



TEACHER WORKSHEET

CYCLE 3 • VISUAL ARTS

OLYMPIC GAMES POSTERS

OVERVIEW

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES:

- Learn how to read and interpret a poster.
- Determine the characteristic features of an official Olympic poster.
- Observe how official Olympic posters have changed, and understand that a poster's design is closely tied to its time period (e.g. the 1948 and 2012 London Olympic Games).
- Create a poster to advertise the Olympic Games in one's home town by utilizing previously acquired knowledge.

SPECIFIC SKILLS:

- Experiment, produce, and create.
- Carry out an art project.
- Familiarize oneself with art-related fields and questions:
 - Identify features that place a work of art in a geographical or cultural area and in a historical time period.
 - Describe works of art, showing personal and well-founded understanding.

INTERDISCIPLINARY SKILLS:

- **Geography:**
Determine one's place in space.

- **History:**
 - Determine one's place in time.
 - Understand texts, documents, and images, and interpret them.
- **Language studies:**
Build semantic networks.
- **Moral and civic education:**
Work individually and as a group.

SCHEDULE FOR SESSIONS:

- Launch project.
- Gather initial student project feedback.
- Read texts aloud as a class.
- Do activities in pairs.
- Share with class and review.
- Extend activity.

DURATION:

- 2 sessions (2 × 45 minutes).

ORGANIZATION:

- Work in pairs, then share as a class.

→ OLYMPIC GAMES KEYWORDS:

HOST CITY • OFFICIAL POSTER • OLYMPIC SYMBOLS • OLYMPIC VALUES



CONCEPTS ADDRESSED

DISPLAYS

The first poster-like displays date back to ancient times. In Greece, and later in Rome, official decisions were posted on movable wooden panels.

In France, before the French Revolution in 1789, only royal decrees could be published on *placards*, which only included written text.

When the *Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen* (Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen) was issued, it protected the freedom of communication and led to some of the first public areas for displaying posters.



At the end of the 19th century, artists such as Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec made advertising posters into an effective means of communication—and an art form in and of itself. What makes posters special is that they can be reproduced and distributed in large quantities.

In the 20th century, posters were made by graphic artists and designers.

OLYMPIC POSTERS

The first official Olympic Games poster was designed for the 1912 Games in Stockholm.

The Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (OCOG) chooses the official poster from various proposals. An Olympic poster communicates information directly related to the Olympic Games and the host country. The graphic design makes it easy to identify the Olympic Games (the rings being featured), and so posters have become a kind of ambassador for the event.

Olympic posters can be classified into two categories:

- Posters that primarily feature figurative elements (public buildings, statues, landscapes, athletes, flags, etc.).
- Posters that stray from the figurative to focus on graphic design (such as the poster for the 1968 Mexico City Games) or on the symbol of the Games (combining the Olympic rings with edition-specific graphic elements, such as the 1976 Montreal Games).

FUN FACT!

For more than a century, the Olympic Games have reflected geopolitical, ethical, moral, and economic developments around the world. The passage of time affects how the events are communicated, and each and every poster is therefore a product of its time.

FUN FACT!

Some Olympic Games have more than one official poster. The 2016 Rio Games had 13!



STUDENT WORKSHEET OVERVIEW

VOCABULARY:

Poster, inform, promote, official poster, symbol.

ACTIVITIES:

► ACTIVITY 1: THE OLYMPIC GAMES ON DISPLAY

Determine the characteristic features of an Olympic poster, based on observing three official posters (including the host city, year, and symbolic depiction of the rings) **9–10 yr** **10–11 yr** **11–12 yr**

Materials: – Texts

- Three Olympic poster illustrations: Stockholm (Sweden, 1912), St. Moritz (Switzerland, 1928), and Los Angeles (United States, 1932)

🔍 FIND OUT MORE:

Make a connection with artwork by **Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec**, who made posters his favorite means of expression.

