

# Gambling go-round

## SPECIFIC OUTCOMES

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Investigate the effectiveness of various decision-making strategies

Analyze factors that affect the planning and attaining of goals

- learn the definition of gambling and activities that involve gambling
- distinguish between social and problem gambling
- gain awareness of the term "odds of winning"
- recognize that winning and losing are random in gambling activities

## CONTENT AND TIME (45-MINUTE LESSON)

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3.1 Opening activity: A glance at gambling (10 minutes)

3.2 Competition vs. cooperation (20 minutes)

3.3 What are the odds? (10 minutes)

3.4 Review: Going over gambling (5 minutes)

## REQUIRED MATERIALS

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HANDOUT 3.1: A Glance at gambling

HANDOUT 3.2: Competition vs. cooperation

Prize items for activity 3.2: Competition vs. cooperation  
(pencils, free time or any reward that you feel appropriate)

One nickel for each student

Large sentence strips (for the class bulletin board)

Notebooks



### 3.1 Opening activity: A glance at gambling

(10 minutes)

Show the definition of gambling at the top of HANDOUT 3.1: A Glance at Gambling. Have the students record this definition in their notebooks:

Gambling is risking money or something of value on an activity with an uncertain outcome. Betting, making a wager and taking a dare are all examples of gambling.

Ask the students to give examples of gambling. They will probably have ideas such as: casinos, video lottery terminals (VLTs) and bingo halls. Remind the class that gambling is any risk-taking behaviour that involves betting, wagering or daring, which involves an exchange of money or something of value. Show the bottom of HANDOUT 3.1 and discuss the examples of gambling listed, which are as follows:

- Playing casinos
- Purchasing fundraising, instant win or lotto tickets
- Wagering on the outcome of a sport
- Playing card, board or video games with family and friends for money or personal belongings
- Playing video lottery terminals (VLTs)
- Online gambling/gaming (for money, virtual coins or credits)
- Daring someone to do something for money or personal belongings
- Betting on a skill competition (such as darts, shooting hoops or running)
- Playing for keeps
- Flipping a coin to determine an outcome
- Playing bingo

### 3.2 Competition vs. cooperation (20 minutes)

People mainly gamble with friends because they enjoy the activity, the interaction with others and the challenge. For most people, gambling is a social activity; winning or losing money or something of value is not the primary goal. For some, however, gambling turns into a serious problem.

These individuals become preoccupied with gambling, which can be just as powerful as an addiction to drugs. Bets, wagers and dares become much more significant and frequent.



The following are signs that an individual may have a gambling problem:

- Experiencing a “rush,” which reinforces continued gambling
- Focusing primarily on winning
- Extending the time and money spent on gambling
- Increasing gambling activities to win back lost money or personal belongings
- Hiding gambling activities from family and friends
- Lying about gambling losses
- Feeling depressed about the outcome of gambling activities
- Wanting to stop, but feeling unable to do so

This activity is designed to raise awareness about the shift from social to problem gambling. To understand this concept more fully, the students will explore the difference between healthy and unhealthy competition, which serves as a good comparison.

Divide the class into groups of four. Explain that this activity involves each group competing against the others to unscramble a mystery word. The mystery words are different, but all of them relate to the meaning of the word competition. The first group to complete this challenge will be given a prize.

Cut out the scrambled words from the top left portion of HANDOUT 3.2: Competition vs. cooperation. Distribute one word to each group face down. When you say go, the members of each group will turn over their mystery word and begin to unscramble the letters. If they complete this task, they are to write the unscrambled word on their slip of paper, remain seated and raise their hands as a group. When one group has finished, allow the rest of the groups another minute to see if they can unscramble their words. Award a prize to the winning group. Reveal the unscrambled words to the class.

Discuss this activity with the class, using the following questions and responses as a guideline:

Describe some of the feelings you experienced and explain why

- I was excited about competing against other teams
- I wanted to win
- I enjoyed the challenge of working quickly
- I felt pressure to help my group
- I was frustrated because we weren't fast enough
- I had fun even though we didn't win

Explain any aspects of this activity that you thought were unfair

- Some groups had easier words than others
- Everyone made a good effort but only one group won
- My group figured out the word but it was too late
- My group members weren't working together

Define the word competition

- When two people race
- When two teams play against each other
- A game where someone wins and someone loses
- A challenge to win against another person or team

The next part of this activity involves the same groups of students unscrambling words about cooperation; however, this time you will give the class a five-minute time limit. Regardless of which group finishes first, everyone will receive a prize if one of the mystery words is solved. When a group unscrambles a word, the members of that group are to wait patiently, while one representative records the word on the board. The activity will continue for five minutes, even if one group has completed the task. Should other groups unscramble their mystery words, they too can record the answers on the board. Cut out and distribute the scrambled words from the bottom left portion of HANDOUT 3.2. After five minutes, reveal the answers and discuss the following questions with the class:

What was enjoyable about this activity?

