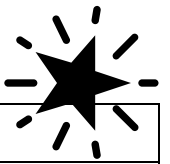




10. That's excellent!



Age range: Primary

Theme: We gather as a community for collective worship that is **inspiring, invitational and inclusive**, reflecting the fact that we are a part of a diverse school family and the wider church community. This term, we are warming up for the Summer Olympics by going back in time and revisiting some Olympic and Paralympic Games from the past. We will share inspirational stories which reflect the six Olympic values of Determination, Excellence, Inspiration, Courage, Friendship and Equality and use them to help us to think about what we can learn from them.



How does this link to your school's Christian vision & values?

Many of the Olympic values are shared with those that are familiar to us in school, so throughout this term, we encourage you to link each week's collective worship to your school vision – and the way that you live this out through your values. Today we find out about Australian Olympic swimmer Shane Gould, who in 1972 was the only person, male or female, to hold every world freestyle record from 100 m to 1500 m simultaneously, and the first female swimmer ever to win three Olympic gold medals in world record time. So, this week, we focus on the value of Excellence.

Resources:

- The PowerPoint slides are numbered with a point in the script so you can find your way, and the parts in **bold** show you where to click on to activate the next slide or animation. There are slides to go with today's script, but you could quite easily use this collective worship without the PowerPoint if you preferred.
- **There is also an Olympic 'passport' that you can create using the reflection cards for each week, and to gather some thoughts from your children as you go along. This is in a separate file and could be easily constructed from an A4 or A5 folder with plastic pockets, but will also be included in each week's resources. You could 'stamp' your reflection card each week, just like you would a passport. There is space for this at the top of each card. Use as many as you have time for.**
- **The introductory game focuses on people who are 'excellent' at different disciplines. You might be best to think of people in the real world rather than children in school, to avoid any competitive vibes, but by all means do use children in your school community as examples, with some care!**
- **Reflective prayer activity:** Put star shaped paper (or sticky notes) in your reflective area for children to write things that they are 'excellent' at. Encourage your class community to help the less confident to identify things that they are good at – and praise them for them. Some children find this very hard, so be very encouraging!

Gathering:

Slide 1: Use the new gathering words, which will be the same each week.



- **Leader: We are here together**
- **ALL: May we 'GO FOR GOLD!' in our words and actions today!**

Engaging:

- **Slide 2:** We're going to start our time together today thinking about people who are EXCELLENT at different things.
- **Slides 3-8:** Ask children to suggest candidates for each category – celebrity or school community-focused. You could also ask children to decide with a talk partner.
- **Slide 3: Football**
- **Slide 4: Cooking**
- **Slide 5: Fixing / Building**
- **Slide 6: Being friends**
- **Slide 7: Crafting**
- **Slide 8: Music**
- **Slide 9: Swimming**
- **Slide 10:** It probably comes as no surprise to hear that we are today focusing on the Olympic value of excellence – which I guess we have also been thinking about in most of our stories so far!
- **Slide 11:** This summer during our Olympics, we'll be seeing many more demonstrations of excellence, but for today, we're going back in our Olympic time machine again, to 1972,
- **Slide 12:** when the summer Olympics were held in Munich, Germany.
- **Slide 13:** This is Shane Gould, whose nickname was **'the Australian goldfish'**! I wonder if you can guess which sport she might've been good at?! [swimming]...and which country she represented at the 1972



Olympics?!!! [Australia] She was also one of the youngest Olympic competitors, aged 15, and was known to have said that the joy of swimming was more important to her than winning gold medals.

- **Slide 14:** Between July 1971 and January 1972, Shane Gould set world records in all five freestyle swimming distances. ‘Freestyle’ is when you choose the swimming stroke that you prefer – most competitors choose front crawl, because it’s the fastest. So this means she was the fastest swimmer in the world across the 5 freestyle distances: the 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m and 1500m. She is still the only person, male or female, to have ever achieved this.

So, before she’d even won her medals at the 1972 Summer Olympics, she was already pretty excellent!

- In Munich, Shane Gould swam 12 races in 8 days, logging a total of 4,200m of competitive swimming in the process. She won her first **gold** in the 200m individual medley – that’s doing a length of the pool 4 times, using a different swimming stroke each time. She went on to win two **further golds** in the 400m and 200m, in which she also set her third world record. She finished her first Olympic Games with these three golds, a **silver medal** in the 800m, and a **bronze** in the 100m.
- **Slide 15:** And the most extraordinary thing about this is that she was aged only 15 at the time! But she’s also remembered as someone who swam because she loved to swim – she just happened to win as well! Someone said of her:

‘...winning races, achieving gold medals and setting world records were all incidental to the experience of swimming....’

- For Shane, swimming was more important to her than winning medals, and when she got back home to Australia after the Olympics, she struggled being the centre of everyone’s attention. What do you do when you’ve won just about everything it’s possible to win – and you’re only 15? Her mother suggested an idea.....
- **Slide 16:** One Sunday, when the Gould family went to church, Shane took her five medals with her. During the service, she took the medals up to the front and laid them down on the clean, white cloth that covered the big altar table. They glistened in the sunlight. As she placed them there, Shane said a quiet prayer of thanks to God for them, and stepped back. It felt good. Swimming was a beautiful thing to be able to do, but it was better to recognise that this talent she enjoyed so much came from God. And for the first time since she’d won the medals, she felt as if a great weight had been lifted from her shoulders.

Slide 17: Responding and words for worship

Let’s be quiet and still with our own thoughts.....



In 1972, Shane Gould laid her medals down to show that she recognised that her talent, the thing she was good at, swimming, was a gift from God.

Each of us have different talents and abilities too.....things that we are good at.....

.....I wonder what you think that you are good at?.....

....maybe it’s swimming, like Shane Gould.....or singing, like.....[insert name]

.....maybe it’s cooking....or dancing.....or playing a musical instrument.....

...maybe it’s being a good listener....or a good friend....

....all these are special gifts given to us to look after and develop.....

....I wonder what we need to help our talents to grow strong, and not waste them?....

.....many people, like Shane, would say that all these different talents come from God.....

.....maybe in the quietness you’d like to pause and say ‘thank you’ to God for the abilities he’s given to you.....or to be quietly thankful for your talents

[leave space for private prayer / reflection here]



Sending: Slide 18

Leader: As we leave this place & time and go into the day ahead...

All: Let's go for gold* in all that we do!



*Again, you might need to unpick what we mean by 'going for gold' in the context of today's words.

To listen to / sing:

[All together as a family](#) (AAOS)

There's also a really great Out of the Ark song called 'Praise to the One' which was on a CD called 'Sunday's Cool!' that was given to many schools a few years ago. Check your cupboard to see if you were one of them!



Slide 19: Reflective areas

Put star shaped paper (or sticky notes) in your reflective area for children to write things that they are 'excellent' at. Encourage your class community to help the less confident to identify things that they are good at – and praise them for them.

Some children find this very hard, so be very encouraging!



Going for gold!

10. That's excellent!

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TRANSFORMING LIVES

Arrival on:



Excellence

After the 1972 Olympics in Germany, swimmer Shane Gould said ‘thank you’ to God for her ability to swim, by placing her medals on the altar in her church.



**What do you think you're good at?
How does doing this make you feel?**



How do you ‘get better’ at your talent?

What do you need to do to help it to grow?



Write your thoughts onto a star shape. You might want to turn your words into a prayer of thanks.



Going for gold!

10. That's excellent!

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