

TEXT 1

Everybody admires Olympians – the sportspeople who have competed in the Olympic Games. The American swimmer Michael Phelps is the most successful Olympian of all time. He has won a record 28 Olympic medals. Winning lots of medals in the same sport is nothing unusual. But how many Olympians have competed (or even won medals) in different events? There are more than you would think! Of course, Olympians have often competed in similar sports at the same Games, like skiing and snowboarding, or swimming and diving, but what about more unusual combinations?

TEXT 2

For example, British athlete Rebecca Romero won Olympic medals in rowing at the 2004 Games in Athens, and cycling at the 2008 Games in Beijing. Perhaps the biggest achievement is to get medals at both the Winter and Summer Games. Only five people have ever done this in recent times! Cycling and ice skating are two sports with certain similarities. Clara Hughes is a Canadian Olympian who has won six medals: two for cycling and four for ice skating, perhaps making her the most versatile modern Olympian.

TEXT 3

But nobody has ever beaten American Eddie Eagan's achievement of winning gold at both Games. In the early years of the modern Olympics it was quite common for people to compete in more than one sport. There were even artistic events like architecture and sculpture! Eagan's medal wins were in 1920 in boxing, and in 1932 in bobsleigh! It's still quite common to find well-known athletes competing in the bobsleigh, as their strength and speed are useful at the start of the event. Lauryn Williams, from the USA, has recently won medals in this winter sport.

TEXT 4

In the world of the Paralympics, the Games for disabled athletes, success in different events is more common. Heinz Frei from Switzerland has won Paralympic medals in wheelchair racing, cycling and skiing. Britain's Sarah Storey began as a Paralympic swimmer in Barcelona in 1992, but has now become a successful cycling champion. She changed sports in 2005 because she had an ear infection. She hasn't qualified for the Olympics yet, but she has already competed and won against non-disabled cyclists.

TEXT 5

People say that travel broadens the mind, that it makes you tolerant. When we travel, we meet people who think differently, do things differently and so we learn that there are alternatives to our own beliefs and behaviour. At least that's the theory, but is it true?

Josh thinks it is. Last year, he travelled round the world with his friends Tim and Kieran. They were having a gap year between school and university, as a lot of British teenagers do. They bought a one way round-the-world ticket with stops in six countries (Italy, Greece, India, Thailand, Peru and Brazil).

TEXT 6

They decided before they left, they didn't want to just be tourists for the whole trip, so they volunteered for a few weeks in India and Peru. In India, they worked in an orphanage in Goa, where they taught Maths in the morning and played football with the children after school. While they were there, they learned about local customs and how to make curry from their Indian colleagues. In Peru, they decided to do something completely different. They helped to build a community centre in a village with volunteers from all over the world.

TEXT 7

They didn't know much about building before they arrived in Peru, but they trained hard and by the end of their six-week stay, they were happy laying bricks and painting windows and doors. The boys were also very enthusiastic about their experiences. 'Our eyes are now open to how people live in other parts of the world. I think in future we'll look at our own problems in a different way,' says Josh. 'I'm going to look for other volunteering opportunities in future. It's a great way to see the world.'

TEXT 8

Many pet owners say that they love their pets and when we see an animal in danger, we often want to help. Here are the stories of just a few animal heroes. Dogs are the world's favourite pet and man's best friend. They are well known for helping the humans they live with. However, some help people they don't know. For example, one day a dog and her owner were walking by a river when the owner saw an empty wheelchair next to the river and a woman lying in the water. The dog's owner told her to 'fetch' the body. The dog jumped in the river and pulled the woman to safety.

TEXT 9

There are many stories about dolphins saving swimmers, particularly in New Zealand. In 2004, a British man, his young daughter and two of her friends were swimming in the sea in New Zealand when a group of dolphins made a circle round them. The swimmers were really surprised and at first they didn't understand why the dolphins were behaving in this strange way. However, when the father saw a great white shark, he understood that the dolphins were keeping the shark away from the group. The dolphins stayed with the swimmers for 40 minutes, until the sharks went away.

TEXT 10

National Three Peaks Challenge - We're Emma Davis and Oliver Hampton. We're doing the National Three Peaks Challenge this weekend – that's climbing the highest mountains in Scotland, England and Wales. Some people climb the three mountains in 24 hours! But we aren't crazy: we're going to try to do it in three days. We're on an organised tour and we're ready to start our adventure: enjoy our blog!

Friday, 8th June - Well, it's three o'clock in the afternoon and we've just climbed the highest mountain in the UK – that's Ben Nevis in Scotland!

TEXT 11

Friday, 8th June - The mountain is awesome. There was snow on the top – we've never seen snow in June! We'd like to stay here because we've never been to Scotland before, but in half an hour we're getting on a bus to travel to the Lake District in England. The journey takes about six hours.

Saturday, 9th June - We've woken up in the Lake District this morning. We arrived late last night, had dinner and went to bed. At nine o'clock today a minibus is taking us to Scafell Pike, the highest mountain in England. It isn't very high. It's less than 1,000 metres, so if the weather's good, we'll climb it in five hours.