

## Reading Level 2: Sochi Winter Olympics

9<sup>th</sup> February 2014

**Topics:** olympics, Sochi, Russia, sports

**Learning points:**

- vocabulary
- relative pronouns
- connectives
- present perfect tense
- adverbs

1 Well, the Sochi Winter Olympics have finally<sup>1</sup> started. Have you seen any of the events yet? Did you watch  
2 the ‘dazzling’ opening ceremony, or Matthias Mayer winning the men’s downhill ski race? The Olympics has  
3 been making headlines and I think it will continue to do so – and I hope for the right reasons!

4  
5 To start with, the venue is a little strange. Sochi is the warmest city that has ever hosted a Winter Olympic  
6 Games. In February it has an average temperature of 9°C. Sochi is actually<sup>2</sup> a Black Sea summer coastal  
7 resort, equivalent to the Mediterranean coast in France. Incredibly, it stretches for 90 miles along the coast,  
8 which makes it the longest city in Europe.

9  
10 The cost of the Games has been a subject of discussion, due to<sup>3</sup> the \$51bn price tag, which is not only more  
11 than the Beijing Summer Olympics (\$40bn), let alone<sup>4</sup> the London Summer Olympics (\$15bn), but – almost  
12 unbelievably – more than all the previous Winter Olympic Games combined!

13  
14 However, there have also been some positive headlines, such as<sup>5</sup> that there will be a record 2,900 athletes  
15 from 87 countries who will participate in the 98 events. Some new events include women’s ski jumping, ski  
16 halfpipe and snowboard parallel slalom. Even though<sup>6</sup> you might not have heard of him, Shaun White, who is  
17 a snowboarder, is probably the richest athlete in the competition. He is estimated<sup>7</sup> to be worth \$20mill.  
18 One person you might hear more about is Ole Einar Bjoerndalen, who is a biathlete and who needs just 2  
19 more gold medals to equal the all-time Winter Olympics record of 8 gold metals, which was set by the  
20 Norwegian cross-country skier Bjorn Daehlie.

21  
22 Despite<sup>8</sup> the headlines that it makes today, alpine skiing surprisingly was not included in the first 3 Winter  
23 Olympics. Since then, Austria has won 105 alpine skiing medals, which is almost more than twice as many as  
24 Switzerland, France or the USA. If you saw Matthias Mayer this morning, then you will know that that  
number has just gone up!

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<sup>1</sup> finally = endlich

<sup>2</sup> actually = eigentlich

<sup>3</sup> due to = wegen

<sup>4</sup> let alone = geschweige denn

<sup>5</sup> such as = wie

<sup>6</sup> even though = selbst wenn

<sup>7</sup> estimated = geschätzt

<sup>8</sup> despite = trotz

## Level 2 questions

This is a good example of text at the 'Level 2' level. It contains some more difficult vocabulary than the Level 1 text but really it is more difficult because the sentences are more complicated. If you compare the sentences to the Level 1 text, you will see the difference.

There are several things that help to make this text more complicated. For each of the following, can you find examples of them in the text?

1. relative pronouns (that/who/which)
2. connectives (however, due to, although, despite, if)
3. the present perfect tense
4. adverbs

## Level 2 answers

1. for example, in lines 5, 7-8, 10, 16-17, 18
2. for example, in lines 10, 14, 16, 22, 24
3. for example, in lines 1, 5, 10, 23
4. for example, in lines 1, 6, 7, 12, 22