► ACTIVITY 2: POSTERS THAT CHANGE WITH THE TIMES

Observe how posters for the London Olympic Games in 1948 and 2012 changed, and understand that a poster's design is closely tied to its time period **9–10 yr** **10–11 yr** **11–12 yr**

Materials: – Texts

- Two poster illustrations for the London Olympic Games (England, 1948 and 2012)
- Illustration of the mascot for the London Olympic Games (England, 2012)



► **ACTIVITY 3: IT'S YOUR TURN! CREATE A POSTER FOR YOUR HOME TOWN AS AN OLYMPIC HOST CITY!**

Create a poster to announce that one's home town will host the Olympic Games, using knowledge acquired from Activities 1 and 2 **9-10 yr | 10-11 yr | 11-12 yr**

Materials: Three official poster illustrations for the Olympic Games in Mexico City (Mexico, 1968), Montreal (Canada, 1976), and Atlanta (United States, 1996)



STUDENT WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY

► **ACTIVITY 1: THE OLYMPIC GAMES ON DISPLAY**

Determine the characteristic features of an Olympic poster, based on observing three official posters (including the host city, year, and symbolic depiction of the rings) **9-10 yr | 10-11 yr | 11-12 yr**

- 1) - Dates: June 29 to July 22, 1912
- Host city: Stockholm (Sweden)
- Flags of participating countries: 21 flags!
- 2) The Olympic flag is featured with the five rings (in addition to the Swiss flag in the background).
- 3) The Olympic rings must be included.

► **ACTIVITY 2: POSTERS THAT CHANGE WITH THE TIMES**

Observe how posters for the London Olympic Games in 1948 and 2012 changed, and understand that a poster's design is closely tied to its time period **9-10 yr | 10-11 yr | 11-12 yr**

- 1) Both posters announce the event (i.e. the Olympic Games) and feature the Olympic rings. They both specify the host city and the year.

2) Observations:

1948 poster: The event (top), and the dates and location (bottom) are announced in black capital letters.

There are three visual planes:

- Foreground: The Olympic rings in the official colors.
- Middleground: An image of a Greek statue, the *Discobolus* (the original can be found in the British Museum in London).
- Background: An image of the Palace of Westminster and Big Ben.

2012 poster: The name of the artist, the host city, the year, the Olympic rings in color, and the London Olympic Games logo are featured in small print.

Random circles in the Olympic colors cover the rest of the poster. The circles are not as sharp as the Olympic rings; they seem to have been painted in blobs.

3) Differences:

The poster from 1948 emphasizes the event: "Olympic Games" is written in capital letters, the rings are depicted in large format, and the exact dates are given.

The poster from 2012 only mentions that information in tiny print at the bottom of the poster. However, the poster does mention the name of the artist, Rachel Whiteread.

4) Message:

In the aftermath of World War II, **the poster from 1948** sought to inform the public and promote the spirit of the Olympic Games (peace through sports). It became the symbol of a nation that had resisted the war.



By choosing to depict the *Discobolus* (a clear reference to the ancient Games) and Big Ben (an emblematic monument in London), the poster was intended to convey that the 1948 Games would be a time for past and present—the classical and the modern—to come together.

The poster from 2012 made no reference to the past or to the city of London. It sought to convey universality, friendship, and conviviality—the circles evoke the traces left by drinking glasses or bottles on a table, after an evening spent with friends watching an Olympic event, for example! Hence the play on the letter “O”, which is capitalized in “LOndOn”.



FIND OUT MORE

CNOSF EDUCATIONAL FILES

10–11 yr: “The 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin”

11–12 yr: “The first Olympic Games”

9–10 yr: “Stadium history from ancient times to the present day”

Cycle 3: “Bobsleigh (dimensions and measurements)”

Cycle 3: “Learn about a major city: Tokyo, host city of the 2020 Summer Olympic Games”

Cycle 3: “Vocabulary for sports and athletic achievement”

Cycle 3: “French vocabulary for sports and the Olympic Games”

DIGITAL RESOURCES

Find out more about the symbols of the modern Olympic Games:

<http://cnosf.franceolympique.com/cnosf/actus/4928-les-symboles-et-marques-olympiques.html>

Learn more about Olympic mascots:

<https://www.olympic.org/mascots>

Learn more about Olympic posters:

<https://www.olympic.org/museum/explore/press/photo-library/og-posters>

https://stillmed.olympic.org/AssetsDocs/OSC%20Section/pdf/QR_Symbol_Posters_Summer%20Games.pdf