- I liked working together as a group
- It wasn't as stressful because we didn't have to be first
- I wasn't worried about losing
- I was glad that everyone was a winner
- I enjoyed the challenge of unscrambling the words

What were some similarities and differences between the competitive and cooperative word scrambles?

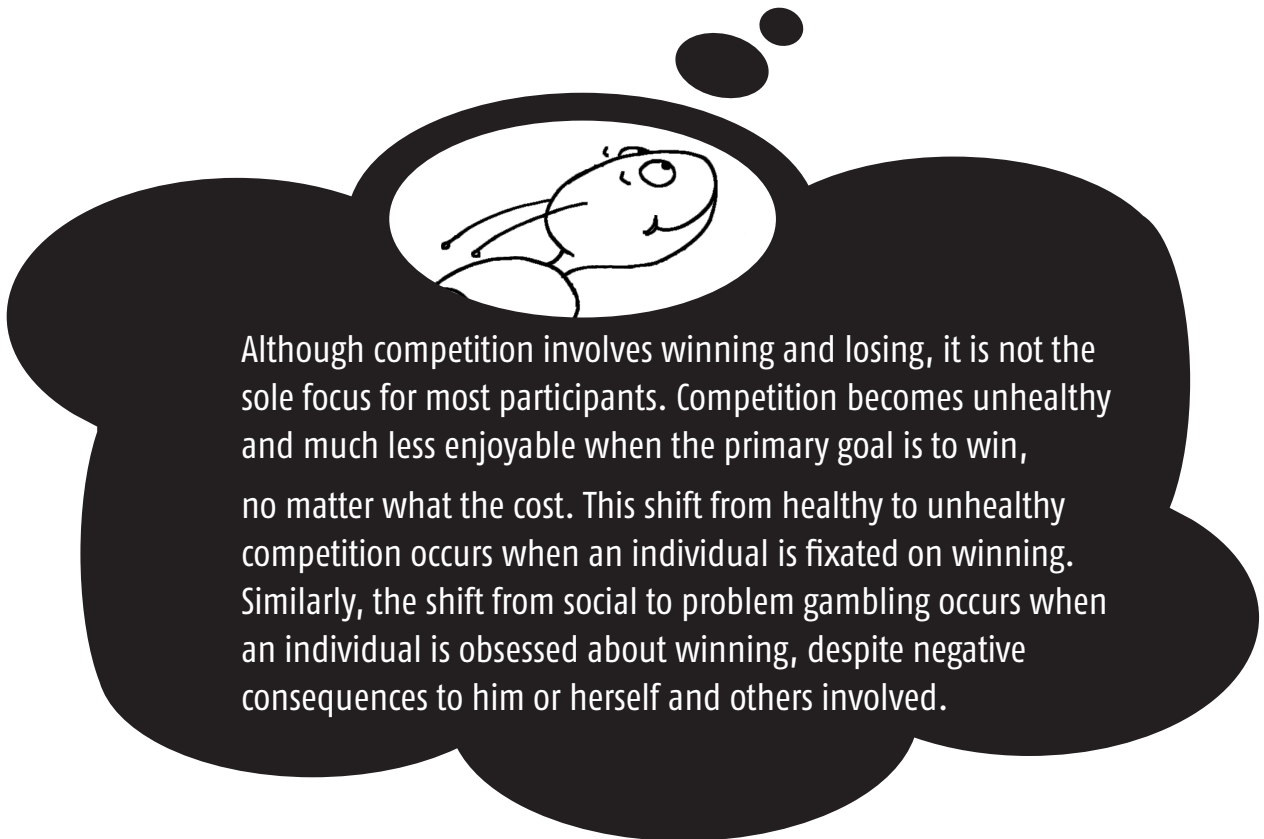
### **Similarities**

- We worked better when we worked together
- We had a time limit
- There was a prize for both games
- Some words were easier than others in both games

### **Differences**

- There was only one winner in the first game
- We were more stressed to win the first game
- We had more time for the second game
- In the first game we worked against other groups and in the second game we worked with other groups

Explain to the students that unlike competition, cooperation rarely involves winning and losing. Cooperation is working together to achieve a common goal. When we think about competition, we assume that somebody wins and somebody loses; however, most competition also involves cooperation of some sort. When you play team sports, your team will be much more successful if everyone works together, rather than against each other. At the end of a game, you show support for the other team members by cheering for them or shaking their hands, whether you have won or lost. Sportsmanship is also expected during individual competitions. Wishing your opponents good luck and congratulating them for doing well are examples of cooperation, which promote an enjoyable experience for all participants.



