Discussion Guide: "Dick Pound Shares His Memories of Montreal '76"

This activity explores Dick Pound's account of the 1976 Montreal Olympics. Students will explore the last impacting of the Olympic Games on athletes, Montreal and Canada.

Source: Heather Hiscox, "Dick Pound Shares His Memories of Montreal '76," Canada's History, Fall 2026.

Grade Level: High school

Time Required: One to two classes (60-90 minutes)

Select Curriculum Connections:

This activity explores the long-last implications of the 1976 Montreal Olympics. It connects with broader themes of sports, and Canadian identity.

ONTARIO | CHC2D Grade 10 Canadian History since World War I | CHC2P Grade 10 Canadian History since World War I

QUEBEC | History of Quebec and Canada Secondary III and IV | History and Citizenship Education Secondary I

ALBERTA | Social Studies 10-1

BRITISH COLUMBIA | Social Studies 10

About the Interviewer and Interviewee:

Heather Hiscox, a 43-year veteran of the broadcasting industry, spent two decades as the face of CBC Morning Live and has covered 10 Olympic Games. Richard "Dick" Pound is the longest-serving member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC). An Olympic swimmer in the 1960 Summer Games in Rome, Pound was a key member of the Canadian Olympic Association (COA) for the 1976 Summer Games and has been a defining force in the Olympic Movement for more than 40 years. At the time, Pound was a member of the Canadian Olympic Association (COA), which is now the Canadian Olympic Committee. The organization's main role involved supporting Canadian athletes, including fundraising.

DISCUSSION

Essential Question

What are the long-lasting impacts of the 1976 Montreal Olympics?

Historical Thinking Concepts

Continuity and change, cause and consequence, historical significance

Discussion Questions

- What role did Mayor Jean Drapeau play in the 1976 Montreal Olympics?
- What was the Malouf Commission? What were some of the costs associated with the Olympics?
- Who is Nadia Comaneci? What was the significance of her earning a perfect 10 in gymnastics?
- What was the scandal with the East Germany's athletes? How did their actions change rules around substance use in sports?
- What was the lasting impact of the Olympics in Canada?

Activity

Before reading the article, start a class discussion using the following prompt:

- When guests are visiting for the first time, what steps might you take to prepare for their visit?

Students might have responses like cleaning the house, tidying up, accommodating requests guests might have etc. Have students consider the steps a city might take to prepare for a major event like the Olympics. Educators might use the following prompts to guide the discussion:

- What infrastructure might a city need to put on a major event like the Olympics?
- What types of buildings might they need?
- How might they make the city more appealing to visitors?
- What impacts might this have on locals?

Working in small groups of 4-5, have students read the article, "Dick Pound Shares His Memories of Montreal '76." If time allows, students might also listen to the podcast interview.

As students read, encourage them to make note of words they're unfamiliar as well as significant moments during the Olympics that were mentioned. Some key moments students might make note of include:

- Legacy of the Olympics in Canada
- Mayor Jean Drapeau
- The Malouf Commission/ high costs of the Olympics
- Nadia Comaneci
- East Germany's athletes

Educator note: Students might be unfamiliar with the term "doping" mentioned in connection with the East German athletes. You might consider using this definition to further students' understanding: Doping – Athletes using substances, like drugs, to improve their sporting abilities, including running or swimming faster, having more endurance etc.

Each student in their small group can either take note of all the key moments in the article or they can each select one topic to focus on.

After students have read the article, bring the class back together for a whole class discussion. Use the following questions to guide the discussion:

- What role did Mayor Jean Drapeau play in the 1976 Montreal Olympics?
- What was the Malouf Commission? What were some of the costs associated with the Olympics?
- Who is Nadia Comaneci? What was the significance of her earning a perfect 10 in gymnastics?
- What was the scandal with the East Germany's athletes? How did their actions change rules around substance use in sports?
- What was the lasting impact of the Olympics in Canada?

Reflection

Using a method of their choice, students should reflect on what they learned after reading the article. Use the following questions to guide your reflections:

- Whose experiences did the article focus on?
- What perspectives were missing?
- What perspectives are you interested in learning about?
- How might you support this inquiry?

Extension Activity

Though the article provides Dick Pound's account of the 1976 Montreal Olympics, it does fully encompass the experiences of the Summer Games. Students might consider exploring the following topics to research independently or in small groups:

- The boycott of over 20 African countries
- Debut of events like women's basketball, rowing and team handball
- Montreal "clean up" including removal of queer spaces including gay bars and police interactions

Resources

Montreal Olympics https://montrealolympique.ca/en/

Canadian Enclyclopedia https://thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/the-montreal-olympics

Olympics Memories https://www.onf.ca/chaines/souvenirs-olympiques/