



12. Home-Grown Hero

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 Ellie Simmonds, paralympic swimmer and star of the 2012 Games. At her first games in 2008, Ellie was (aged just 13) the youngest paralympic athlete to compete and of course has since been a contestant on Strictly Come Dancing. As a school, you may also have been visited by a Paralympic athlete as part of your wider curriculum, so if this is the case, do help pupils to make these connections!

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 for this week will require you to upload photos using the links provided, which will form a game a little bit like the children's game 'Guess Who'. There are a number of clues to use, which will lead pupils to the correct answer, which is Ellie Simmonds. Slide 6 contains a set of cover-ups which you should cut and paste over your photos so your screen should work just like the flip-down game when you click. Delete this slide once you have made the game.**
- Ellie Simmonds has faced many challenges as a paralympic athlete and in her personal life, recently featuring in an ITV programme about finding her birth family. We have not focused on this in this CW but you will find plenty of wider information about her here: [ITV News : The Latest Ellie Simmonds News](#)
- If you'd like to watch Ellie swim, there are a number of good clips here (and lots of info about her Guinness Book of Records achievements!) [Ellie Simmonds: Paralympic swimmer, dance star and record breaker | Guinness World Records](#) and you can find out more about her in her profile on the Paralympics website: [ParalympicsGB | Ellie simmonds](#) There are also some good quotes from Ellie if you want to use them in other parts of your school's life: [30 Best Ellie Simmonds Quotes With Image | Bookey](#)
- **Reflective prayer activity:** Use the challenge cards to help you to talk through some suggested solutions.

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 by jumping straight into our Olympic time machine and go back in time 12 years**to 2012,**
- **Slide 3:** When the Olympics and Paralympics were here, in London. For us here in the UK, it was one of the finest Olympic years ever! It was also the year of **our late Queen's Golden Jubilee.** It was a year to remember!
- **Slide 4:** We're going to play a game together to find out which athlete's story we will share today. The game is a bit like 'Guess Who' and you'll see the photos of some of the Olympic and Paralympic athletes from 2012....Listen to the clues and decide who you think it isn't!.....
- **Slide 5: Medallists in 2012 Olympics and Paralympics,** from top to bottom, left to right.
 - Will Bayley, paralympic table tennis
 - Mo Farah, long distance runner
 - Rebecca Adlington, swimmer
 - Jonnie Peacock, paralympic runner



- Andy Murray, tennis
- Sarah Storey, paralympic track cyclist
- Jessica Ennis-Hill, heptathlete
- **Ellie Simmonds, paralympic swimmer**
- Victoria Pendleton, sprint cyclist

The clues will lead you to Ellie Simmonds. They are included on p4 as cards you can print as well. It's important to use them in the specified order or they won't match up with the game on the screen! Pupils should find this easy enough but you may have to support younger pupils' thinking with careful questions about what they are looking for in the photos.

- **Clue 1: I am not playing with a ball. [covers Will Bayley & Andy Murray]**
- **Clue 2: I am a female athlete. [covers Jonnie Peacock & Mo Farah]**
- **Clue 3: I don't ride a bike. [covers Sarah Stoney & Victoria Pendleton]**
- **Clue 4: I am a swimmer. [covers Jessica Ennis-Hill]**
- **Clue 5: I am wearing swimming goggles [covers Rebecca Adlington – and reveals that Ellie Simmonds is the correct answer!]**
- **Slide 6:** It will come as no surprise that we are thinking today about the Olympic value of courage – and especially how Ellie Simmonds has shown this not just in her swimming career, but also in how she lives her life. So, let's find out a bit more about her.....
- **Slide 7:** Use images from this page on the slide: <https://paralympics.org.uk/athletes/ellie-simmonds>
Ellie Simmonds was born with a condition called dwarfism (its medical name is achondroplasia) and is famous for her motto "**work hard, be yourself**".
She has spoken openly about how the demands of professional sport and attitudes of people to her condition have impacted on her as an individual, but despite these challenges, she has **10 World Championship titles**, and 9 Gold, 3 Silver and 3 Bronze medals earned during 4 Paralympic Games. She has several entries in the Guinness World Records, including being the **youngest ever holder of an MBE**, a very special medal awarded by the King, or as it was when she received hers, the Queen.
She is very positive about her condition and promotes educating others about dwarfism. She also said "**We don't need to be cured. We're so happy with who we are.**" and has proved this with every challenge that she has faced, including taking part in the TV show **Strictly Come Dancing** in 2022 for the famous glitterball trophy.
- **Slide 8:** Use an image from this page on the slide: <https://paralympics.org.uk/athletes/ellie-simmonds>
Here are some more words from Ellie:
"Life is full of challenges, but it's how you overcome them that defines you."
Talk together about what you think Ellie's words mean. What challenges have you / do you face in life?
How might Ellie's words help you?
- **Slide 9:** A teacher named Paul, who also faced many challenges in his life as one of the very first Christians, wrote these words in his letter to one of the very first churches, in Rome. You can find them in the Bible in Romans chapter 3, verses 3 & 4: [**NB the Bible uses the word 'troubles' but we have used the word 'challenges' to help pupils here]*
**And we also have joy with our challenges because we know that these challenges produce patience.
And patience produces character, and character produces hope.**
I wonder what is challenging about these words?! Do you agree with what Paul says?
I wonder how these words might help Christians when they are facing challenges in life?

