

ANGLAIS

En vous appuyant *uniquement* sur les documents du dossier thématique qui vous est proposé, vous rédigerez une synthèse répondant à la question suivante :

To what extent are the Commonwealth Games thought to be still relevant nowadays?

Votre synthèse comportera entre 450 et 500 mots et sera précédée d'un titre. Le nombre de mots rédigés (titre inclus) devra être indiqué à la fin de votre copie.

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4. Birmingham 2022: The Queen officially launches Baton Relay at Buckingham Palace, paralympic.org
5. The future of Commonwealth countries following the death of Queen Elizabeth II, adapted from aa.com.tr

Document 1

Why the Commonwealth Games still matter

Adapted from Nicole W. Forrester, *The Conversation*, 4 April 2018

Nicole Forrester is a member of the Athletes Commission for Commonwealth Games Federation, as well as the Athlete Representative and a Board of Directors member for Commonwealth Games Canada.

There was a buzz of excitement in the air for athletes, coaches and volunteers — and for me — when the 2018 Commonwealth Games started with spectacular opening ceremonies in Gold Coast, Australia. But despite the glitzy ceremony, the shine of the Commonwealth Games appears to have dulled.

There is declining media coverage for these Games, while a cultural shift has led many to question the merit of the Commonwealth.

Considering the waning interest, why do the Commonwealth Games still exist?

The Commonwealth is rooted in its historical past of sovereign and independent states that formally made up the British Empire and its traditional trade relations between member states.

What sets the Commonwealth apart from other assembled nations is that all members share a commitment to democracy, humanity and equality. Unlike the United Nations, all countries have an equal voice, no matter their size.

The Commonwealth Games celebrate this commonality every four years. In fact, the Commonwealth Sport Movement is an extension of the Games. Through the power of sports, there is continuous engagement with communities in between the Games years, embracing and celebrating diversity while promoting sport for development. Evolving with the times, the modern Commonwealth vision is “building peaceful, sustainable and prosperous communities globally, by inspiring Commonwealth Athletes to drive the impact and ambition of all Commonwealth Citizens through sport.”

A recent study exploring positive sports diplomacy found the Commonwealth Games effectively foster co-operation and friendship among member nations and territories, successfully achieving their objective.

The Commonwealth Games have a long history that dates back as far as 1891. An English minister, Rev. Astley Cooper, proposed that a Pan-Britannic-Pan-Anglican Contest and Festival should occur every four years as a means of “increasing the goodwill and good understanding of the British Empire.”

In 1930, the first Games took place in Hamilton, Ontario, with 400 athletes from 11 countries participating. Now the Commonwealth Games include athletes from 71 nations and territories, estimated to be approximately one third of the world’s population.

The 2018 Gold Coast Games will be the most inclusive international Games in history. These Games will be the first international Games to achieve gender equality, with the same number of medal events for women and men; the first international Games to have a reconciliation action plan, respecting and celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures¹; and the largest integrated para-sport program in Commonwealth Games history.

The Games continue to exist because they are driven by shared values, offering excellence both on and off the field of play. For those reasons and more, the Commonwealth Games are still important.

¹ Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islander peoples are “Australia’s two distinct Indigenous cultural groups”. (*Encyclopædia Britannica*)

Document 2

The Commonwealth Games: searching for relevancy, a host and a reason to exist

Adapted from Andy Bull, *The Guardian*, 13 October 2021

It's nine months until the start of the XXII Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, which also means it's four years and nine months till the start of the XXIII Commonwealth Games in, well, nobody knows.

It's almost as if no one wants to publicly commit to spending millions to host Games memorably described by comedian John Oliver as "the historic display of a once-mighty nation gathering together the countries it lost and finding a way to lose to them once more".

They were supposed to be held in Hamilton, Canada, but that bid¹ faltered when it became clear the best part of \$150m (£110m) in public money was needed.

Kuala Lumpur, Cardiff, Calgary, Edmonton and Adelaide also pulled out because they were concerned about cost. All this after Durban², which was supposed to host the 2022 Games, had them taken away again because they couldn't afford them. The Games were saved by the British government, which, in a timely bit of post-Brexit boosterism, decided to spend £594m to bring the Games here. Birmingham will cover the remaining £200m-odd of costs itself.