Éduscol support document for visual arts in Cycle 3:

<http://eduscol.education.fr/pid34175-cid99287/ressources-d-accompagnement-enseignements-artistiques-aux-cycles-2-et-3.html#lien0>

FURTHER READING FOR STUDENTS

<http://www.lesclefsdelecole.com/Clefs-des-champs/Listes-de-lecture/Sport-et-olympisme>

FURTHER READING FOR TEACHERS

TDC (texts and documents for the classroom), “*L’affiche*” (Posters), March 2015 (Canopé): <https://www.reseau-canope.fr/notice/tdc-n-1091-1er-mars-2015.html>

EXHIBITIONS FOR STUDENTS

The Olympic Museum in Lausanne, Switzerland <https://www.olympic.org/museum> (virtual tour available online)

“Fair Play”: A touring exhibition on Olympism, available on loan (12 panels, 1.60 m × 50 cm):

Contact: academieolympique@cnosf.org

ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

End of unit: “It’s your turn! Olympic Games posters” (and answer key)



STUDENT WORKSHEET

CYCLE 3 • VISUAL ARTS

OLYMPIC GAMES POSTERS

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VOCABULARY



POSTER: A large printed sheet of paper used to inform the public or promote an object or event.

INFORM: To give information.

PROMOTE: To give publicity to an event (synonym: to publicize).

OFFICIAL POSTER: A poster selected by the Olympic Games organizers (the International Olympic Committee) and used to advertise an edition of the Games.

SYMBOL: A sign or image that represents an idea.



TIPS & TRICKS



Sometimes people say, “He’s the creative type!” as if they were saying, “He’s blond!” and he couldn’t help it. But that isn’t entirely true.

Of course, people often do **what comes naturally to them**. But **nothing is set**, and everything takes work.

Not only artists know how to create. Scientists, lawyers, professors, and chefs do it too, in their own way.

Being creative lets you **find quick solutions** to a problem.

For example, say you lost a worksheet with a map of Europe you had to fill in.

Can’t redraw it or photocopy another one? No problem! Just use rectangles to symbolize the different countries—**it won’t be perfect, but it’s better than doing nothing!**

ACTIVITIES

► ACTIVITY 1: THE OLYMPIC GAMES ON DISPLAY

FUN FACT! In France, the first modern posters date back to the 19th century. Before the French Revolution in 1789, only kings could post their decisions on walls. In 1789, the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen authorized the public to communicate freely, including by posting their ideas on walls!

At first, there were only written messages, but eventually visuals were added to draw the attention of passers-by.

In the 19th century, a growing number of artists, including Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, specialized in poster-making, and posters became real works of art!

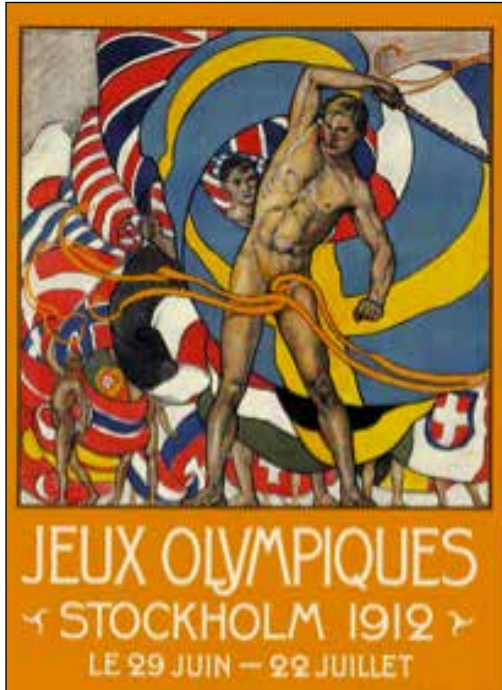
As early as 1912, the organizers for the modern Olympic Games understood the importance of informing the public and promoting events. Back then, radio, television, and Internet didn’t exist, and so posters were one of the few ways to announce the Games.

The first official poster was produced for the 1912 Olympic Games in Stockholm, Sweden. It was translated into sixteen languages and sent to thirty different countries to be displayed in areas frequented by tourists and athletes (hotels, restaurants, shops, travel agencies, transportation companies, sports clubs, etc.).



