports tend to be more popular than women's sports. But women's sports are catching up.

Men's sports have been a major part of society for generations. People have grown up watching football since the mid-1800s. Women's sports only began to grow rapidly around the 1970s. Before then, women were sometimes barred from playing. Other times they were severely limited. This sexism was simply part of the culture.

For many years, people did not want to see women athletes. In the past, sports were seen as an activity for men. Women were not supposed to be aggressive or athletic. Some people also claimed sports could be harmful to women. They worried that sports could hurt women's bodies, which they believed were more fragile than men's bodies.

Some women began to challenge these sexist beliefs by the late 1890s and women's sports slowly grew over the next several years. The beginning of the modern Olympic Games in 1896 was a milestone for all sports. But the Olympics have been particularly important for women's sports. Men have always had many opportunities to play sports at a high level. For women, the Olympic Games have been the one constant world-class competition.

Yet women have also faced many challenges within the Olympics, some of which still continue. The first obstacle to overcome was participation. A Frenchman, Pierre de Coubertin, the Baron de Coubertin, founded the modern Olympics. He wanted to maintain many of the traditions from the ancient Greek Olympics. One of those traditions was that participation was limited to men.

The IOC barred women from the first Olympic Games, in 1896, but relaxed its ban after that. In the 1900 Games, women competed in tennis and golf. More women's sports were added to the Games that followed. However, the women's programme was always much smaller than the men's programme, and women were generally limited to sports that were thought to be less physically demanding.

Questions

1 Who **founded** most sports (paragraph 1)?

2 Look in the extract from the third paragraph below.

'For many years, people did not want to see women athletes. In the past, sports were seen as an activity for men. Women were not supposed to be aggressive or athletic.'

Find **two** characteristics that women were **not supposed to be**.

1. _____

2. _____

3 Complete the table below with facts from the text.

'Men's sports have been a major part of society for generations. People have grown up watching football since the mid-1800s. Women's sports only began to grow rapidly around the 1970s.'

The date people have been watching football since:	
When women's sports began to grow:	

4 Look at the last paragraph. Which **two** aspects still made the Olympics unequal for women?

'However, the women's programme was always much smaller than the men's programme, and women were generally limited to sports that were thought to be less physically demanding.'

1. The women's programme was _____

2. Women were generally limited to _____

5 Choose the best group of words to fit the sentences.

Draw a circle around your choice.

'A Frenchman, Pierre de Fredey, the Baron de Coubertin, founded the modern Olympics. He wanted to maintain many of the traditions from the ancient Greek Olympics. One of those traditions was that participation was limited to men.'

(a) Pierre de Fredey...

wanted women to compete in the Olympics

was a baron

was from Germany

'The IOC barred women from the first Olympic Games, in 1896, but relaxed its ban after that. In the 1900 Games, women competed in tennis and golf. More women's sports were added to the Games that followed.'

(b) After 1896...

women competed in demanding sports

the ban was relaxed

some women's sports were removed

6 Look at the quotation below:

'Yet women have also faced many challenges within the Olympics, some of which still continue. The first obstacle to overcome was participation.'

What was the first challenge needing to be overcome?

7 Using information from the text, tick one box in each row to show whether each statement is **true** or **false**.

'Yet women have also faced many challenges within the Olympics, some of which still continue. The first obstacle to overcome was participation. A Frenchman, Pierre de Fredey, the Baron de Coubertin, founded the modern Olympics.'

	True	False
Pierre de Fredy banned the modern Olympics.		
Pierre de Fredy was from France.		

Answers

1 Who **founded** most sports (paragraph 1)?

Men.

2 Look in the extract from the third paragraph below.

'For many years, people did not want to see women athletes. In the past, sports were seen as an activity for men. Women were not supposed to be aggressive or athletic.'

Find **two** characteristics that women were **not supposed to be**.

Aggressive.

Athletic.

3 Complete the table below with facts from the text.

'Men's sports have been a major part of society for generations. People have grown up watching football since the mid-1800s. Women's sports only began to grow rapidly around the 1970s.'

The date people have been watching football since:	The mid-1800s
When women's sports began to grow:	(Around) the 1970s

4 Look at the last paragraph. Which **two** aspects still made the Olympics unequal for women?

'However, the women's programme was always much smaller than the men's programme, and women were generally limited to sports that were thought to be less physically demanding.'

1. The women's programme was **always much smaller than the men's**.

2. Women were generally limited to **sports that were thought to be less physically demanding**.

5 Choose the best group of words to fit the sentences.

Draw a circle around your choice.

'A Frenchman, Pierre de Fredey, the Baron de Coubertin, founded the modern Olympics. He wanted to maintain many of the traditions from the ancient Greek Olympics. One of those traditions was that participation was limited to men.'

(a) Pierre de Fredey...

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'The IOC barred women from the first Olympic Games, in 1896, but relaxed its ban after that. In the 1900 Games, women competed in tennis and golf. More women's sports were added to the Games that followed.'

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Participation.

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'Yet women have also faced many challenges within the Olympics, some of which still continue. The first obstacle to overcome was participation. A Frenchman, Pierre de Fredey, the Baron de Coubertin, founded the modern Olympics.'

	True	False
Pierre de Fredy banned the modern Olympics.		✓
Pierre de Fredy was from France.	✓	