**Ancient Olympia**

**POWERPOINT NOTES**

2.The ancient Olympic Games took place at Olympia which is in the Peloponnese of Greece. Olympia was a Panhellenic sanctuary:

Panhellenic means it was for Greeks from all over the Greek world

Sanctuary means it was a special religious place where you could come and worship the gods as well as compete in the games.

The first Olympic Games were in 776 BC and they took place every four years after that until 395 AD (over a thousand years).

The Olympic Games were the most famous games in ancient Greece but athletic competitions took place in other cities and sanctuaries as well.

The ancient Olympic Games were the inspiration for the modern Olympics – the first modern games was in 1896 in Athens.

3. Here you can see what the sanctuary looks like today and also a plan. You can spot the stadium (top right) and also the Temple of Zeus (in the middle).

4.Here is a picture of what the Temple of Zeus might have looked like. It has Doric columns. Now all the columns have toppled over although one has recently been put up again. The columns are made from lots of sections (column drums) which stack on top of one another. You can see the column drums on the picture at the bottom. The columns were made of limestone rather than marble on this temple.

5.The temple was the house for the god and in the cella (inside room) of the temple there was a giant statue of Zeus. This statue was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. It was made of ivory and gold (chryselephantine).

6. The cult statue is described by the travel writer Pausanias who was writing in the 2nd century AD. He visited Olympia and saw the statue. This is what he writes:

7. The statue does not survive and archaeologists have tried to imagine what it must have looked like based on Pausanias’ description and pictures of it on coins. Notice how Zeus holds a statue of Nike (goddess of victory) in his hand.

8.There was a statue of Nike outside the temple standing on a tall column (9m high). The statue fell off the column and broke but it survives and is in the museum at Olympia.

9. Some of the column also survives and this is what archaeologists think the statue might have looked like before it was broken. This was a victory monument from the Peloponnesian War when Athens was fighting Sparta.

10.Here is the Nike from the Great North Museum. What do you think she is standing on? It looks a bit like a football but it is a globe with hexagons on. The other Nike in Newcastle is at Haymarket and like the Nike at Olympia stands on a tall column and was put up to celebrate a victory in war.

Recap on Haymarket war memorial

A war memorial built in 1908 that commemorated those who died in the Boer War 1899-1901. The statue stands outside Haymarket metro station. The bronze statue is often referred to as an angel rather than named as Nike. In 1978 the wings were damaged by lightning and were replaced by fibre glass.

11. As the goddess of victory Nike is important for war. On this pot (a pelike) we can see Nike with a soldier. Nike is also important for athletics and was honoured at the Olympic Games. Nike is often represented holding a wreath or sash to give to victorious athletes or warriors. On the two sides of the other pot (amphora) we see Nike and an athlete.

12.The athletes would have entered into the stadium at Olympia through a tunnel. The stadium could hold around 45,000 people.

13. The judges would sit on a platform at the side of the stadium.

14. This is the starting line which ran across the stadium. The athlete would stand with one foot in front of the other – his toes in the grooves.

15. The Hippodrome where the chariot racing would have taken place has been washed away by the river in the Middle Ages. We know about it only from ancient writing. It would have been wide enough for 40 chariots to race.

**Now try the Nike art activity or statue of Zeus colouring sheet**