

Drawing the Line



*A Resource for
the Prevention
of Problem
Gambling*



**Volume I
Junior High**

**Curriculum Supplement for Personal
Development and Relationships (PDR)**


NOVA SCOTIA

Department of Health
Problem Gambling Services, Drug Dependency
Department of Education and Culture



Drawing the Line

A Resource for the Prevention of Problem Gambling

Volume I. Junior High
Curriculum Supplements

For use with the Nova Scotia Junior High School course
Personal Development and Relationships (PDR), Grades 7-9

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Junior High

Drawing The Line

Introduction	vii
Grade 7. Life Is a Gamble	1
Lesson Overview	2
7.1 The Lighthouse Game	3
7.2 Everyday Risks	11
7.3 Weighing the Consequences	17
7.4 The Limit Line	23
7.5 Make or Break	29
Grade 8. Be a Winner	37
Lesson Overview	39
8.1 Sign of the Times	41
8.2 Feel Like a Winner—Big Time	51
8.3 Opinion Continuum	59
8.4 The Rise and Fall	67
8.5 Scam Buster	73
Grade 9. When Gambling Becomes a Problem	81
Lesson Overview	83
9.1 Young Gamblers	85
9.2 Winning Streak	89
9.3 You Lose!	99
9.4 Stories	111
9.5 Where Lies the Risk?	125



Appendix

InfoSheets	129
A. Historical Notes	129
B. Gambling in Nova Scotia	135
C. Legalized Gambling: Pros and Cons	139
D. Changing Values	141
E. The Odds	145
F. Why Some People Gamble Too Much	149
G. Stages of Problem Gambling	153
H. Gambling as an Addiction	157
I. The Effect of Problem Gambling on the Family	159
J. Men and Women Gamblers	161
K. Three Famous Gamblers	163
L. The Lottery	167
M. Video Gambling Machines	171
N. Casinos	175
Glossary	181
Resources	185

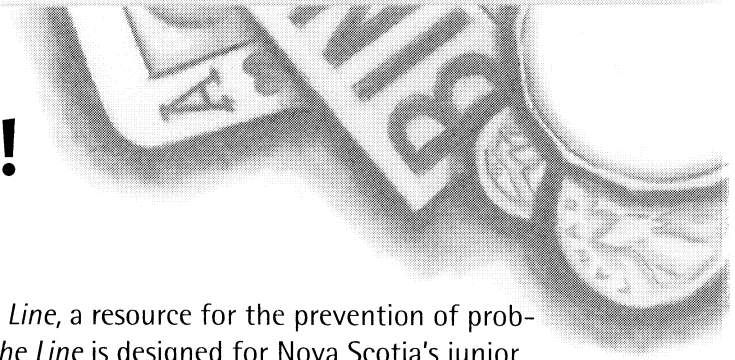
Note: overhead transparencies are located in the back-cover sleeve.

Introduction

Welcome!	vii
Is Gambling Really a Problem for Nova Scotia Students?	vii
Why Are So Many Young People Attracted to Gambling?	viii
When Is Gambling a Problem?	ix
Teens at Risk	ix
The Costs	x
The Goal of this Supplement	x
Approach	x
Method	xi
What Makes This Supplement Teacher Friendly	xi
How to Use This Supplement	xi
Looking Ahead: The Senior High Supplements	xii
Sample Letter to Parents	xiv
A Few Facts	xv



Welcome!



Welcome to *Drawing the Line*, a resource for the prevention of problem gambling. *Drawing the Line* is designed for Nova Scotia's junior and senior high school students. This volume supplements the Personal Development and Relationships (PDR) curriculum, grades 7–9. Volume II supplements Career and Life Management (CALM), Math 231/432, and Economics 331 courses at the senior high school level.

Drawing the Line was developed by Drug Dependency, Problem Gambling Services, of the Nova Scotia Department of Health, in consultation with the Department of Education and Culture. It was first distributed to Nova Scotia schools in the fall of 1997 after being focus tested and then pilot tested by teachers in a mix of rural and urban schools.

Is gambling really a problem for Nova Scotia students?

With all of the difficult issues facing today's young people, you may be asking yourself where gambling ranks on your list of relevant topics.

It is true that for most people gambling is an innocent pastime. Buying a lottery ticket on the way home from work, spending Saturday evening at the bingo hall, playing cards for money with a few friends—these are usually harmless forms of entertainment. The money gambled might be equivalent to the money spent on a night out at the movies, or a magazine. In this case the entertainment “bought” is the chance of winning, and perhaps the fun of sharing that risk with friends. This is called social gambling.

Surveys have shown that most Nova Scotians are social gamblers. However, a 1993 survey revealed a disturbing trend. Close to 5 percent of the adult population showed signs of problem gambling. And almost 12 percent of adolescents showed these signs.¹

These findings are consistent with larger national and international trends. With the explosion of legalized gambling in our society, problem gambling is a growing concern, and adolescents are at least *twice as likely* to get into trouble with gambling as adults.²

Today's youth are relatively well informed about the risks of smoking, using drugs, and experimenting with sex. But many have yet to see that gambling has its own risks. They may not even realize that they do gamble. Placing a bet on a hockey game, pitching pennies against the wall, buying a lottery ticket—how many teens think of these as gambling? And how many would be able to recognize that they had slipped over the line from social to problem gambling?



Everywhere we turn, we see promises of the big win, the instant jackpot. As adults we are placing our bets in record numbers. In 1995, Nova Scotians wagered a total of \$760 million on video lottery terminals (VLTs), lottery tickets, bingo, casino games, horse races, and raffles.³ In terms of sales, gambling is as large an industry as farming and fishing—combined.⁴ Increasingly, governments depend on gambling as a source of revenue. The present generation of young people is the first to grow up in a culture where gambling is not only legal and accepted but openly promoted.

In this social climate, it is only fair that students be shown the other, less glamorous side of gambling—that the odds cannot be beaten, and that the lure of gambling can become so consuming that it can overtake and devastate a person's life.

Why are so many young people attracted to gambling?

Everyone loves to play a good game, and betting on the outcome heightens the risk and therefore the excitement. Risk taking is especially attractive to teens, who are eager to test themselves against their peers and their world.

Gambling also offers the promise of the quick win, which appeals to a developing ego in search of a successful identity. It feels good to win. Losses can be ignored or explained away, but the wins can be paraded for all to see. Social values equate winning with popularity, respect, and happiness. Teens are especially vulnerable to the message that they could prove their self-worth through games of chance and skill.

In the media, ads encourage us to believe that money and material wealth will solve our problems and that being “lucky” is a shortcut to our dreams of wealth, success, and power. Because gambling is restricted by law to adults, it is especially appealing as an illicit rite of passage. And because legalized gambling is a relatively new phenomenon, many parents are still unaware that gambling can lead to problems, including addiction. Adults often unwittingly condone or even encourage social gambling among children and teens.



When is gambling a problem?

Gambling becomes a problem when a person continues to gamble in spite of negative consequences. Problem gamblers bet more than they can afford to lose, and they spend more and more time playing because they

- hope they can win in the end
- get hooked on the "action"—the high, the risk, the absorption
- use gambling to forget about their problems
- keep trying to win back the money they lost

For a small but significant number of teens, gambling becomes an addiction that is just as powerful and destructive as drug addiction. The bets get bigger, in the same way that someone who is becoming dependent on heroin keeps increasing the size of the dose. The gambler loses control and becomes hooked on being "in action." Many addicted gamblers will do anything to keep playing—use up savings, borrow money, sell valuables, steal, or commit other crimes. He or she often becomes secretive, distant, and moody, while ignoring and deceiving family and friends. The highs and lows become more and more extreme until a stage of desperation is reached.

Teens at risk

Problem gamblers can be male or female, and they can come from any social background. Young people may be at risk if they have

- parents who gamble or who have substance abuse problems
- low self-esteem; a hunger for peer acceptance
- a drive to achieve, compete, and succeed; low tolerance for mistakes and failures
- poor problem-solving and coping skills
- illusions about the odds of winning



The costs

The consequences of problem gambling can range from temporary overspending and preoccupation to psychological, social, and financial devastation.

Typically, problem gambling leads to denial, lying, and other forms of deception, which undermine integrity, self-respect, and trust in relationships. The mood swings of problem gambling can produce depression and self-destructive states. Financially, problem gambling can quickly become disastrous, as debts mount and the gambler resorts to increasingly desperate ways of getting more money to try and pay back loans and keep gambling.

As problem gambling progresses, it replaces other interests. Relationships, school work, and the developmental process of adolescence all suffer. Problem gambling, like other addictions, becomes an "easy exit" from the challenges of adolescence, such as learning to deal with difficult feelings and frustrations, living with uncertainty, building self-identity, exploring career options and interests, and handling relationship ups and downs. All of these challenges are reduced to a singular focus: gambling.

The goal of this supplement

This supplement helps students recognize the line between responsible and harmful risk taking, and between social and problem gambling. It increases awareness of the psychological and social influences that surround attitudes and decision making with respect to gambling. It helps students develop the knowledge and skills they will need in order to draw the line when confronted with opportunities to gamble. Problem gambling prevention is one aspect of the larger goal of helping students to achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle, both now and in their adult years.

Approach

The field of problem gambling prevention is relatively new, and current theory remains largely untested. This supplement therefore takes a broad approach that incorporates elements from substance abuse prevention and acknowledges that young people may become problem gamblers for many different psychological and social reasons.

In its scope, this supplement assumes that a context of substance abuse prevention is already being presented in the PDR curriculum,



through such supplements as *Making a Difference* and *Smoke-Free for Life*. Because of this, general topics and skills such as decision making, problem solving, communication, resistance to peer pressure, and self-esteem are not duplicated here, except as they apply specifically to risk taking and problem gambling.

Method

The lessons in this supplement

- supply students with the information they need to form their own values and make their own responsible choices
- help students identify the personal and social influences that could predispose them to problem gambling
- encourage maximum student participation, through games, class discussions, and small-group exercises
- present tasks that require higher-order skills, such as problem solving, decision making, analyzing, valuing, and communicating

What makes this supplement teacher friendly

- It is tied closely to the provincial PDR curriculum.
- Lessons require minimum preparation time. Detailed, easy-to-follow lesson plans include masters for handouts and transparencies.
- Ample background information at every grade level prepares you to lead directed or open-ended discussions.
- Ideas for extension activities invite you to continue the learning across the curriculum.

How to use this supplement

- Use the Lesson Summary at the beginning of each grade to decide where the lessons fit within your teaching schedule. Note that the primary focus for Grade 7 is self-awareness and decision making, for Grade 8 is consumer awareness and decision making, and for Grade 9 is substance abuse prevention (although gambling is a behaviour, not a substance, many of the same prevention principles apply).



