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Olympic officials probe ticket scandal

18th June, 2012

http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1206/120618-olympics_tickets.html

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THE ARTICLE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1206/120618-olympics_tickets.html

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has launched an investigation into allegations that officials in more than 50 countries have been selling London Olympics tickets on the black market for profit. The IOC met at an emergency session on Saturday to look into a stack of evidence uncovered by Britain's 'Sunday Times' newspaper. The paper claims that high-ranking Olympic officials have been selling tickets for the games at hugely inflated prices. The highest priced tickets on the black market were for the men's 100-meter final. The IOC has issued a statement saying it "takes these allegations very seriously and has immediately taken the first steps to investigate."

IOC rules forbid national Olympics committees from selling tickets overseas, increasing ticket prices or selling tickets to unauthorized, third-party resellers. Despite this, Sunday Times undercover reporters posing as illegal ticket sellers say they have recorded evidence of 27 officials selling tickets allocated to 54 countries. One of the most serious allegations was against the Greek Olympic Committee president Spyros Capralos. He denies saying he had "pulled strings" with the head of the London Olympics Sebastian Coe even though the paper posted videos of its reporters' negotiations with Capralos on its website. Mr Capralos has so far refused to comment.

WARM-UPS

1. OLYMPICS TICKETS: Walk around the class and talk to other students about Olympics tickets. Change partners often. Sit with your first partner(s) and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

Olympics / investigation / allegations / black market / emergency / officials / committees / unauthorized / undercover / evidence / pulled strings / negotiations

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

3. CLEAN: How do we keep them clean? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you wrote. Change and share again.

	How big a problem?	How to deal with it?
Buying hosting rights		
Selling tickets illegally		
Drugs cheats		
Bad sportsmanship		
Racism		
Politics		

4. CORRUPTION: Students A **strongly** believe corruption will be a thing of the past one day; Students B **strongly** believe otherwise. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. EVENTS: Which do you like best? Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners and share your rankings again.

- synchronized swimming
- marathon
- boxing
- rowing
- 100 metres
- archery
- gymnastics
- cycling

6. INVESTIGATION: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'investigation'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1206/120618-olympics_tickets.html

1. TRUE / FALSE:

Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. The IOC is investigating its own officials for illegally selling tickets. | T / F |
| b. The investigation comes after an athlete blogged about the scandal. | T / F |
| c. The highest prices on the black market are tickets for the marathon. | T / F |
| d. The IOC said it has already started investigating. | T / F |
| e. IOC rules say selling tickets overseas is OK if prices are unchanged. | T / F |
| f. A newspaper reported 27 officials were selling tickets illegally. | T / F |
| g. The head of a national Olympics committee has been accused. | T / F |
| h. The national Olympics boss has issued a full statement denying claims. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH:

Match the following synonyms from the article.

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1. launched | a. disallow |
| 2. allegations | b. proof |
| 3. session | c. discussions |
| 4. evidence | d. sent out |
| 5. issued | e. started |
| 6. forbid | f. acting |
| 7. unauthorized | g. distributed |
| 8. posing | h. claims |
| 9. allocated | i. unofficial |
| 10. negotiations | j. meeting |

3. PHRASE MATCH:

(Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. launched an | a. session on Saturday |
| 2. the black | b. allegations |
| 3. met at an emergency | c. investigation |
| 4. high-ranking | d. resellers |
| 5. taken the first | e. Olympic officials |
| 6. third-party | f. strings |
| 7. undercover reporters posing | g. steps to investigate |
| 8. the most serious | h. refused to comment |
| 9. He denies saying he had pulled | i. market |
| 10. Mr Capralos has so far | j. as illegal ticket sellers |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1206/120618-olympics_tickets.html

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has (1) _____ an investigation into allegations that (2) _____ in more than 50 countries have been selling London Olympics tickets on the black market for (3) _____. The IOC met at an emergency (4) _____ on Saturday to look into a stack of evidence uncovered by Britain's 'Sunday Times' newspaper. The paper claims that (5) _____-ranking Olympic officials have been selling tickets for the games at (6) _____ inflated prices. The highest priced tickets on the black market were for the men's 100-meter final. The IOC has (7) _____ a statement saying it "takes these allegations very seriously and has immediately (8) _____ the first steps to investigate."

