

3.3 Impact of the Olympics



Main Idea Brazil is working hard to maximize the economic and social impact of the 2016 Olympic Games.

Athens, Greece, hosted the first modern Olympics in 1896. Since that time, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has decided which countries would host the games. Not once had the committee chosen a city in South America. That changed in 2009 when the IOC selected **Rio de Janeiro**, Brazil, as the host of the 2016 Olympics.

Preparing the City

Rio has previous experience hosting international sports events. In 2007, Brazil hosted the Pan-American Games, which are similar to the Olympics but open only to countries in the Western Hemisphere. At that time, Brazil's government made

improvements to the **infrastructure**, or the basic systems that a society needs, such as roads, bridges, and sewers. However, more improvements are needed to host the Olympics. Thirty-four competition **venues**, or locations for organized events, need to be built or updated. Efficient transportation to and from the venues is also important.

The Olympic Games last only a few weeks. However, many in Rio de Janeiro hope that one **impact**, or effect, will be long-term improvements in the health of their city. Overcrowded and often dangerous favelas surround Rio. As part of its Olympic preparations, the city plans to tear down and rebuild in these locations. Areas that were once slums will become paved neighborhoods with running water, electricity, and gas—all of which are missing in the existing favelas.



Critical Viewing Brazilian soccer star Pelé (far right) celebrates winning the bid with the Rio Olympic committee. Based on this photo, what can you say about the committee's reaction?

Hosting the Games

Benefits come to countries that host the Olympic Games. First, constructing buildings such as stadiums and the Olympic Village (where athletes stay) creates jobs. Ideally, these structures will still be used long after the games are over. Businesses such as hotels and restaurants benefit, too. Athletes and tourists from around the world flood a host city and spend money on lodging, food, and other goods. Billions more watch the Olympics on television. With such wide exposure, Rio de Janeiro hopes to earn a reputation as a thriving and world-class city.

Before You Move On

Make Inferences In what ways might the 2016 Olympics change Rio?

ONGOING ASSESSMENT

PHOTO LAB

- 1. Analyze Visuals** Look at the photo of Rio de Janeiro. As a tourist visiting Rio, what impression might you have of the city?
- 2. Describe** In what ways might the hills and coastline shown in the photo help make Rio an appealing location for the 2016 Games?
- 3. Region** What makes the IOC's choice of Rio de Janeiro as an Olympic host a departure from previous choices?
- 4. Form and Support Opinions** Consider what you learned from the text and photos. Write two or three sentences that explain whether or not you consider Rio a good choice for the 2016 Games. Support your opinion with facts and details. Go to **Student Resources** for Guided Writing support.



The Christ the Redeemer statue atop Corcovado Mountain overlooks Rio de Janeiro.