- Five lessons are suggested for each grade. Choose those that are best suited to your class.
- Teach the lessons as is, or use them as a springboard for your own ideas.

Looking ahead: The senior high supplements

The senior high component of *Drawing the Line* is cross-curricular rather than sequential, comprising supplements for Career and Life Management (CALM), Math, and Economics courses.

Career and Life Management

The CALM supplement encourages students to look at their own experience when asking the question, How does gambling become a problem? Gambling is then examined within the larger context of addictions. Topics include self-esteem, childhood experiences, and coping styles; effect on friends and family; and community resources. Finally, students are encouraged to critically examine their social environment with respect to gambling, and to assess how prevailing attitudes, customs, and laws influence their own behaviour and values.

Math 231 and 432

In the Math supplement, students calculate the odds of winning for three commercial gambling games: roulette, video gambling machines, and the lottery. Through probability exercises, anecdotes, and simulations, students see that, in the long run, losing is inevitable. They also examine the irrational thinking that denies or ignores the real odds, and that assumes more personal skill or control is involved than is actually the case.

Economics 331

The Economics supplement approaches gambling as a case study. Students see that legalized gambling is one of the largest and fastest growing tertiary industries in Nova Scotia. They analyze this trend in terms of historical factors, social forces, and the role of government. They list and compare costs and benefits in order to assess social and economic impact. They also critically examine current issues and predict



possible trends for the future. Through these exercises, students are better prepared to participate as informed consumers and decision makers in a society where gambling is both a leading form of entertainment and an important source of government revenue.

Notes

1. Omnifacts Research Ltd., *An Examination of the Prevalence of Gambling in Nova Scotia* (May 1993); Baseline Market Research, *Final Report: 1996 Prevalence Study on Problem Gambling in Nova Scotia*. In the 1993 survey, 93 percent of the adult sample (n=1110) showed no signs of problem gambling; in the 1996 survey 96 percent of the sample (n=801) showed no signs. Both surveys found that about 5 percent of the adults were "possible problem or pathological gamblers," based on their responses to a series of questions widely used to measure the prevalence of problem gambling (the South Oaks Gambling Screen). In the 1993 study, 11.7 of the adolescents surveyed showed signs of problems (of these, 3 percent showed signs of pathological gambling); adolescents were not included in the 1996 Baseline study. In a 1996 survey of student drug use in Nova Scotia (n=3857), 2.6 percent of Grade 7–12 students reported gambling-related problems such as "arguments with family and friends, or problems at school or work." This survey was much less comprehensive than the 1993 screen, which used a random sample (i.e., not just school-based) and questions that did not rely on the students' own perception of having a gambling "problem." See *Nova Scotia Student Drug Use 1996: Technical Report*, published by Drug Dependency, N.S. Department of Health, and Dalhousie University.
2. For example, a report on the North American Symposium on Youth Gambling, sponsored by the Harvard Medical School in 1995, stated that 9.9 to 14.2 percent of adolescents in Canada and the United States have symptoms of problem gambling, which is approximately twice the incidence among adults.
3. Nova Scotia Gaming Control Commission, *A Year in Review: Gaming in Nova Scotia*. First Annual Report, 1995/96, 17.
4. *Ibid.*, Appendix A, 5.

Dear Parents:

This term, problem gambling will be included in our list of PDR topics. The Department of Health, in cooperation with the Department of Education and Culture, has developed a curriculum supplement called *Drawing the Line*. The goal of this supplement is to help students recognize the line between responsible and harmful risk taking, and between social and problem gambling.

The lesson activities in *Drawing the Line* help students become more aware of the psychological and social influences that surround their attitudes with respect to gambling. They also help students develop the knowledge and skills they will need in order to draw the line when confronted with opportunities to gamble.

If you would like to know more about the curriculum or if you have any questions, do not hesitate to phone me at _____.

If you or someone you know has questions about problem gambling, or would like to speak to a trained counsellor, call the province's toll-free Problem Gambling Help Line: 1-888-347-8888.

Sincerely,



A Few Facts

Nova Scotian adults who...

- have gambled for money some time in their lives: 96%
- buy a Lotto 6/49 ticket at least once a year: 73%
- buy lottery tickets every week: 34%
- play bingo at least once a year: 14%
- play bingo every week: 3%
- play the slot machines at a casino at least once a year: 29%
- play VLTs in a bar at least once a year: 21%
- bet on a horse race at least once a year: 2%
- gamble on high-risk stocks at least once a year: 12%
- think that gambling is as big a problem as alcohol or drug abuse: 51%
- show signs of problem gambling: 5%

Nova Scotian adolescents (11–19 years) who...

- have gambled for money some time in their life: 68%
- gamble at least once a month: 32%
- buy lottery tickets (other than Sports Select) at least once a month: 15%
- play cards for money at least once a month: 14%
- play Sport Select at least once a month: 9%
- play bingo at least once a month: 8%
- have played VLTs in the past year: 20%
- play VLTs at least once a month: 6%
- say they want to stop gambling but can't: 2%
- show signs of problem gambling (13–17 years, 1993): 12%

Sources: Omnifacts Research, *An Examination of the Prevalence of Gambling in Nova Scotia*, May 1993 and *A Study of Gambling in Nova Scotia*, June 1996; Baseline Market Research, *1996 Prevalence Study on Problem Gambling in Nova Scotia*; N.S. Dept. of Health and Dalhousie University, *Nova Scotia Student Drug Use 1996*.

Grade 7

Life Is a Gamble



Introduction	1
Lesson Overview	2
7.1 The Lighthouse Game	3
7.2 Everyday Risks	11
7.3 Weighing the Consequences	17
7.4 The Limit Line	23
7.5 Make or Break	29



Grade 7

Life is a Gamble

We are quick to associate risk taking with the teenage years, but in fact we all take risks, many times each day. Every time we make a decision, trust someone, or cross the street we are taking a risk. Try to imagine a life without risks. It would be a life of stagnation, wrapped in a cocoon of fear and hesitation.

Adolescence is a time of breaking out of the security of childhood; of growing, re-forming and reaching for a new identity; of testing a larger world. All of this naturally involves risk. One of the greatest challenges of adolescence is to know, situation by situation, how to meet risks in a way that is neither cowardly nor self-destructive. The young teen needs to develop a sense of when to rise to a challenge, when to draw the line, how to draw it, and how to hold to it in the face of social pressures.

The goal of this unit is to help students recognize and apply the principles and skills of responsible risk taking. Gambling is presented within a larger context of "everyday risks." Students discern between positive (growth-oriented) and negative (self-defeating) risk taking. Using various scenarios, they weigh consequences and set limits. They explore the relationship between risk taking and self-esteem. They see how, in competitive games involving risk, they can be swept away by excitement and the momentum of peer influence. The Grade 7 unit provides a foundation for the later grades, which focus more explicitly on problem gambling.

The topic of risk intersects with key PDR concepts, such as self-awareness, decision making, and problem solving. The Grade 7 lessons raise questions and pose challenges that will be of relevance to students throughout their teenage years and into adulthood.

Before You Start

- Let parents know that you will be teaching lessons from *Drawing the Line*. Use the sample letter on p. xiv, or write a letter of your own.
- Browse through the InfoSheets at the back of this book.
- Decide which lessons you will teach. The Lesson Overview on the following page shows where each lesson fits into the PDR curriculum. This unit can be taught within Unit II, Self-Awareness and Acceptance, under the topics of self and decision making.



Grade 7 Lesson Overview

SUMMARY

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be able to...

CURRICULUM

TIE-IN (PDR)

7.1 The Lighthouse Game

Students play a game that stimulates discussion on the topic of risk.

- identify positive and negative reasons for taking risks
- record examples of "everyday risks"

Unit II-C,
Decision Making
Unit II-A,
Self-Concept

7.2 Everyday Risks

Students brainstorm examples of physical, financial, social, and emotional risks.

- compile and classify examples of everyday risks
- reflect on their own risk-taking experiences and style

Unit II-C,
Decision Making
Unit II-A,
Self-Awareness

7.3 Weighing the Consequences

Using four different scenarios, students practice "weighing" consequences in order to decide whether risks are "worth it."

- identify the potential positive and negative consequences of taking emotional, financial, and social risks
- assess when someone should take a risk

Unit II-C, Decision
Making: Values,
Influences

7.4 The Limit Line

Students practice setting limits and reflect on their own risk-taking style.

- suggest reasons why some people gamble too much
- indicate their risk limit in given situations
- summarize their risk-taking tendencies and strategies

Unit II-C,
Decision Making:
Values

7.5 Make or Break

A game illustrates how peer participation influences risk taking.

- describe how teammates influenced their risk taking tendencies and strategies
- apply this experience to other examples of risk taking, particularly gambling
- recall a personal example of peer influence related to risk taking

Unit II-C,
Decision Making:
Influence of
Others



The Lighthouse Game

7.1

Summary

A game stimulates discussion on the topic of risk.

Students will be able to...

- identify positive and negative reasons for taking risks
- record examples of "everyday risks"

Curriculum Tie-in (PDR)

Unit II-C, Decision Making; Unit II-A, Self-Concept

Time

40 min.

Preparation

Bring to class three dice.

Use the colour transparency of "The Lighthouse Game" (see p. 6), located in the back-cover sleeve.

Make transparency – "Why Take the Risk?" p. 7.

Copy "Climbers Know Risks: Why Do They Do It?" p. 8, and "Think About It," p. 9 – one for each group (optional).

Method

Class Activity
20 min.

Introduce the game: You live in a small town near the sea. Not far away, a lighthouse stands at the top of a high bluff, overlooking a narrow channel. You are the lighthouse keeper. An oil tanker is expected to pass through the channel at 10:15 tonight, on its way up the coast to Halifax. At 9:00 p.m., you discover that the lighthouse lamp is not working. You must repair it as quickly as possible, or possibly be held responsible for a terrible disaster. You jump in your truck and drive to the bottom of the bluff. From there, you have to make your way to the lighthouse on foot. You have three choices for how to get there:

Route 1

Follow the footpath, which is well maintained but long and winding.

Route 2

Climb the old, broken-down staircase which goes straight up the side of the bluff. This seems like a quicker route, but it's been a while since anyone used these stairs, and you suspect that whole sections might be rotten.



Route 3

Follow an abandoned mine shaft into the side of the bluff. At the end of the shaft, a ladder leads straight up through an opening and into a shack near the lighthouse. If everything goes well, this is the quickest route. The mine shaft is probably safe, but you have no way of knowing whether the ladder is still in one piece.

The object is to reach the lighthouse as quickly as possible.

Divide the class into three groups, and assign each group with the route they will follow. Give one die to each group. One person in each group takes a turn rolling the die.