IOC rules (9) _____ national Olympics committees from selling tickets overseas, increasing ticket prices or selling tickets to (10) _____, third-party resellers. Despite this, Sunday Times undercover reporters (11) _____ as illegal ticket sellers say they have recorded evidence of 27 officials selling tickets (12) _____ to 54 countries. One of the most serious allegations was against the Greek Olympic Committee president Spyros Capralos. He (13) _____ saying he had "pulled (14) _____" with the head of the London Olympics Sebastian Coe even though the paper posted videos of its reporters' (15) _____ with Capralos on its website. Mr Capralos has so far (16) _____ to comment.

hugely

session

officials

taken

high

launched

issued

profit

allocated

negotiations

forbid

strings

refused

unauthorized

posing

denies

LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1206/120618-olympics_tickets.html

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) _____ investigation _____ that officials in more than 50 countries have been selling London Olympics tickets on the black market for profit. The IOC met at _____ on Saturday to look into a stack of evidence uncovered by Britain's 'Sunday Times' newspaper. The paper claims _____ Olympic officials have been selling tickets for the games at hugely inflated prices. The highest priced tickets on the black market were for the men's 100-meter final. The IOC has _____ saying it "takes these allegations very seriously and has immediately taken the first _____."

IOC _____ Olympics committees from selling tickets overseas, increasing ticket prices or selling tickets _____ -party resellers. Despite this, Sunday Times undercover _____ illegal ticket sellers say they have recorded evidence of 27 officials selling tickets allocated to 54 countries. One of the most _____ was against the Greek Olympic Committee president Spyros Capralos. He denies saying he _____ with the head of the London Olympics Sebastian Coe even though the paper posted videos of its reporters' negotiations with Capralos on its website. Mr Capralos _____ to comment.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1206/120618-olympics_tickets.html

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

ticket	scandal
---------------	----------------

- 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">• launched• met• paper• men's• issued• steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• overseas• posing• 27• against• strings• comment
---	--

OLYMPICS TICKETS SURVEY

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1206/120618-olympics_tickets.html

Write five GOOD questions about Olympics tickets in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

OLYMPICS TICKETS DISCUSSION

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

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'Olympics'?
- c) What do you think about what you read?
- d) How much corruption do you think there is in the Olympics?
- e) What will officials discuss at the emergency session?
- f) Do you think they'll go for damage limitation or the whole truth?
- g) What should happen to anyone found guilty?
- h) Why do highly paid Olympics officials feel the need to make illegal money on the side?
- i) Do you think newspapers do a good job of uncovering scandals?
- j) Which Olympics event would you like to attend?

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OLYMPICS TICKETS DISCUSSION

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What's wrong with selling tickets overseas?
- c) Do you think Londoners who cannot get are unhappy about this?
- d) Would you like to be an undercover reporter?
- e) Why do people deny any involvement in scandals when they know the newspapers have evidence they did it?
- f) Do you think this scandal will taint the London games in any way?
- g) What should happen to the Greek Olympics boss if he's guilty?
- h) Should Mr Capralos sue the Sunday Times if it's found the allegations are untrue?
- i) Have you ever "pulled strings"?
- j) What questions would you like to ask the IOC boss?

LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1206/120618-olympics_tickets.html

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has (1) ____ an investigation into allegations that officials in more than 50 countries have been selling London Olympics tickets on the black market for (2) _____. The IOC met at an emergency (3) ____ on Saturday to look into a stack of evidence uncovered by Britain's 'Sunday Times' newspaper. The paper claims that (4) ____-ranking Olympic officials have been selling tickets for the games at hugely (5) ____ prices. The highest priced tickets on the black market were for the men's 100-meter final. The IOC has issued a statement saying it "takes these allegations very seriously and has immediately taken the first (6) ____ to investigate."