Read the text above and answer the questions.

1) Look at the poster for the Summer Olympics in Stockholm, Sweden, and list the elements that advertise the event:



A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing the answer to question 1.

FIND OUT MORE:

The Stockholm Olympic Games brought together participants from the five main continents for the very first time.

2) Look at the poster for the Winter Olympics in St. Moritz, Switzerland, in 1928. What new element appeared on an Olympic poster for the first time?



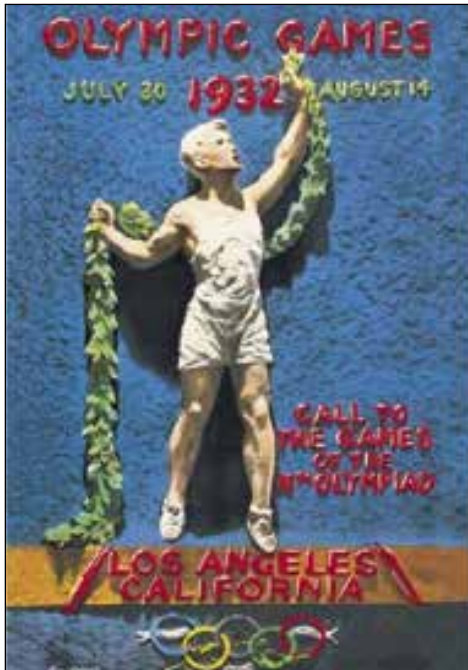
A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing the answer to question 2.

FIND OUT MORE:

The five colored, interlocking rings represent the union of the five continents through sports.
The Olympic flag has six colors: the colors of the five rings and a white background. The colors were chosen so that every participating country could find at least one color from its own national flag.



3) Look at the poster for the 1932 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles, California. What new element must now appear on all Olympic posters?



A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing the answer to the question.

► **ACTIVITY 2: POSTERS THAT CHANGE WITH THE TIMES**

FUN FACT! The city of London, in England, has hosted the Olympic Games three times—in 1908, 1948, and 2012.

In 1908, London replaced Rome at the last minute, because the Italian capital was not ready to host the events.

The 1940 and 1944 Games could not be held due to World War II. In 1948, London rose to the challenge of hosting the first Games since the end of the war, as many countries (including England) struggled to recover from the terrible event.

Read the text above and look at the Olympic posters for the 1948 and 2012 Olympic Games.

1) What features make the posters identifiable as official Olympic posters?

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing the answer to the question.



2) Describe each poster's content and composition.



1948 poster

Horizontal dotted lines for writing the description of the 1948 poster.



2012 poster

3) What major differences do you see between the two posters?

Horizontal dotted lines for writing the comparison between the two posters.



4) In your opinion, what is each poster's message?

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Wenlock, the mascot for London 2012

◆ FIND OUT MORE:

Since 1972, host cities have also had a mascot—a kind of lucky charm that represents the city. Sometimes the mascot is more popular than the official poster.

Wenlock was named after the town of Much Wenlock, in England, which in the late 19th century organized the sports events that later inspired Pierre de Coubertin to create the modern Olympic Games.

This mascot represents the last drop of steel that was used to build the Olympic stadium in London. The yellow light on top of its head was inspired by London taxis.

► ACTIVITY 3: YOU'RE THE ARTIST NOW!

It's your turn! Create a poster for your home town, designated to be an Olympic host city!

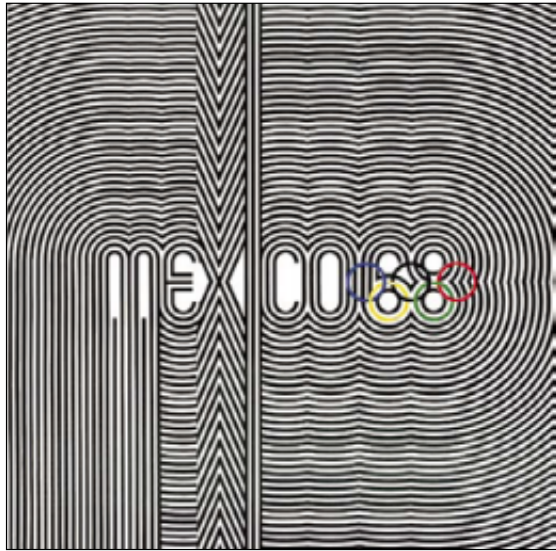
Your home town has been selected to host the Olympic Games (winter or summer—it's up to you!) and you must submit a proposal for a poster design to promote it.