Use the "Lighthouse" transparency as a game board. A penny or button can mark the progress of the groups as they advance towards the lighthouse. Every time a group lands on a hazard (shown as a bomb), it is set back two spaces. After each turn, the die is passed to the next person. The game continues until all three groups have reached the lighthouse.

Variation: If time allows, play the game more than once, giving students a chance to try different "routes," or to choose their own route.

Class Discussion
20 min.

- Did you enjoy this game? Why or why not?
- Which route was the biggest gamble? (shortest route) Why? (biggest element of chance; could arrive quickly *or* not get there at all)
- Which route would you have followed if you had the choice?
- Can you think of other situations that involve this same kind of choice—between a shortcut with high risk and a longer route that is safer? (e.g., taking the initiative to meet someone new rather than waiting for a chance encounter, investing in a savings account versus investing in high-risk stocks, canoeing across a windy lake instead of following the shore, taking steroids to gain a competitive edge, leaving school to pursue a promising job opportunity, spending money on the lottery and other types of gambling)
- Why do people take risks? Why are some people "risk takers"?
- *Use the "Why Take the Risk?" transparency to lead a brainstorming session. What are some positive reasons for taking risks? (e.g., courage, confidence, ambition, high ideals) What are negative reasons? (e.g., boredom, lack of awareness of consequences, limited personal vision, and poor self-esteem, which leads to not caring*



about potential harm to oneself or others) Note that some personality types also seem to be more attracted to the danger and thrill of extreme risk taking than others.

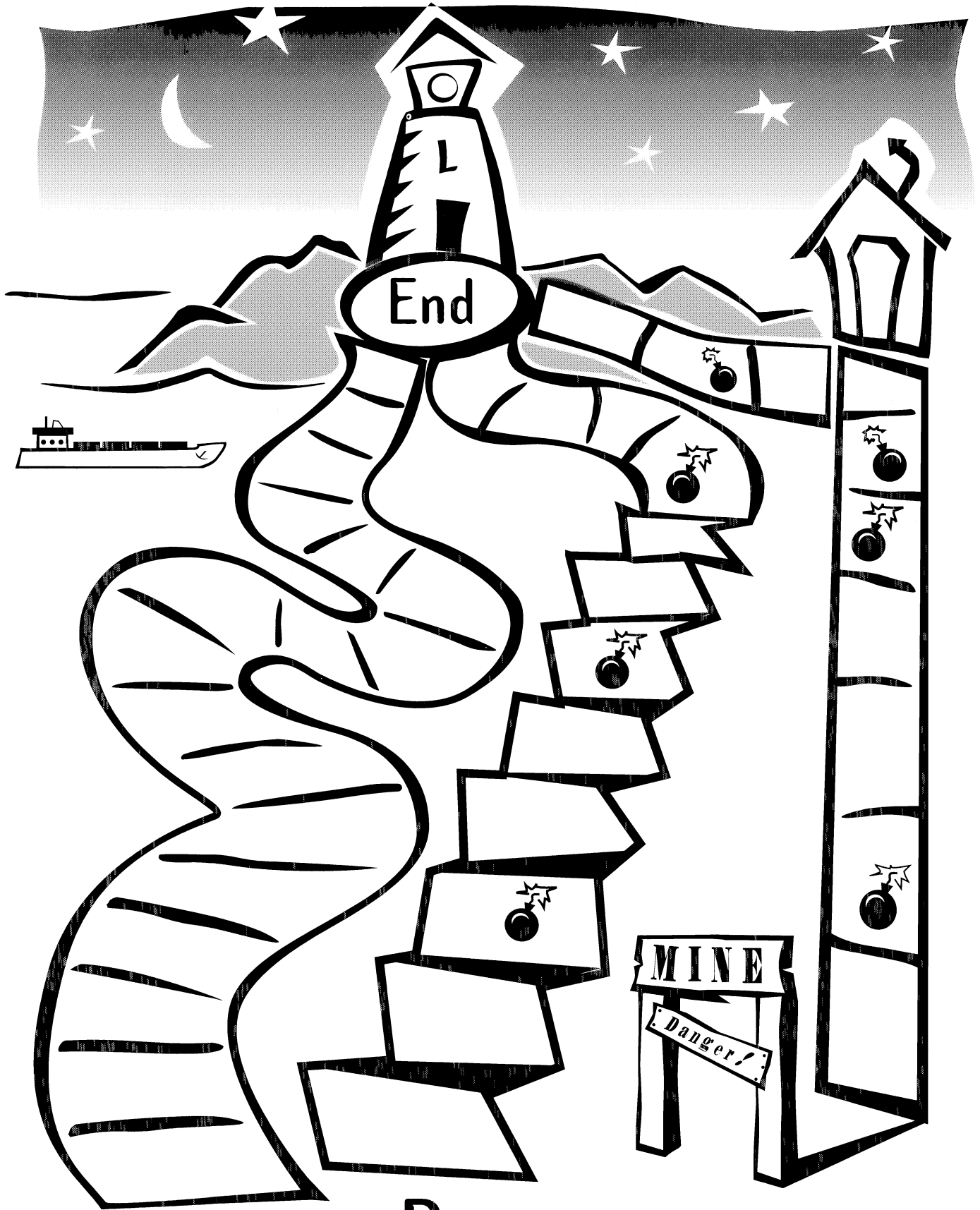
- How do you know when a risk is positive and when it is negative?
- What would a life without risk be like?
- What are some examples of "everyday risks"? (e.g., talking to someone you don't know very well, wearing something a little different than usual, getting a haircut, pushing a rule or a limit, speaking in front of the class, trying out for a team)

Homework

Students notice (and jot down) any risks, large or small, they take between now and the next class.

Variation/Enrichment

Use the newspaper article "Climbers Know Risks: Why Do They Do It?" p. 8, to introduce or further explore the topic of risk. In small groups, students read then discuss the article, answering the questions on p. 9.



Begin

Why Take the Risk?

Positive Reasons

Negative Reasons

Climbers know risks: Why do they do it?

The eight men and women who died in a blizzard on Mount Everest knew before they started that even if they reached the world's highest peak, it could all end in disaster.

So why did they pay \$60,000 apiece for a permit, travel as far as halfway around the world, spend years preparing and leave families behind, to challenge one of the most dangerous mountains on Earth?

Some people would scoff at climbers who embark on a journey to the top of the world. Psychologists might call them thrill-seekers, but mountaineers attribute their passion to a voyage of self discovery.

"How do you explain it to someone who doesn't feel it?" sighed Jolene Unsoeld, a former congresswoman who lost her husband and her daughter to the lure of the highest peaks.

"Life is not meant to be wrapped in a cocoon of total safety," Unsoeld said. "It's only by stretching our limits that we as human beings grow."

Exhausted climbers straggled down Mount Everest on Tuesday after one of the worst tragedies since its conquest in 1953. The blizzard roared in Friday without warning, killing seven men and a

woman. Twenty-two people survived.

The climbers died descending the 8,848-metre summit. The dead included some of the world's most skilled climbers as well as amateur adventurers. One victim left behind a wife seven months pregnant.

They knew the risks: a fickle storm or an unexpected avalanche could bury them, they could freeze to death or lose limbs to frostbite, or drown on fluid that might fill their lungs from altitude sickness.

But for people who live for adventure, it's the awe-inspiring danger that propels them.

Unsoeld's husband, Willi, who was in the first American expedition to Everest, died climbing in 1979 on Mount Rainier in Washington. Her daughter, Devi, died at 22 years old in 1976 on a climb in the Himalayas.

Yet Unsoeld, who has climbed to 5,500 metres, bemoans the fact her grandchildren aren't old enough to climb with her.

Her husband, in writings published after his death, said climbers find humility from their brushes with the sacred.

Lou Whittaker, who has twice scaled Everest and guides people up Rainier and Alaska's Mount McKinley, said he read the words of Helen Keller while trapped for eight days by a storm on Pakistan's K-2, the world's second highest peak.

"Security is mostly a superstition," wrote Keller, who overcame blindness and deafness. "Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. Life is either a daring adventure or nothing."

The Daily News (May 16, 1996). Reprinted with permission of the Associated Press.

1. What risks did the climbers face?
2. Why did they accept these risks? Would you have made the same decision? Explain.
3. If you had the chance, what questions would you ask Lou Whittaker?
4. Helen Keller wrote, "Life is either a daring adventure or nothing." Do you agree? Why or why not?
5. When is life a "daring adventure"?



Everyday Risks

7.2

Summary

Students brainstorm examples of physical, financial, social, and emotional risks.

Students will be able to...

- compile and classify examples of everyday risks
- reflect on their own risk-taking experiences and tendencies

Curriculum Tie-in (PDR)

Unit II-C, Decision Making; Unit II-A, Self-Awareness

Time

45 min.

Preparation

Bring to class a three-minute timer (or watch with a second hand).

Make two copies of the "Chance" cards on p. 13. On the back, copy the cues on pp. 14–15. Laminate and cut into cards.

Copy "Take a Chance," p. 16, one for each student.

Method

Class Discussion
10 min.

- What risks did you take this week? What did you do that didn't involve any risk at all?

On the chalkboard write the word "RISK" in large letters, surrounded by lines that radiate in all directions. Record examples at the ends of the radiating lines. Discuss a few: What could be gained, and what could be lost in each case?

- Are there different *types* of risk?

One way to classify risks is to ask the question, What have you got to lose? Write the words *health and safety, money, approval, feelings* across the board, and ask students to use different coloured chalk to underline examples that would fit each category (or to supply new examples).



Small Group Activity
20 min.

Divide the class into three groups. Shuffle the deck of "Chance" cards. Each card gives a cue that involves taking a risk, and also names a risk category. Each group is dealt one card. The group then has three minutes to come up with as many examples as possible.

Illustrate with a few examples.

Chance Card	Example
Test Your Limit: Risk Health and Safety	hang gliding, competitive sports
Test Your Limit: Risk Money	pushing a spending or betting limit
Be Courageous: Risk Feelings	confiding in a friend
Do Something New: Risk Approval	shaving your head, standing up for something you believe in

To begin, each group selects a leader who chooses the card, leads the brainstorming process, and then reports the results to the rest of the class. The leader changes with each round. Play three or four rounds.

Individual Activity
15 min.

Students complete the "Take a Chance" worksheet.

