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Ancient poems about ancient-Olympic athletes, written by Pindar, were known as Pindaric Odes. This image, by William Blake, illustrates a more-recent form of such a lyrical work: "The Bard. A Pindaric Ode," by Thomas Gray. Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons. Click on the image for a much-better view.

In honor of the XXX Olympiad, London's mayor - Boris Johnson - asked an Oxford professor to write an Olympic ode in ancient Greek. Hereafter is its English translation:

*This new Olympic flame behold,
that once burned bright in Greece of old;
With happy hearts receive once more
these Games revived on London's shore.*

*Praise rival teams, in sport allied,
as athletes stream from far and wide;
The poet too must take the road
conveying praise to victory owed.*

*Millions of watchers will embrace
the passion of each close-run race,
The efforts of the rowing teams
and gymnasts balancing on beams.*

*They will observe with rapt delight
the archer draw his bowstring tight,
The skillful rider guide her horse,
and lightning bolt around the course.*

*The pipes will play, the drum resound,
as medallists are daily crowned;
The crowd's hurrah will reach the skies
when victors hoist the golden prize.*

*Now welcome to this sea-girt land,
with London's Mayor and co. at hand.
Good luck to all who strive to win:
applaud, and let the Games begin!*

By Dr. Armand D'Angour
Commissioned for the 2012 London Games

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/OLYMPIC-POETRY-Ancient-Olympics>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

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OLYMPIC POETRY

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