The graphic design of your poster should make it easy to identify the city and the fact that it is a poster for the Olympic Games.

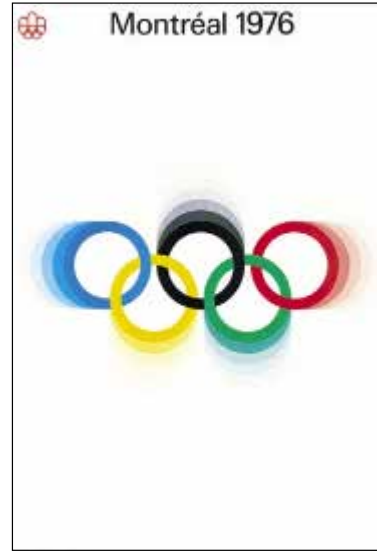
Using the research done in previous activities, decide what you want to include to represent your home town. Don't forget that because it's supposed to be an official Olympic poster, it must include certain key elements.

Here are a few suggestions to help you:

- Think about what your city symbolizes (its culture, traditions, heritage, monuments, geography, surrounding countryside, historical figures, etc.).
- Don't hesitate to play with the Olympic rings, a symbol of universality, as other cities have done—such as Mexico City in 1968, and Montreal in 1976.



Mexico City 1968 Olympic poster



Montreal 1976 Olympic poster



Atlanta 1996 Olympic poster

- Make a connection with the ancient Games, like the poster for the 1996 Atlanta Games did, in featuring the silhouette of an athlete from ancient times to celebrate the centennial of the modern Games.
- Highlight an Olympic value: excellence (giving the best of yourself), perseverance, friendship, solidarity, fair play, etc.



REVIEW

- The role of a poster is to **inform** and **promote** (advertise). It is produced by a professional who has often has a background in **graphic design**. On a poster, the imagery matters just as much as the text.
- The official Olympic poster is used to announce the Olympic Games. That has been a **tradition** since the first posters were produced for the 1912 Games in Stockholm, Sweden. Since 1928, posters have included the Olympic rings, which make them recognizably Olympic.
- Host cities are responsible for publicizing the Games. Since 1972, in agreement with the IOC, host cities have also created a **mascot**, a sort of lucky charm that represents the city. Sometimes the mascot is more popular than the official poster.



NOW, TAKE ACTION!

- **Look around you:** art is everywhere in the street! Some posters really should be studied closely, because they are **the work of graphic designers who have played with color, shape, typography (font), imagery...** Understand that the way a message is communicated **matters just as much as the message itself.**
- **Develop your critical thinking.** Advertisements and billboards are **a reflection of our times; they say things about our way of life.** Look at them with a trained eye—that is, by learning how to tell **fact from fiction.** Be curious and have an open mind, which will help you form your own opinion.



CYCLE PROGRESS WORKSHEET

CYCLE 3 • VISUAL ARTS

OLYMPIC GAMES POSTERS

CONNECTION WITH THE HISTORY PROGRAM:

9–10 yr

- Topic 1: Before France

The worksheet could establish a connection with the history of the Roman colonization of the Gauls and the contributions of Roman culture, by proposing two lines of study:

- The ancient Games (originating in Greece in the 8th century B.C. and taken over by the Romans until Emperor Theodosius outlawed them in 394).
- The first poster-like displays in Rome: the public album. In Rome, citizens were informed of official decisions on large, whitewashed panels.

10–11 yr

- Topic 2: The industrial age in France

The worksheet could establish a connection with the history of industrialization in France, the first department stores, and the first advertising posters.

In art, students could study posters designed by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec.