Chance?
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Chance?
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Chance?
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Chance?
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Chance?
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Try Something
New

Health & Safety

Try Something
New

Approval

Try Something
New

Feelings

Take a
Gamble

Money

Take a
Gamble

Approval

Take a
Gamble

Feelings

Break a
Habit

Money

Break a
Habit

Feelings

Break a
Habit

Approval

Be
Courageous

Health & Safety

Be
Courageous

Approval

Be
Courageous

Feelings

Explore the
Unknown

Health & Safety

Explore the
Unknown

Money

Explore the
Unknown

Feelings

**Test Your
Limit**

Health & Safety

**Test Your
Limit**

Money

**Test Your
Limit**

Approval

**Ignore a
Warning**

Health & Safety

**Ignore a
Warning**

Approval

**Ignore a
Warning**

Feelings

**Be
Vulnerable**

Money

**Be
Vulnerable**

Health & Safety

**Be
Vulnerable**

Feelings

**Break
a Rule**

Health & Safety

**Break
a Rule**

Money

**Break
a Rule**

Approval

**Don't Hold
Back**

Feelings

**Don't Hold
Back**

Approval

**Don't Hold
Back**

Money

Take a Chance

1. Think of a time when you did something that put your *health or safety* at risk. Describe what happened.
2. Think of a time when you risked losing *money*, or something of value to you. Describe what happened.
3. Think of a time when you risked losing someone's *approval*. Describe what happened.
4. Think of a time when you risked having your *feelings* hurt. Describe what happened.
5. Do you admire people who take a lot of risks? Why or why not?
6. Are you a risk taker?
7. In general, when do you take risks and when do you choose not to?



Weighing the Consequences

7.3

Summary

Using four different scenarios, students practice “weighing” consequences in order to decide whether risks are “worth it.”

Students will be able to...

- identify the potential positive and negative consequences of taking emotional, financial, and social risks
- evaluate risks

Curriculum Tie-in (PDR)

Unit II-C, Decision Making: Values, Influences

Time

40 min.

Preparation

Make transparencies – “Weigh the Risks” and “Risks” pp. 19–20.

Make up or collect scenarios to supplement the ones provided, to reflect situations of current interest and relevance to your students. These could include students’ examples of “everyday risks” discussed in Lesson 7.2 (optional).

Copy “Is It Worth It?” pp. 21–22 – one copy for each group, and cut the scenarios into strips.

Method

Class Discussion/Activity
10 min.

Use the “Weigh the Risks” transparency to introduce the activity. Pass out the first scenario to a student, who reads it aloud to the class. Ask how Lorna can decide whether she should take the risk. On each side of the scale, write the students’ ideas about what could be gained or “won” and what could be “lost.” Ask students to assign a “weight” (a number from one to ten) to each consequence, then evaluate whether the risk is “worth it.” Acknowledge that students’ evaluations may differ, depending on which positive or negative consequences they assign the most value or “weight” to.

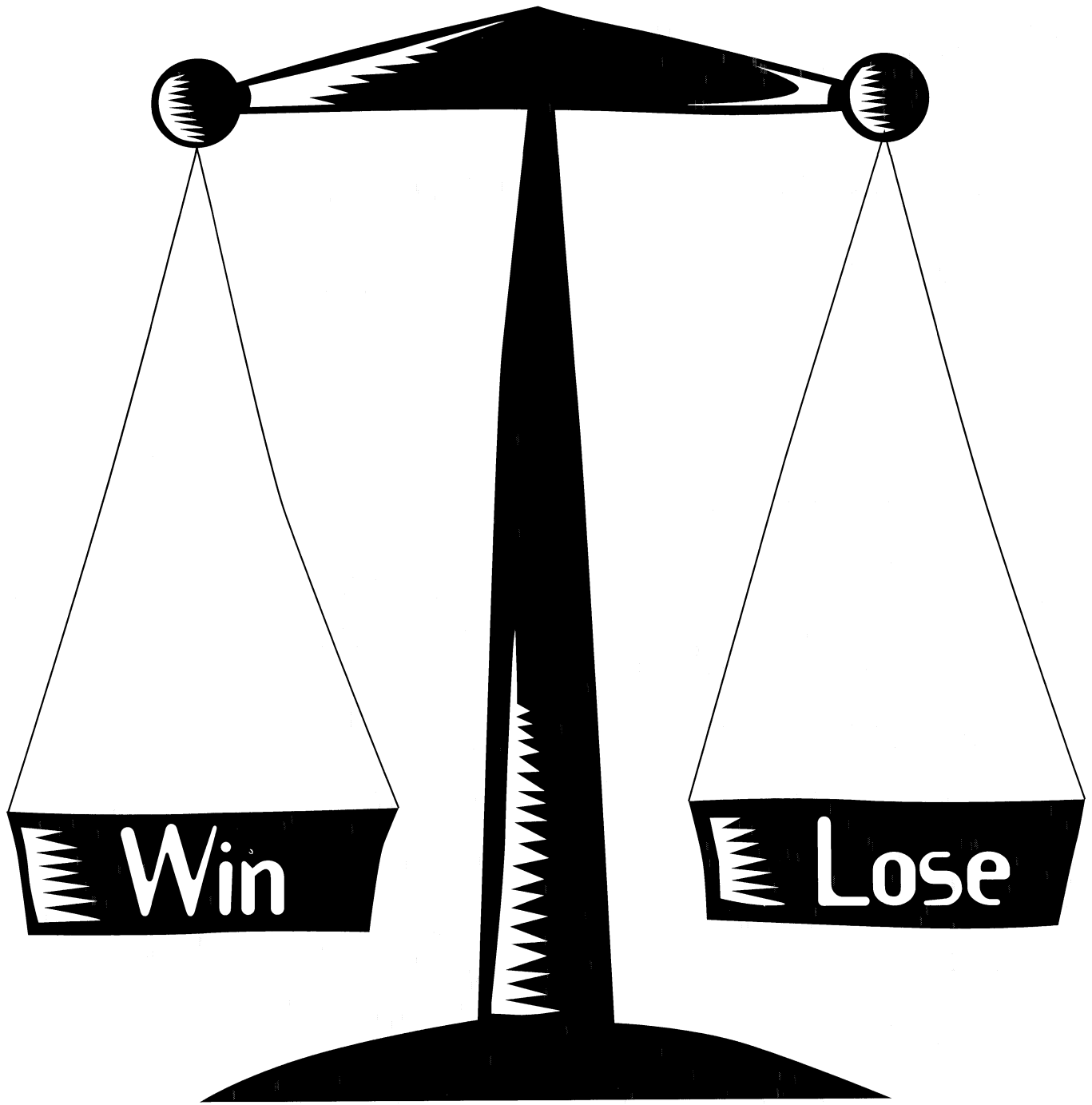


Small-Group Discussion
20 min.

Divide the class into groups and assign discussion leaders, readers, and notetakers. Give each reader a copy of the remaining three scenarios. The notetaker records the group's ideas about what can be gained and what can be lost in each scenario.

Class Discussion

Discuss the results of the small-group exercises. Use the "Risks" transparency to offer suggestions or to conclude the discussion.



Weigh the Risks

Risks . . .

**What Have You
Got to Win?**

- growth
- new experiences
- new friends
- a closer friendship
- respect
- money
- confidence
- fun
- excitement

**What Have You
Got to Lose?**

- health & safety
- money
- approval of friends & family
- respect
- trust
- freedom
- options for the future
- comfort
- face

Is It Worth It?

One

Lorna feels good about her new friendship with Roseanne. Lorna never thought Roseanne would be interested in her, since Roseanne has so many friends already. Lately, Lorna has been spending a lot of time at Roseanne's house. She feels relaxed there, because Roseanne's mom is always friendly, and everything seems so "normal." One day Roseanne suggests they go to Lorna's house instead, for a change. Lorna hesitates. She doesn't usually invite anyone home, especially not on days like today, when she knows her mother has been drinking. The house will probably be a mess, and who knows what mood her mother will be in. Her mom could be phoney and too "nice" or she could blow up over nothing. Lorna wavers between making up an excuse about why they can't go to her house and telling Roseanne the truth. Lorna doesn't want Roseanne to think she comes from a weird family, and she doesn't want everyone in her class to find out about her mother's drinking.

Two

Last summer, Amber spent a lot of time at a friend's house playing pool. She got really good at it. Lately, she's started hanging with Jesse, a guy she really likes. One evening they go to a pool hall with some of Jesse's friends. They are betting a dollar a game, and she has already won \$5. Jesse puts his arm around her shoulder and gives her a squeeze, to show he's feeling proud of her. Jesse's friend Kirk challenges her to a play-off game. He flashes a \$20 bill and asks if Amber can match it. She has \$20 in her pocket, which her mother gave her to buy some groceries with on the way home from school tomorrow. Amber thinks she can beat Kirk.

Is It Worth It?

Three

Sam's friend, William, wants to go to his parents' cottage for the weekend. His parents are out of town. William says they can hitchhike to the cottage and spend the weekend canoeing on the lake. They'll be the only ones there, because it's still early in the season and the other cottages will be empty. It'll be fun. Sam's parents have let him go to the cottage with William and his family before, but he knows they won't allow him to go with William alone. He really wants to go, and he knows he can take care of himself. He could tell his parents that he'll be going with William's family, and they'll never know the difference.

Four

Alex is out late, playing poker with his older brother and his brother's friends. They've been playing for hours. He's lost track of the time. A while ago he had to borrow \$10 from his brother so he could keep playing. He's only got \$1 left, but he's got a great hand. There's a pile of money in the middle of the table. He could clean up, and then go home with his pocket full. He's feeling excited and shaky. The bets keep getting raised. It's his turn, and he has to bet \$10 to stay in the game. His brother won't give him any more money, but he could write an IOU for \$10. It doesn't matter that he doesn't have the money at home, because he is sure he is going to win this round.



The Limit Line

7.4

Summary

Students practice setting limits and reflect on their own risk-taking style.

Students will be able to...

- suggest reasons why some people gamble too much
- indicate their risk limit in given situations
- summarize their risk-taking tendencies and strategies

Curriculum Tie-in (PDR)

Unit II-C, Decision Making

Time

40 min.

Preparation

Refer to InfoSheet F, "Why Some People Gamble Too Much."

Make transparencies – "Where Should Alex Draw the Line?" and "Why Some People Gamble Too Much," pp. 25–26.

Copy "The Limit Line," pp. 27–28, one for each student.

Method

Class Discussion
15 min.

Use the "Where Should Alex Draw the Line?" transparency, which expands on scenario four in Lesson 7.3. Re-read the scenario, p. 22, to the class, and then discuss the risks for each option. Ask students where they would "draw the line" if they were in Alex's shoes. Use a marker to indicate the suggested limit.

Use the "Why Some People Gamble Too Much" transparency to lead a brainstorming. See InfoSheet F for ideas.

Note that a simple way to keep game playing among friends from becoming too serious, and to avoid the risks associated with "gambling too much," is to bet with nonvaluables such as poker chips. However, it is best if students come to their own conclusions, based on an evaluation of the risks involved.

"Responsible gambling" is also a challenge for adults, who must learn how to set a financial limit and then being able to stick to it. In 1996 the Nova Scotia Gaming Commission wanted to know whether people at the casinos were gambling responsibly. As one measure, they asked visitors whether they had set and stuck to personal spending limits. They found out that about three-quarters of people who had visited the Halifax and Sydney casinos had set a spending limit before



arriving. Of those, 95 percent reported that they were able to hold to their limit (source: 1995/96 Annual Report of the Nova Scotia Gaming Control Commission). Warning signs of problem gambling include gambling with money intended for other purposes and gambling with borrowed money.