The problem goes beyond finding a country which would do likewise in four years' time. The Commonwealth Games Federation president, Dame Louise Martin, has said herself that the Commonwealth Games have been in an existential crisis for the last decade. "The Commonwealth Sport Movement reached a challenging chapter in its existence – when the very word and purpose of the 'Commonwealth' was questioned and the negative impacts of a Games on a host community were highlighted," she said in 2018.

There is a section on the Federation's own website called "Our Relevance", which has the unintended effect of making you wonder why they feel the need to explain it. It talks about the "unique connections and friendships", the "transformative and connecting power of sport", the "enduring commitment to human rights", and "shared values" of "Humanity, Equality, and Destiny". They are known as the "Friendly Games", after all. The website doesn't mention the fact that homosexuality is currently a criminal offence in 36 of the member countries, a situation which, like the Games themselves, is in large part the legacy of British colonial rule.

Martin has already said as much and that the Games have to "move on and modernise", and this week the CGF announced a "roadmap" showing how it is going to go about it. It is a genuinely radical plan, which speaks, in itself, to the severity of the problem.

Some of these are sensible changes, long overdue for a "mega-event" that feels, these days, like it's struggling to live up to the description. Others seem like genuine desperation about the future of Games that increasingly feel as though their time has passed.

¹ A bid: an offer to do something when you are competing with other people to do it

² Durban is a city in South Africa.

Document 3

What is the point of the Commonwealth and does it really have a future?

Adapted from Victoria Crow, news.com.au, 20 April 2018

Everyone is thinking it, but no one is saying it. At the opening of the official Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in London on Thursday, there is one question that needs to be asked.

What is the point of the Commonwealth?

Yes, it's a great chance for Australia and the UK to clean up the medal count at the Commonwealth Games without any competition from the rest of the world.

But with 53 countries covering 2.4 billion people spreading from Africa to the Caribbean and Pacific, what do we really have in common and is there any point to it at all?

The London event has been seized upon by the UK as a chance to pave the way for Prince Charles' inevitable ascension to the throne. Not to mention reinvigorating a trading network post-Brexit, thus proving to the 48 per cent of the country who voted to remain in the EU that leaving won't be a total disaster.

But with the incredibly disparate range of nations the Commonwealth covers, from genuine heavyweights like India and Canada to tiny island states like Tuvalu and Nauru, with hugely divergent views on everything from gay marriage to trade — does such a club based on nothing more than a shared colonial past really have a common vision for the future?

Critics question the relevance of the organisation in an era when many nations are considering whether they want to become republics. Some claim the vision is too wide-ranging to be really effective, while Afua Hirsch in *The Guardian* asked whether it's really just a second incarnation of the British Empire.

Comments from diving champion Tom Daley following his Gold Coast win highlighted disparate views after he pointed out "37 of the competing nations criminalise being LGBT+".

"I feel so lucky to be able to be openly who I am without worry. I hope one day every athlete from every nation in the Commonwealth will be free to compete openly as who they are too," he said.

At the opening of the summit, UK Prime Minister Theresa May highlighted a wish list for co-operation including everything from free trade to cyber security, preservation of the rules-based order, democracy and climate issues, neatly aligned with the UK's foreign policy priorities.

Perhaps most successful have been environmental initiatives, which directly impact many of the Oceanic member states. The UK has used the event to launch a ban on plastic drinking straws and a Queen's canopy of rainforests covering nations around the world.

At what many think could be the Queen's last CHOGM, the biggest clue as to her vision lies in her "sincere wish" that Prince Charles succeeds her.

Whether the organisation founded in 1949 still exists in another 70 years could entirely depend on him.

Document 4



Birmingham 2022: The Queen officially launches Baton Relay¹ at Buckingham Palace
paralympic.org/news/, 8 October 2021

Dame Louise Martin; His Royal Highness Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex; and four-time Paralympic gold medallist Kadeena Cox receiving the Baton from Her Majesty the Queen in the ceremony at Buckingham Palace. Photograph by Alastair Grant

¹"The Queen's Baton Relay is a tradition that celebrates, connects and excites communities from across the Commonwealth during the build up to the Games. The Queen's Baton will now visit all 72 nations and territories of the Commonwealth for 294 days, covering 140,000 kilometres. The global journey will conclude at the Opening Ceremony of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games on 28 July 2022." (<https://www.birmingham2022.com/>)