Slide 10: Responding and words for worship

We've been thinking today about how Ellie Simmonds handled challenges in life – and about our own challenges. As we come towards the end of our time together today, we're going to be still and quiet together.



Take a few moments now to think about any challenges that you – or people you love – are facing at the moment.

....I wonder what we can learn from the example of Ellie Simmonds or St. Paul's words?.....



...I wonder what they show us about handling challenges in life?....
....I wonder how challenges might help us to become better people?....

Slide 11: Prayer

For many people, prayer is one way in which they handle the challenges of life, and find that giving their concerns to God and asking him for help to overcome them really helps.

So now let's take a few moments to reflect or pray.... I'm going to use the we've just heard from St. Paul and turn them into a prayer asking God for his help: if you want to make the prayer your own, then please do join in with the Amen at the end.

Dear God

We know that life can be full of challenges.

When we are faced with a challenge, help us to be patient with ourselves and with others.

May our patience help us to become better people and give us hope that we will meet future challenges with greater confidence.

Slide 12: Amen.

Sending: Slide 13

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:

[Got a bit better \(AAOS\)](#)

[Resilience in me \(NBD\)](#)

Slide 14: Reflective areas



Print the **Challenge Cards** (see page 5) and leave them in your reflective area for this week.

Encourage children to talk in groups so that they collaborate on finding answers – or you could select a card to talk about as a class each day



<p>Clue 1: I am not playing with a ball. <i>[covers Will Bayley & Andy Murray]</i></p>	<p>Clue 2: I am a female athlete. <i>[covers Jonnie Peacock & Mo Farah]</i></p>	<p>Clue 3: I don't ride a bike. <i>[covers Sarah Stoney & Victoria Pendleton]</i></p>
<p>Clue 4: I am a swimmer. <i>[covers Jessica Ennis-Hill]</i></p>	<p>Clue 5: I am wearing swimming goggles <i>[covers Rebecca Adlington – and reveals that Ellie Simmonds is the correct answer!]</i></p>	

Challenge card:

Your best friend moves house and is no longer able to come to your school.

How would you try to overcome this challenge?

Challenge card:

You are finding some class work very difficult.

How would you try to overcome this challenge?

Challenge card:

You are out shopping with your family and you can't see where they are.

How would you try to overcome this challenge?

Challenge card:

You've moved to a new school and don't know anybody.

How would you try to overcome this challenge?

Challenge card:

Sports Day is coming up and you're feeling anxious.

How would you try to overcome this challenge?

Challenge card:

Your teacher tells you that you will be doing some new work next week.

How would you try to overcome this challenge?



Arrival on:



Courage



Ellie Simmonds is well-known as a British Paralympic athlete, especially since the 2012 Olympics, and for her work to support people with disabilities. She has showed great courage in her swimming races and in her personal life.



What is a 'challenge'?

What challenges have you faced or are you facing?



How can we try to overcome the challenges we face?

How can we help each other?



Take a 'Challenge' card and talk together about how you might overcome the challenge....