Individual Activity
15 min.

Students complete "The Limit Line" worksheet.

Class Discussion
10 min.

Discuss "The Limit Line" worksheet. In each category, ask students how they would "set their limit." Do they have a tendency to hold back too much or to go too far? In each case, what kind of advice could they give themselves? When is it appropriate to push one's limit, or "push the envelope"? When is it appropriate to hold the limit?

Where Should Alex Draw the Line?

Stay away
from games
involving
money.

Play with
extra
spending
money.

Play with
money
borrowed
from his
brother.

Play with
IOUs.

Why Some People Gamble Too Much

The Limit Line

A. Draw a line to show where your limit is.

1. To prepare for a midterm math test, the most time I would spend studying would be...

30 min	1 hr	2 hr	3 hr	5 hr	10 hr	20 hr	30 hr
--------	------	------	------	------	-------	-------	-------

2. If I was playing cards with friends, the most I would bet would be...

poker chips	pennies	\$1	extra spending money in my pocket	money I could borrow and pay back the next day	any money I could borrow
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3. For a good time, I wouldn't do more than...

watch TV at home	go to a movie with a friend	go to a party with just my friends	go to a party where I didn't know most of the people	go to a party and drink or smoke whatever was being passed around	drive around town with kids who were high and had a habit of getting into trouble
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4. To get the attention of a girl I liked but didn't know, I wouldn't do more than...

say hello	try to start a conversation	offer her something she liked to eat or drink	call her on the phone and invite her to go somewhere	wear the kind of clothes she liked	anything she wanted me to do
-----------	-----------------------------	---	--	------------------------------------	------------------------------

B. Think about each situation in Part A. Would you be more likely to hold back too much or go too far?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

C. When you feel yourself holding back too much, what can you do?

D. When you feel yourself going over your limit, what can you do?

E. Remember a time you crossed your "limit line." What happened?



Make or Break

7.5

Summary

A game illustrates how peer participation influences risk taking.

Students will be able to...

- describe how teammates influenced their risk-taking decisions
- apply this experience to other examples of risk taking, particularly gambling
- recall a personal example of peer influence related to risk taking

Curriculum Tie-in (PDR)

Unit II-C, 2. Decision Making: Influence of Others

Time

40 min.

Preparation

Copy the "Playing Cards," pp. 31–32, then copy pp. 33–34 onto the back. Laminate and cut into individual cards.

Make transparency – "Take a Chance," p. 35.

Method

Class Activity
10 min.

Divide the class into four groups and ask each group to choose a leader.

On the chalkboard, list the number of cards of each value in the deck:

10 cards @ 1 point

4 cards @ 2 points

2 cards @ 3 points

1 card @ 5 points

4 bankrupt

Shuffle the cards, marked side down, making sure that none of the top four cards is "bankrupt."

Deal one card to the leader in each group. Everyone in the group looks at the card, without showing it to the other groups. With help from the other group members, the leader decides whether to "hold" or to draw another card. Once a group has been dealt a bankrupt card, the group is out of the game. The object of the game is to acquire the most points without going bankrupt. Continue until all groups are either bankrupt or holding.



If time allows, play the game once or twice more, with different group leaders.

Note that this is not a gambling game per se, in that it does not involve money or other valuables. However, it deliberately imitates a card game of chance, in order to evoke the experience of risk taking and stimulate a discussion on peer influence.

Class Discussion
5 min.

- How did the group influence each leader's decisions? (consider both what teammates said and the group's energy level) Would the leaders have played differently if they had been playing by themselves?
- Can you think of other situations where friends might influence your decision about whether or not to take a risk? What can happen to your "limit line"? (see Lesson 7.4)
- What is more fun—playing cards with one friend or with a group of friends? Why? Which would be more risky if money was involved?
- What can you do when you feel yourself being swept away by group energy or excitement? (e.g., remember your "limit line," take a break, take a few deep breaths, get in touch with your own energy and hold it steady)

Individual Activity
10 min.

Describe a situation where you were influenced by someone else to go past your "limit line."

Variations: Students describe their experience in writing or orally with a partner. This could be a communication exercise, in which students listen to their partners' stories then retell what they heard.

Class Discussion
15 min.

Use the "Take a Chance" transparency to review the principles of responsible risk taking.

1
Point

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Point

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Make
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**Make
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**Make
or Break**

**Make
or Break**

Take a Chance

...for a good reason

to have fun
to learn and grow
to stretch your limits
to build confidence

...when you can afford to lose

know what's at stake
know the odds
weigh the consequences

...and be ready to draw the line

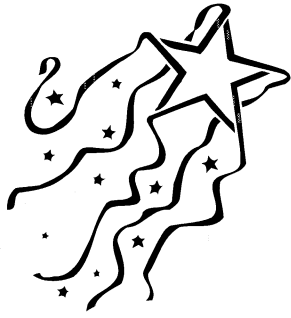
know your limit
if you tend to go too far, hold your limit
don't get swept away by what others say,
or by group energy

Grade 8

Be a Winner



Introduction	37
Lesson Overview	39
8.1 Sign of the Times	41
8.2 Feel Like a Winner – Big Time	51
8.3 Opinion Continuum	59
8.4 The Rise and Fall	67
8.5 Scam Buster	73



Grade 8

Be a Winner

Gambling is a form of competition. The person who buys a lottery ticket, plays the video lottery machine, or sits at the roulette table is playing against the odds, the machine, or the "house." He or she wants to win.

Competition, in itself, isn't negative. To play a game or to test oneself against a standard or against others can be stimulating and exciting; it can push us to excel, to go beyond our limits, to break into new territory. It can foster team spirit and camaraderie. The problem comes when self-esteem is tied to the outcome and when winning becomes "everything." We begin to believe that what we achieve, how we measure up, adds up to who we are and what we are worth. For young people whose identity is shifting and tenuous, and particularly for those whose self-esteem has already been undermined by a disrupted or abusive home life, this danger is especially great.

The overt attraction of winning is one reason adolescents as an age group are at highest risk for developing gambling problems. Because of gambling's illusory promise to make the player a winner, and because the adolescent's vulnerable developing ego naturally desires this type of reinforcement, gambling is an obvious activity of choice.¹

In our daily lives, we are bombarded with messages telling us how we can rise above our peers. Professional sports and Olympic games fan a competitive spirit. The media glorify athletic superheroes. Wealth and material goods are held up as the ticket to personal happiness and social success.

Gambling has thrived in this social climate. Just three decades ago, the only types of gambling that were legal in Canada were racetrack betting and small bingo games or "Vegas nights" for charities. In 1969, the Canadian government opened the door to legalized gambling. Since then, gambling has burgeoned, becoming an accepted and integral part of the world we live in. Now anyone can become an instant winner. Luck is the magic doorway to fame and fortune.



This unit encourages students to take a critical look at the social forces that influence their gambling-related values and decisions. The lessons give students opportunities to express their opinions and to examine prevalent values, myths, and deceptions. Along the way, they discover that the best protection against deceptive promises and inflated hopes is the conviction that being a real winner can only come from unconditional self-acceptance, and from the recognition that a game is only a game.

Curriculum Connections

Math: Lesson 8.2

Art: Lesson 8.4, 8.5

Computer Graphics: Lesson 8.5

Before You Start

- Let parents know that you will be teaching lessons from *Drawing the Line*. Use the sample letter on p. xiv, or write a letter of your own.
- Read the Introduction and browse through the InfoSheets at the back of this book.
- Decide which lessons you will teach. The Lesson Overview on the following page shows where each lesson fits into the PDR curriculum. This unit can be taught within Unit II, Self-Awareness and Acceptance, under the topics of values and decision making; or within Unit VI, Healthy Active Living, under the topics of problem gambling prevention (especially environmental influences) and consumer awareness.

Notes

1. Jane Haubrich-Casperson and Doug Van Nispen, *Coping with Teen Gambling* (New York: The Rosen Publishing Group, 1993), 23.



Grade 8 Lesson Overview

SUMMARY

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be able to...

CURRICULUM

TIE-IN (PDR)

8.1 Sign of the Times

Historical drawings and contemporary photographs illustrate that gambling is a universal activity, which is currently available in many forms in Nova Scotia.

- list and classify types of gambling
- record observed signs of gambling in their community

Unit VI-C,
Substance Use and
Abuse/ Problem
Gambling: Influences

Unit VI-D,
Consumer Awareness

8.2 Feel like a Winner–Big Time

Lesson activities challenge two popular myths about winning the lottery jackpot: that winning would instantly solve all of a person's problems and that everyone has a reasonable chance of winning.

- predict how winning a million dollars would affect their lives

Unit VI-C,
Substance Use and
Abuse/ Problem
Gambling: Influences

Unit VI-D,
Consumer Awareness

8.3 Opinion Continuum

Value statements trigger a discussion of social values and issues, and introduce the topic of problem gambling.

- support personal values related to gambling
- identify and respond to social issues raised in a newspaper article

Unit II-A, Values and
Decision Making

Unit VI-C,
Substance Use and
Abuse/ Problem
Gambling: Influences

8.4 The Rise and Fall

A case study illustrates the negative consequences of an obsession with winning "at all costs."

- critique social messages pertaining to winning and losing
- define what it really means to be a "winner."
- analyze a case study

Unit II-A,
Self-Concept: Social
and Environmental
Influences

8.5 Scam Buster

A mock sweepstakes offer alerts students to deceptive marketing practices.

- analyze a direct mail flyer
- decide how they would respond to the flyer

Unit VI-D,
Consumer Awareness

Unit II-C, Decision
Making

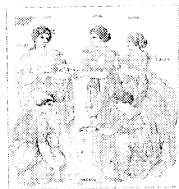
Sign of the Times



Summary	Historical drawings and contemporary photographs illustrate that gambling is a universal activity, which is currently available in many forms in Nova Scotia.
Students will be able to...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • list and classify types of gambling • record observed signs of gambling in their community
Curriculum Tie-in (PDR)	Unit VI-C, Substance Use and Abuse/Problem Gambling: Influences; Unit VI-D, Consumer Awareness
Time	40 min.
Preparation	<p><i>Refer to</i> InfoSheet A, "Historical Notes," InfoSheet B, "Gambling in Nova Scotia," InfoSheet L, "The Lottery," InfoSheet M, "Video Gambling Machines," and InfoSheet N, "Casinos."</p> <p><i>Use the transparencies</i> located in the back-cover sleeve, corresponding to the images described on pp. 42–47.</p> <p>Copy "Brainstorm: Gambling in Nova Scotia," p. 49 – one for each group (or student).</p>
Method	Use the transparencies to lead a discussion of gambling types. For each illustration or photograph, first ask students to identify the type of gambling involved. Refer to the Discussion Guide on pp. 42–47.
Class Activity 20 min.	
Small Group or Individual Activity 20 min.	Using the "Brainstorm" handout, students list and classify the various types of gambling with which they are familiar. Refer to InfoSheet B, "Gambling in Nova Scotia," when discussing the results.
Homework	Look for "signs of gambling" in your community. Record your observations, making a note of the date, location, and what you saw.