IOC rules (7) ____ national Olympics committees from selling tickets overseas, increasing ticket prices or selling tickets to unauthorized, third-party resellers. (8) ____ this, Sunday Times undercover reporters (9) ____ as illegal ticket sellers say they have recorded evidence of 27 officials selling tickets (10) ____ to 54 countries. One of the most serious allegations was against the Greek Olympic Committee president Spyros Capralos. He denies saying he had "pulled (11) ____" with the head of the London Olympics Sebastian Coe even though the paper posted videos of its reporters' negotiations with Capralos on its website. Mr Capralos has so far refused to (12) _____.

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. | (a) lynched | (b) lunched | (c) linked | (d) launched |
| 2. | (a) greedy | (b) profit | (c) winnings | (d) make money |
| 3. | (a) session | (b) chat | (c) period | (d) time |
| 4. | (a) tall | (b) large | (c) high | (d) elevated |
| 5. | (a) rubbery | (b) magnified | (c) inflated | (d) filled up |
| 6. | (a) stairs | (b) steps | (c) ladders | (d) paces |
| 7. | (a) forbid | (b) forbids | (c) forbidden | (d) forbidding |
| 8. | (a) In spite | (b) Spiteful | (c) Dispute | (d) Despite |
| 9. | (a) praying | (b) posing | (c) pasting | (d) preening |
| 10. | (a) allocating | (b) allocates | (c) allocation | (d) allocated |
| 11. | (a) cotton | (b) ropes | (c) strings | (d) threads |
| 12. | (a) comment | (b) repent | (c) claim | (d) contribute |

WRITING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1206/120618-olympics_tickets.html

Write about **Olympics tickets** for 10 minutes. Correct your partner's paper.

HOMework

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find out more about Olympics tickets. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. OLYMPICS TICKETS: Make a poster about Olympics tickets. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. CORRUPTION: Write a magazine article about corruption in sport. Include imaginary interviews with people who are trying to fight it.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. LETTER: Write a letter to the head of the IOC. Ask him/her three questions about Olympics tickets. Give him/her three of your opinions on people trying to sell them for personal gain. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. T b. F c. F d. T e. F f. T g. T h. F

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1. launched | a. started |
| 2. allegations | b. claims |
| 3. session | c. meeting |
| 4. evidence | d. proof |
| 5. issued | e. sent out |
| 6. forbid | f. disallow |
| 7. unauthorized | g. unofficial |
| 8. posing | h. acting |
| 9. allocated | i. distributed |
| 10. negotiations | j. discussions |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. launched an | a. investigation |
| 2. the black | b. market |
| 3. met at an emergency | c. session on Saturday |
| 4. high-ranking | d. Olympic officials |
| 5. taken the first | e. steps to investigate |
| 6. third-party | f. resellers |
| 7. undercover reporters posing | g. as illegal ticket sellers |
| 8. the most serious | h. allegations |
| 9. He denies saying he had pulled | i. strings |
| 10. Mr Capralos has so far | j. refused to comment |

GAP FILL:

Olympic officials probe ticket scandal

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has (1) **launched** an investigation into allegations that (2) **officials** in more than 50 countries have been selling London Olympics tickets on the black market for (3) **profit**. The IOC met at an emergency (4) **session** on Saturday to look into a stack of evidence uncovered by Britain's 'Sunday Times' newspaper. The paper claims that (5) **high**-ranking Olympic officials have been selling tickets for the games at (6) **hugely** inflated prices. The highest priced tickets on the black market were for the men's 100-meter final. The IOC has (7) **issued** a statement saying it "takes these allegations very seriously and has immediately (8) **taken** the first steps to investigate."

IOC rules (9) **forbid** national Olympics committees from selling tickets overseas, increasing ticket prices or selling tickets to (10) **unauthorized**, third-party resellers. Despite this, Sunday Times undercover reporters (11) **posing** as illegal ticket sellers say they have recorded evidence of 27 officials selling tickets (12) **allocated** to 54 countries. One of the most serious allegations was against the Greek Olympic Committee president Spyros Capralos. He (13) **denies** saying he had "pulled (14) **strings**" with the head of the London Olympics Sebastian Coe even though the paper posted videos of its reporters' (15) **negotiations** with Capralos on its website. Mr Capralos has so far (16) **refused** to comment.

LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - d 2 - b 3 - a 4 - c 5 - c 6 - b 7 - a 8 - d 9 - b 10 - d 11 - c 12 - a