- Topic 3: France in World War I, World War II, and the European Union

The worksheet could establish a connection with the start of World War II, by having students study the official poster for the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games, which perfectly illustrates Nazi propaganda at the time and showed how the Nazis manipulated an international event.

11–12 yr

- Topic 2: Founding narratives, beliefs, and citizenship in the Mediterranean in the 1st millennium B.C.

The worksheet could establish a connection with Greek cities and be an opportunity for students to study the Games of Olympia, which illustrated the common culture shared by rival Greek cities.

It would also be an opportunity to study the first poster-like displays used in Greece to inform the public of major decisions, i.e. axons (movable wooden panels).

CONNECTION WITH THE MORAL AND CIVIC EDUCATION PROGRAM (TAKING ACTION AS AN INDIVIDUAL AND AS PART OF A COMMUNITY):

Raise student awareness about the role of poster campaigns used by humanitarian groups and NGOs (such as Amnesty International).



IT'S YOUR TURN!

CYCLE 3 • VISUAL ARTS

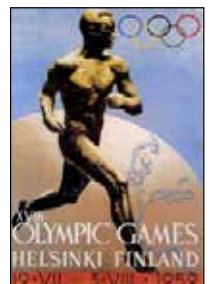
OLYMPIC GAMES POSTERS

PUT YOUR KNOWLEDGE TO THE TEST

- 1 WHEN WAS THE FIRST OFFICIAL OLYMPIC POSTER USED?**
 - In 1896, at the first modern Games in Athens, Greece
 - In 1912, at the Summer Games in Stockholm, Sweden
 - In 1924, at the first Winter Games in Chamonix, France
- 2 WHAT OLYMPIC SYMBOL HAS BEEN FEATURED ON EVERY POSTER SINCE 1928?**
 - The host-city name
 - The five rings
 - The mascot
- 3 WHO IS IN CHARGE OF CREATING THE POSTER FOR THE NEXT OLYMPIC GAMES?**
 - The most recent host city
 - The next host city
 - The International Olympic Committee
- 4 HOW MANY TIMES HAS THE CITY OF LONDON HOSTED THE SUMMER OLYMPICS?**
 - Two times
 - Three times
 - Four times

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE FURTHER

- 1 THE POSTER FOR THE 1948 LONDON OLYMPIC GAMES SHOWS BIG BEN'S HANDS POINTING TO 4 O'CLOCK. WHY IS THAT?**
 - That's tea time
 - That's when the Queen's dogs had to be let out
 - That's when the Games were officially proclaimed open
- 2 WHEN WERE THE FIRST GAMES TELEVISED?**
 - In 1936, for the Berlin Olympic Games in Germany
 - In 1948, for the London Olympic Games in England
 - In 1960, for the Rome Olympic Games in Italy
- 3 THE POSTER DESIGN FOR THE 1952 GAMES IN HELSINKI, FINLAND, WAS ACTUALLY INTENDED FOR OTHER GAMES. WHICH ONES?**
 - The Olympic Games planned for 1940
 - The first modern Olympic Games in Athens, Greece, in 1896
 - The Olympic Games in Los Angeles, California, United States, in 1932





4 WHEN WERE THE VERY FIRST POSTERS USED TO INFORM THE PUBLIC?

- Ancient Greece
 The Middle Ages
 The French Revolution

KICK OFF THE DISCUSSION... GIVE YOUR OPINION!

WHAT ABOUT YOU? HOW DO YOU REACT TO ADVERTISING?

DO YOU REMEMBER AN AD THAT MADE YOU WANT TO BUY SOMETHING YOU DIDN'T REALLY NEED?

WHAT WAS IT ABOUT THE AD THAT CAUSED YOU TO FEEL THAT WAY?





IT'S YOUR TURN! ANSWER KEY

CYCLE 3 • VISUAL ARTS

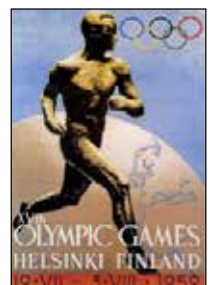
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4 WHEN WERE THE VERY FIRST POSTERS USED TO INFORM THE PUBLIC?

- Ancient Greece The Middle Ages The French Revolution

(Mobile wooden panels called “axons” were used to announce decisions made by the authorities).