Signs of Gambling: Discussion Guide

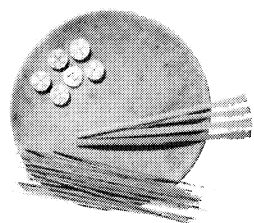
1. Dice Throwers in Ancient Greece



The Greek women in this picture are tossing astragals, or knucklebones, made from the anklebones of sheep. Each astragal had four sides, which were marked with dots.

Games of chance are found in nearly all cultures and in every period of history. The forerunners of today's dice and playing cards were not always used for "gambling" in the modern sense of the word. Often they were used to interpret dreams, for divination, and as a way to focus and demonstrate one's attunement with events.

2. A Mi'kmaq Game of Chance



Waltos (wall'-tez) has been played by the Mi'kmaq since precontact times. The game set consists of a bowl or platter, usually made from a scooped-out burl of maple or birch; six round dice made from the shin bone of the moose, etched with designs on the flat side and plain on the convex side; and counting sticks for keeping score, usually made of wood. The playing objects are treated with great respect.

3. The Crucifixion



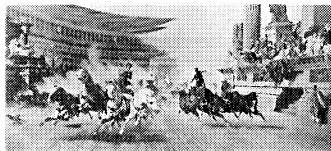
The Roman soldiers in the foreground are tossing dice to determine who will "win" Jesus' garments. According to the New Testament, "When they had finished crucifying him they shared out his clothing by casting lots" (Matthew 27:35).

It seems that the "drawing of lots" was a common way of making decisions and allocations in Biblical times. This was how Saul was chosen to be king (1 Samuel 10:20–21), and how a direction was chosen for David to go to take command of his troops (2 Samuel 2:1). This was also the method used to select soldiers for battle (Judges 20:9), to divide lands, select the first residents of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 11:1), and select animals for sacrifice on the day of atonement (Leviticus 16:7–10).¹

This 19th-century engraving is by Gustave Doré, a popular French illustrator, painter, and sculptor. It is telling that Doré chose to include this detail in his portrayal. Although Doré completed a total of 10,000 drawings during his career and was well paid for his work, he was constantly in debt because of a gambling addiction: "the demon of gambling held [him] tightly in its claws."²



4. Chariot Race



This chariot race is taking place at the Circus Maximus in ancient Rome, one of the largest sports arenas ever built, with a seating capacity of 250,000. Up to 50 races were held here each day.

Horse racing, with bets placed on the winner, is an ancient sport. "By the seventh century B.C. chariot races were a regular feature of the Olympic games.... From all accounts the races were tumultuous affairs. There were accusations—and denials—that certain horses had been doped, squabbles over betting, and an assortment of other disputes that frequently erupted into riots. Gamblers and bookmakers abounded and bettors who couldn't get to the races received the results by carrier pigeon."³

Betting on horse races is legal in Nova Scotia for those age 19 and over. The three racetracks in the province are located in Truro, Inverness, and Sydney. Replacing the carrier pigeons of Roman times are teletheatres, which broadcast races in licensed establishments or at other racetracks. Racetrack gambling plays a minor role in the province's gambling industry, accounting for less than 2 percent of the total dollars wagered.

5. The Cockpit



This 18th-century engraving by William Hogarth shows fighting between cocks and spectators alike, as bets are placed on the winning bird.

Cockfighting as a spectator sport began in Greece in the fifth century B.C. Two roosters wearing brass spurs were placed in a ring or cockpit. Today cockfighting is outlawed in many parts of the world, though it is still popular in India, Latin America, the Phillipines, and several European countries. In other countries, spectators bet on the outcome of dogfights, camel fights, scorpion matches, and human fights (e.g., boxing and wrestling). In Spain and Mexico, bullfight fans bet on the relative skill of the matadors.

As the engraving illustrates, betting on sports competitions is a way for spectators to feel more actively involved, since they are also taking a risk.

6. Gambling for Candy



This 19th-century newspaper engraving illustrates "a new juvenile vice—gambling for delicacies."

Children learn to gamble by imitating the adults around them. Through much of Western history, gambling has been seen as a "vice." Critics claim that it distracts from "honest labour" and family life, and promotes unwholesome values (see also InfoSheet D, "Changing Values").



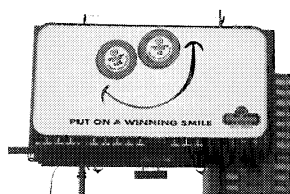
7. Gambling House



This is a drawing of a gambling house in Cheyenne, Wyoming, in 1877.

Many of the adventurers who travelled westward with the advancing frontier were risk takers by nature. They included prospectors, drifters, railroad workers, outlaws, and professional card players. In remote towns, gambling was one of the few forms of entertainment, and laws were difficult to enforce. The rowdiness, cheating, and sometimes deadly squabbles that regularly took place in the gambling houses led to a continent-wide crackdown on gambling at the turn of the century.

8. Casino Billboard and Slot Machines



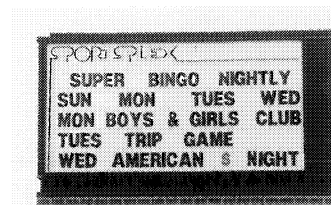
The casino is a modern-day gambling house. To avoid some of the problems of the Wild West—cheating, brawls, shootings—everything that goes on in the casino is very tightly controlled by the company that runs it and the government. There are two casinos in Nova Scotia, one in Halifax and one in Sydney, and these are the only two casinos in Atlantic Canada. Besides slot machines, the casinos also have gaming tables, where people play blackjack, mini baccarat, poker, or roulette.

Almost all types of gambling were illegal in Canada between 1892 and 1969. The exceptions were racetrack betting, charity raffles and bingo games, and betting games at annual fairs and exhibitions. In 1969, the federal government legalized commercial gambling. Since then, opportunities to gamble have steadily increased. The Nova Scotia casinos were opened in 1995.

With the exception of racetrack betting, all forms of legal gambling in Nova Scotia today are controlled by the provincial government. Lottery games, video gambling machines, and casino games have become an important source of revenue for the government. Raffles and bingo help charities raise the money they need. *All legal gambling games are restricted to age 19 and over.*

What other types of gambling can we find in Nova Scotia today?

9. Bingo Hall



Although most bingo players don't think of themselves as gamblers, playing bingo for cash prizes or merchandise is a form of gambling. In fact, it is one of the most popular forms of gambling in the province. In many towns and neighborhoods, the bingo hall provides an important social focus.



10. Lottery Ads



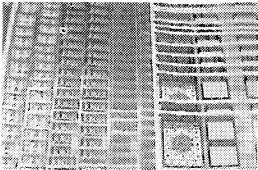
More people play the lottery than any other type of gambling in Nova Scotia. About 73 percent of adult Nova Scotians buy a Lotto 6/49 lottery ticket at least occasionally, and 73 percent buy them every week.⁴ See also InfoSheet L, "The Lottery."

Nova Scotian students (Grades 7–12) who buy lottery tickets (other than Sport Select)⁵

at least once a year: 43 %

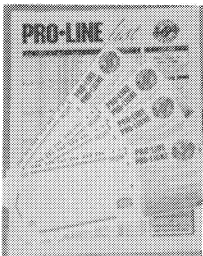
at least monthly: 15 %

11. Scratch-and-Win Tickets



This is a popular type of lottery game. Players scratch an area of the ticket to find out if they have won a prize. A similar type is the "pull-tab" or "break-open" lottery game. As the name implies, players pull the ticket open to find out if they have won. Some people prefer "instant lotteries" because of the immediate feedback.

12. Sport Select Pro Line Ticket



To play the Sport Select lottery, players bet on which team they think will win an upcoming game. You could say that more skill is involved here than in a straight lottery, because you can use your knowledge of the teams' playing condition, record, and so on. In fact, however, the odds are "evened out" by a system called handicapping, expressed as a point spread. For example, if the Blue Jays are given a handicap of three points over the opposing team, this means that a person betting on the Blue Jays will only win if the Blue Jays win by more than three points. Sports betting tends to be more popular among males than females.

Nova Scotia students (grades 7–12) who play Sport Select⁶

at least once a year: 20%

at least monthly: 9%

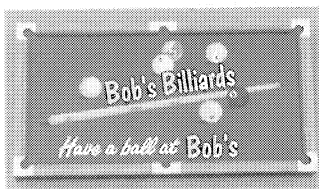
Playing Sport Select Pro Line is technically the only kind of legal sports betting in Canada. Sometimes friends or office workers bet among themselves on the outcome of a game, but this is generally overlooked by government officials and law enforcers.

Another type of illegal sports betting is taken more seriously. This is when bookies set their own betting odds and then take bets on games, usually over the phone. Sports betting through bookies is illegal in Canada and most of the U.S. Some people accuse newspapers of tacitly



supporting illegal gambling by publishing point spreads, or handicap information, used by bookies and their clients. Others claim that legal sports lotteries initiate people into sports betting and indirectly support illegal gambling.

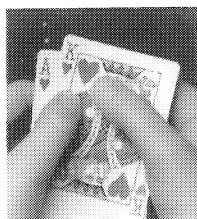
13. Pool Hall



Sometimes people place bets on a competitive game of skill, like pool. Usually this kind of betting involves small amounts of money exchanged among friends.

As with sports betting, playing cards for money, and "pitching coins," this type of gambling is generally tolerated by law enforcers, unless it escalates to a point where large amounts of money or other illegal activities are involved. But even small-time gambling can lead to problems if it becomes a consuming preoccupation. What might these problems be?

14. Playing Cards



Betting on card games for money is the most popular form of gambling among young Nova Scotians.

Nova Scotia students (grades 7–12) who play cards for money⁷

at least once a year: 40%

at least monthly: 14%

15. Raffle



Who would think of buying a raffle ticket as gambling? How would you define gambling? A commonly accepted definition: "risking valuables (usually money) on the outcome of an event that involves at least some degree of chance." How is a raffle different from a lottery? Like all other forms of gambling, raffles must be licenced by the government. Unlike government-run lotteries, most raffles are used for fund-raising for community nonprofit organizations (schools, churches, clubs, etc.).

