Reflect & Write: Olympics and Global Media


Envision Connection: Use with Envision In Depth, chapter 13.

Background: A PhD candidate at the University of Toronto, Emma Wensing is a specialist in Physical Education and Health. The argument of this article, published originally in Yale Global in August 2004, is drawn both from her Masters thesis and her further research on media and culture.

Reflect & Write:

• Wensing identifies the flag as an example of the visual rhetoric of nationalism. What other examples make the Olympic coverage nationally distinct by country? How are victories celebrated through visual rhetoric? What about the visual appearance of winners themselves? Discuss four examples from the article and the meaning of each.

• How does coverage of the Olympics in diverse countries reflect those countries’ national values? How are such arguments created based on a premise of shared values?

• Does the thesis of this rhetorical analysis essay stand true today? Consider the context of world powers, recent political events, sports wins, and the location of the next Olympics.

• Write: The conclusion to this article takes a rather strong turn and reveals the writer’s stance about the influence of the media concerning national identity. Can you rewrite the conclusion to offer a more open-ended perspective?