Although competition involves winning and losing, it is not the sole focus for most participants. Competition becomes unhealthy and much less enjoyable when the primary goal is to win, no matter what the cost. This shift from healthy to unhealthy competition occurs when an individual is fixated on winning. Similarly, the shift from social to problem gambling occurs when an individual is obsessed about winning, despite negative consequences to him or herself and others involved.

### 3.3 What are the odds?

(10 minutes)

Ask the students to imagine flipping a coin to make a decision. If you call heads, what are the chances that the coin will land heads up? In order to answer this question, have the students predict how many times a coin will land heads up out of 20 flips. Record some predictions on the board and multiply each number by five. Because the predictions are out of 20, multiplying by five determines the numbers out of 100; and as a result, you can figure out percentages.

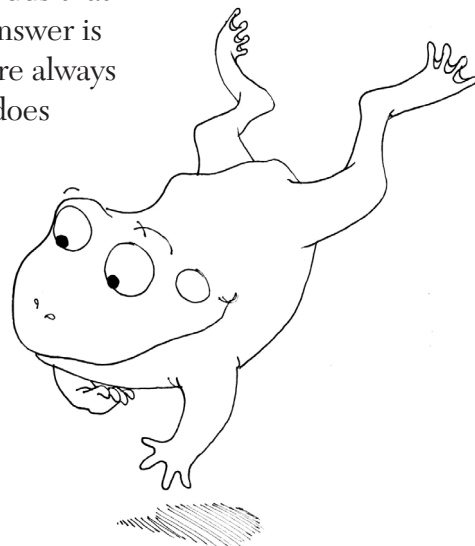
Example	6	12	9	17	15
	$\frac{\times 5}{30\%}$	$\frac{\times 5}{60\%}$	$\frac{\times 5}{45\%}$	$\frac{\times 5}{85\%}$	$\frac{\times 5}{75\%}$

Explain that the term “odds of winning” is used to describe the chances of winning a gambling activity. The above percentages represent the predicted odds of winning.

Next, distribute a coin to all students and have them flip it 20 times, keeping track of the number of times it lands heads up. When everyone has finished, record some of the results on the board. Randomly, add up five numbers to determine a percentage. Add up other sets of five numbers to determine more percentages. Explain that the odds of winning are reflected more accurately when a large number of tests have been considered.

Example:  $12 + 8 + 7 + 14 + 11 = 52\%$   
 $16 + 9 + 13 + 6 + 10 = 54\%$   
 $11 + 15 + 8 + 9 + 12 = 55\%$

Ask the students to consider flipping a coin 19 times and every time it lands heads up. What are the odds that it will land heads up on the 20th flip? The answer is 50%. The odds of a coin landing heads up are always 50%, regardless of previous flips. The coin does not remember how it landed, nor can it fall in patterns of good or bad luck. It is completely random, with a 50% chance each time.





Flipping a coin is just one example of gambling. Different gambling activities have different odds of winning. But regardless of the odds, winning and losing are completely random. Many people believe that they are “on a roll” or that their “luck has run out.” This is not logical thinking because past gambling results do not influence future outcomes. Winning and losing are always random events.

### 3.4 Review: Going over gambling

(5 minutes)

As a large group, have the students briefly summarize the concepts learned in lesson three. Ask volunteers to define or give examples of the following terms:

- Gambling
- Unhealthy competition
- Problem gambling
- Odds of winning

Have some students write one example of each term on a sentence card and add this information to the class bulletin board. Check the class envelope and respond to any questions asked.



# A Glance at gambling

Gambling is risking money or something of value on an activity with an uncertain outcome. Betting, making a wager and taking a dare are all examples of gambling.

Gambling includes:

- Playing casinos
- Purchasing fundraising, instant win or lotto tickets
- Wagering on the outcome of a sport
- Playing card, board or video games with family and friends for money or personal belongings
- Playing video lottery terminals (VLTs)
- Online gambling/gaming (for money, virtual coins or credits)
- Daring someone to do something for money or personal belongings
- Betting on a skill competition (such as darts, shooting hoops or running)
- Playing for keeps
- Flipping a coin to determine an outcome
- Playing bingo



# Competition vs. cooperation

## Words about competition:

ttneemxice  
nwiignn  
golish  
gelcelnah  
agem  
serpruse  
rezip  
manhopci

excitement  
winning  
losing  
challenge  
game  
pressure  
prize  
champion

## Words about cooperation:

oniaritpacpit  
tefro  
potsnimarpssh  
roettgeh  
emat  
perspinrath  
teneyojmn

participation  
effort  
sportsmanship  
together  
team  
partnership  
enjoyment