16. Video Lottery Terminals (VLTs)



VLTs, also called poker machines, are similar to slot machines. In Nova Scotia, slot machines are only in the casinos, while VLTs are in bars and other licensed premises. As for other types of legalized gambling, the age limit for playing is 19.

Nova Scotians plug more money into VLTs than they spend on any other type of gambling, including the lottery. Even though only about



18 percent of the adult population plays the machines once a year or more, these players wager an average of \$2,100 each.⁸

Nova Scotia students (grades 7–12) who play VLTs⁹

at least once a year: 20%

at least monthly: 6%

After VLTs were legalized in Nova Scotia in 1991, they were placed in corner grocery stores and laundromats, as well as in bars. However, public concern over how easy it is to get hooked on the machines, and the number of young people playing them, led to further restrictions. In 1993, the Province removed 2,500 of the machines and restricted the rest to casinos, bars, and restaurants licensed to sell liquor. About 3,000 VLTs remain in use in the province. See also InfoSheet M, "Video Gambling Machines."

17. Stock Market



"Playing" the stock market is a form of investment with many similarities to gambling. However, it is not a game in the usual sense and is not regulated in the same way as other types of legalized gambling. Some people get caught up in the risk and excitement of the stock market in the same way that problem gamblers can become obsessed with and even addicted to their game-playing.

As a sportswriter once pointed out, "If you bet on a horse, that's gambling. If you bet you can make three spades, that's entertainment. If you bet cotton will go up three points, that's business. See the difference?"¹⁰

Notes

1. William N. Thompson, *Legalized Gambling* (Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 1994).
2. Louise Heritte-Viardot, as quoted in *Gamblers of Yesteryear* by Russell T. Barnhart (Las Vegas: GBC Press, 1983), 109.
3. Alice Fleming, *Something for Nothing: A History of Gambling* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1978), 42–43.
4. *1996 Prevalence Study on Problem Gambling in Nova Scotia*, prepared for the Nova Scotia Dept. of Health by Baseline Market Research Ltd., 1996.
5. N.S. Dept of Health, Drug Dependency Services, and Dalhousie University, *Nova Scotia Student Drug Use 1996: Technical Report*, 35.



6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. From a survey by Omnifacts Research and reported in *A Year in Review: Gaming in Nova Scotia*, 1996.
9. *Nova Scotia Student Drug Use 1996*, 35.
10. Blackie Sherrod. Quoted by Mike Orkin in *Can You Win?* (New York: W. H. Freeman and Co., 1991).

Brainstorm: Gambling in Nova Scotia

1. List as many types of gambling as you can under each heading.
2. Draw an X beside games of pure chance.
3. Draw an O beside games of pure skill.
4. Draw an [X inside an O] beside games that require both chance and skill.

Legal but Regulated (e.g., age limit, license, restricted locations) <i>at least 6 types</i>	Not legal, but Tolerated <i>at least 3 types</i>	Not Legal, Not Tolerated <i>at least 2 types</i>



Feel Like a Winner – Big Time

8.2

Summary

Lesson activities challenge two popular myths about winning the lottery jackpot: that winning would instantly solve all of a person's problems and that everyone has a reasonable chance of winning.

Students will be able to...

- predict how winning a million dollars would affect their lives

Curriculum Tie-in (PDR)

Unit VI-C, Substance Use and Abuse/Problem Gambling: Influences;
Unit VI-D, Consumer Awareness

Time

50 min.

Preparation

Refer to InfoSheet L, "The Lottery."

Bring to class a large mixing bowl and a 70-gram (2 1/2-ounce) package of confetti. Empty the confetti into the bowl and fluff it up.

Copy "A Million Dollar Winner," p. 54 – two for each group.

Copy "How (Not) to Waste a Million Bucks," p. 55 – one for each student (optional).

Use the colour transparencies corresponding to pp. 56–57, located in the back-cover sleeve.

Method

Class Activity
20 min.

Lead a visualization. Ask students to close their eyes and imagine that one of their parents has just won the lottery—a million dollars! That is a thousand bundles of a thousand dollars. Just imagine all that money. What will your family do with it? Do you think your parents will quit their jobs, or stop worrying about getting new jobs? buy a new house in a different neighbourhood? give some away? How will *your* life change? Will you still go to this school, or will you go to a school in another part of town? maybe even a private school somewhere? How about clothes? vacations? friends? As your lifestyle changes, will your friends change too?

Your phone starts ringing off the hook. Some people who read the announcement in the newspaper looked up your name in the phone book. They are asking if you want to buy this or that, invest in this or that. Some charities call, hoping for a donation. Old friends and relatives you haven't heard from in years call up, wanting to congratulate



you. You can't help wondering if they are also hoping for a piece of the pie. A cousin who gambles too much asks for a loan. It's hard to know who to trust. An older sister wants to quit university and use some of the money to start her own business.

Suddenly it seems that there are so many possibilities, and things are happening so fast, that your parents decide to take some time just to think about it all and develop some kind of plan. They go on a two-week vacation.

Small Group Activity
15 min.

Divide the class into groups and assign discussion leaders and notetakers. Give each leader and notetaker a copy of "A Million Dollar Winner." Ask the leaders to guide a brainstorming session, in response to each of the questions on the worksheet.

Class Activity
10 min.

Discuss the results of the brainstorming. See also "How (Not) to Waste a Million Bucks," p. 55.

Write on the chalkboard:

Myth no. 1: Winning the lottery will solve all my problems.

Myth no. 2: I have a reasonable chance of winning the jackpot.

Use the transparencies while leading a discussion of government-run lotteries available in Nova Scotia. See also InfoSheet E, "The Odds," and InfoSheet L, "The Lottery."

Class Activity
5 min.

Show the bowl of confetti. Take out one piece, mark a dot on it with a pen or marker, then return it to the container. Mix up the pieces. Invite students to run their hand through the confetti, to get a feeling for the number of individual pieces.

- How many pieces of confetti do you think are in the bowl? (make a list of the various estimates)

If the class is not too large, invite students to try and choose the winning piece of confetti with their eyes closed or, for a more dramatic touch, blindfolded.



A bag of confetti contains approximately 110,000 pieces. If 127 bags of confetti were emptied into a giant bowl, the odds of picking the winning piece of confetti would be about the same as they are for winning the Lotto 6/49 jackpot!

- How much would you be willing to pay for that chance?

Curriculum Connections

Math: Make up a wish list for what you would want to buy if you had a million dollars. Find out how much each item would cost. Plan what you would do with the rest of the money. Calculate the annual interest for various investment options.

A Million-Dollar Winner

Some people believe that if they only won the lottery—big time—it would solve all their problems. But is this really true?

Problems that would disappear if I won a million dollars.

Problems that wouldn't disappear, no matter how much money I had.

Problems that could get worse if I won a million dollars.

New problems that could develop if I won a million dollars.

How (not) to waste a million bucks

By Chris Lambie

Almost everyone thinks they know what they'd do if they won a million dollars. But do they? Investment adviser Richard Learmonth has an emphatic, one-word answer: "No."

Learmonth should know. He's been juggling millions of dollars in lottery winnings for lucky clients for about a decade.

"Suddenly you boost your income up overnight—say if you won a million dollars—to \$100,000 a year. That's a considerable jump. A lot of people think there's all kinds of extra money there and they don't know where the limit is," he said.

"It's a lot of money for those people that don't have it. But once you have it, people's lifestyles change."

Learmonth said about a quarter of his clients—he won't specify a number—have struck it big, one to the tune of almost \$4 million.

He's always "gone after" lottery winners as potential clients.

"I don't chase after them now to

the point where I'm like a fire engine. But I'll send a letter to them and I'll use recommendations from my present clients."

Winners need to get "acclimated" to it, he says. Learmonth usually prescribes a month's vacation.

"When they come back they can sit down with a person such as myself and start making balanced decisions on what to do with the money to earn more money, to save taxes, and to do the things they want to do."

"They run out and say, 'I want to buy a new car, I want to pay off my house, I want to give my kids some money.' Then they sit back and say 'Now we can live the rest of our lives with ease.'"

That's when they realize, he said, there isn't much left of their windfall.

And then there are family members. Lottery winners commonly complain about relatives looking for handouts, he said.

"They come in and say 'Lend me some money.' And it's hard to say no to your relatives.

"If you say no, you're just being mean with your money. But it's not being mean with it; it's just being cautious."

Hanging around with the lucky few has prompted Learmonth to start buying lottery tickets himself.

"But I make more money off the lottery winners than I do from the lottery itself."

The Daily News (May 29, 1996). Courtesy of The Daily News.



LOTTO 6/49

- There are 49 numbers to choose from in the Lotto 6/49 field
- The six winning numbers are drawn every Wednesday and Saturday evening
- There is no maximum size for the Jackpot
- The Jackpot, which can be won or shared, is always at least \$1 million, and rolls over to the next draw if not won
- The game is played throughout Canada
- Players either pick their own set of numbers or play by Insta Pik

6/49						Advance Play		TAG					
A	10 20 30 40	B	10 20 30 40	C	10 20 30 40	D	10 20 30 40		E	10 20 30 40	F	10 20 30 40	CURRENT DRAW
1	11 21 31 41	1	11 21 31 41	1	11 21 31 41	1	11 21 31 41	1	11 21 31 41	1	11 21 31 41	2	2
2	12 22 32 42	2	12 22 32 42	2	12 22 32 42	2	12 22 32 42	2	12 22 32 42	2	12 22 32 42	DRAWS	TIRAGES
3	13 23 33 43	3	13 23 33 43	3	13 23 33 43	3	13 23 33 43	3	13 23 33 43	3	13 23 33 43	3	3
4	14 24 34 44	4	14 24 34 44	4	14 24 34 44	4	14 24 34 44	4	14 24 34 44	4	14 24 34 44	DRAWS	TIRAGES
5	15 25 35 45	5	15 25 35 45	5	15 25 35 45	5	15 25 35 45	5	15 25 35 45	5	15 25 35 45	5	5
6	16 26 36 46	6	16 26 36 46	6	16 26 36 46	6	16 26 36 46	6	16 26 36 46	6	16 26 36 46	DRAWS	TIRAGES
7	17 27 37 47	7	17 27 37 47	7	17 27 37 47	7	17 27 37 47	7	17 27 37 47	7	17 27 37 47	7	7
8	18 28 38 48	8	18 28 38 48	8	18 28 38 48	8	18 28 38 48	8	18 28 38 48	8	18 28 38 48	DRAWS	TIRAGES
9	19 29 39 49	9	19 29 39 49	9	19 29 39 49	9	19 29 39 49	9	19 29 39 49	9	19 29 39 49	9	9
VOID/NUL		VOID/NUL		VOID/NUL		VOID/NUL		VOID/NUL		VOID/NUL		10	10
Selection à l'avance												Mark this box if TAG is NOT PLAYED	
												Cochez cette case si TAG N'EST PAS JOUÉ	

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Opinion Continuum

8.3

Summary

Value statements trigger a discussion of social values and issues, and introduce the topic of problem gambling.

Students will be able to...

- support personal values related to gambling
- identify and respond to social issues raised in a newspaper article

Curriculum Tie-in (PDR)

Unit II-A, Values and Decision Making

Time

40 min.

Preparation

Refer to InfoSheet B, "Gambling in Nova Scotia," InfoSheet C, "Legalized Gambling: Pros and Cons," InfoSheet D, "Changing Values," and InfoSheet F, "Why Some People Gamble Too Much."

Mark a line across the classroom floor, using string or masking tape. At one end of the line, attach a sheet of paper to the floor or wall that says "Strongly Agree." At the other end, attach a sheet of paper that says "Strongly Disagree."

Make three copies of "Beliefs and Values," p. 61, and cut the statements into strips. Fold each strip. Keep the strips in their original groups of three.

Copy "Young Gamblers Spin Out of Control," p. 64 – one for each group (or student).

Copy "Think About It," p 65 – two for each group.

Method

Class Activity/Discussion
20 min.

Introduce the "Opinion Continuum," marked on the floor. Randomly pass out two "Beliefs and Values" sets (i.e., two sets of three) to six students. Ask them to read their statements to themselves, without showing them to anyone else. They should then indicate how strongly they agree or disagree with the statement by standing somewhere on the Opinion Continuum.

When all six students are standing somewhere on the line, ask one to read his or her statement. The others with the same statement raise their hands, so that they can compare where they stand. Ask each student to explain the reason for his or her "position." See "Teacher's



Discussion Guide," pp. 62–63, for ideas and background information to contribute to the discussion. Be careful not to suggest that there are right or wrong conclusions for these issues.

Continue with the other statements, until everyone has had a turn.

Variation: Use "Beliefs and Values" as a worksheet. Students respond to each statement by indicating whether they strongly agree (SA), agree (A), are undecided/need more information (U), disagree (D), or strongly disagree (SD).

Small Group Discussion
20 min.

Divide the class into groups and assign discussion leaders, notetakers, and readers. Distribute copies of "Young Gamblers Spin Out of Control" to the reader in each group (or distribute the article to everyone, for silent reading). Give a copy of "Think About It" to the discussion leaders and notetakers. After the article has been read, the notetaker records the group's ideas.

Once the groups have finished the exercise, use the "Teacher's Discussion Guide" on p. 66 to lead a discussion.

Beliefs and Values

To the teacher: Make three copies of this page, then cut the statements into individual strips. Keep identical strips in their sets of three.

Gambling is a waste of time and money.

Running lotteries is a good way for governments to make money.

Most young people are too smart to bet more than they can afford to lose.

Most people gamble because they think they can win.

When young people gamble too much, it's usually because they are showing off to friends.

Adults are more likely to have a problem with gambling than teens.

You know you have a problem with gambling if it's your favourite pastime.

If you think you have a problem with gambling, you should try to keep your bets under a certain limit.

Teens under 19 should be allowed to play video lottery terminals (VLTs) if they want to. If they lose all their money, that's their problem.

Beliefs and Values: Teacher's Discussion Guide

1. Gambling is a waste of time and money.

This is usually true for someone who hopes to gain something tangible from the time and money spent, since most types of gambling involve an overall loss of money. It is also true for someone who sees the entertainment value of gambling as a "cheap thrill," inferior to other recreational pursuits.

However, social gamblers may feel that the risk and excitement of playing bingo, buying a lottery ticket, or spending an evening at the casino are entertaining enough to justify the time and money spent, even if it is all lost.

2. Running lotteries is a good way for governments to make money.

See InfoSheet C, "Legalized Gambling: Pros and Cons."

3. Most young people are too smart to bet more than they can afford to lose.

This appears to be true for most young people. A 1993 survey showed that most young people in Nova Scotia are social gamblers; i.e., they gamble seldom or occasionally, they gamble for fun, and they stay within a limit they can afford (source: Omnifacts survey prepared for the N.S. Dept. of Health). However, the survey also showed that about 12 percent of young people show signs of having a problem with gambling—but not necessarily because they aren't "smart" enough to limit their bets. See InfoSheet F, "Why Some People Gamble Too Much."

4. Most people gamble because they think they can win.

This may be one reason. See InfoSheet F for other possible reasons.

5. Most people gamble because they think they can win.

This may be one reason. See InfoSheet F for others.

6. Adults are more likely to have a problem with gambling than teens.

Research suggests the opposite to be true. In surveys conducted in Canada and the United States, two to three times as many adolescents show signs of problem gambling as adults. It is not yet known, however, whether these signs are merely reflective of the stage of adolescence—which naturally tends to include risk taking, pushing limits, showing off to friends, recklessness, and feeling invulnerable to long-term consequences—or whether they are reflective of a trend that will likely continue into adulthood.



7. You know you have a problem with gambling if it's your favourite pastime.

This might be true, but the attraction could also be a passing interest in a particular social scene. It is more decisive to look for "clusters" of signs. See "How Do You Score?" p. 128, for a list of possible signs.

8. If you think you have a problem with gambling, you should try to keep your bets under a certain limit.

Setting limits may be a positive step towards keeping one's gambling under control. However, many young people don't realize that gambling can very quickly become an addiction that is just as powerful and compelling as drug addiction. One aspect of addiction is denial, and someone who has a gambling problem often continues to believe that he or she is still in control. For an addicted gambler, trying to keep his or her bets "under a certain limit" could be equivalent to an alcoholic vowing to limit his or her drinks to one or two a day. In both cases, the person needs to talk to someone who understands the problem and can offer help. In Nova Scotia, Drug Dependency Services counsellors are trained in problem gambling.

9. Teens under 19 should be allowed to play video lottery terminals (VLTs) if they want to. If they lose all their money, that's their problem.

This is similar to the issue of age restrictions for cigarette and alcohol purchase. The underlying assumption is that young people should be protected from these potentially harmful substances or activities. Also, there is a notion that society should be protected from irresponsible use/abuse, especially in the case of underage drinking and driving. If young VLT players lose all of their money at the VLTs, that may be their problem, but if they become addicted to the machines and resort to stealing, fraud, and other crimes to support their gambling, then it becomes everyone's problem. In Nova Scotia, VLTs were taken out of corner stores and laundromats and restricted to licensed premises largely because of a widespread public concern that they were too seductive and potentially harmful to underage gamblers. However, it could be argued that the same could be said for adult gamblers, who continue to have easy access to the machines.

Young gamblers spin out of control

Sarah Binder
The Canadian Press, Montreal

Stephane and Mireille don't think a \$2 Bingo lottery ticket is gambling.

It's a game. It's fun. It's harmless. And you can win.

"When you win you're totally happy, but it's rare that you win," says Stephane, 11, who got his first ticket from his parents three years ago and won \$2. He's since won \$10 on a ticket and another \$2. Mireille, 12, who has won a total of \$16, buys about three tickets a month "if I feel like it when I pass the store." Her mother and friends got her started a year ago.

Quebec, unlike other provinces, has no minimum age for its lotteries. It's not illegal to sell Bingo lottery tickets to minors although the provincial lottery agency asks store-owners not to do so.

But even in provinces with an age minimum, most people don't think of lottery tickets as gambling.

And that has social experts worried about the growing respectability of gambling activities, encouraged by government-run lotteries and casinos.

They say the more accessible gambling is, the more people it

attracts, and the more society will have to grapple with problem gamblers—people whose need to bet takes over their life.

Albert, a 20-year-old university student, is one such problem gambler.

He began betting on the horses when he was 15 and desperately turned to Gamblers Anonymous five years later, \$10,000 in debt and facing a life of crime.

Going to the racetrack was fun for two years, says Albert, not his real name. But he spun out of control at the posh gaming tables of the Montreal Casino where he gambled thousands of dollars every day from September 1994 to January 1995.

"I was attracted to the image of being a big shot, all-powerful," says Albert.

Where did he get the money to finance his gaming?

"Part of it I had and part of it I stole from my parents and from credit cards and cheque forging and bank account fraud. Eventually I got caught because the cheques I was forging were, like, astronomic. "That's when I basically collapsed."

It's estimated that between five and 10 per cent of Canadians are problem gamblers. But adolescents appear particularly vulnerable to the addictive allure of betting and

games of chance.

A recent Ontario study suggests that gambling-related problems are four times more prevalent among those aged 12 to 19 than those aged 18 to 74.

"This is the first generation in which gambling is totally legal," says Jeffrey Derevensky, a McGill University professor who specializes in child psychology.

He says his surveys of some Montreal schools indicate as much as 70 per cent of the children Grades 5 through 7 were doing some kind of betting, generally lotteries.

And a Quebec City study suggested that 10 per cent of gambling high-schoolers were involved in illegal activities to finance their betting, such as stealing from parents, breaking-and-entering or shoplifting, Derevensky says.

It's not generally understood that gambling can be as addictive as alcohol, drugs or tobacco.

"Parents buy their kids lottery tickets for birthday presents and take them to bingo and really see nothing wrong with that," says Harold Wynne, an Edmonton sociologist and gambling expert.

"These same parents wouldn't give the kid a drink of alcohol or sanction their using drugs."

Albert says he hasn't gambled for nine months. But he's still on guard against a powerful temptation. "It's like a force within you that drives you to it. In the same way that a normal person has to go to the bathroom, that's how I feel I have to go."

The Mail-Star (Feb. 7, 1996). Reprinted with permission of The Canadian Press.

1. Stephane and Mireille live in Montreal, where it is legal for minors to buy lottery tickets. What is the law in Nova Scotia?
2. The writer says that "most people don't think of lottery tickets as gambling." Do you agree or disagree? How could you support your opinion? Be specific.
3. Find a phrase that means the same as "people who are addicted to gambling."
4. The article says, "Adolescents appear particularly vulnerable to the addictive allure of betting and games of chance." Why might teens be particularly vulnerable?
5. What is the social issue, or problem, that this article focuses on?
6. What could be done about this problem?

Young Gamblers Spin Out of Control: Teacher's Discussion Guide

1. Stephane and Mireille live in Montreal, where it is legal for minors to buy lottery tickets. What is the law in Nova Scotia?

It is illegal to sell lottery tickets to anyone under the age of 19.

2. The writer says that "most people don't think of lottery tickets as gambling." Do you agree or disagree? How could you support your opinion? Be specific.

3. Find a phrase that means the same as "people who are addicted to gambling."

people whose need to bet takes over their life

4. The article says, "Adolescents appear particularly vulnerable to the addictive allure of betting and games of chance." Why might teens be particularly vulnerable?

possible answers: they like to take risks, they like the excitement, they are attracted to the promise of "being a winner," they like to compete, they think they can win, they like to break rules (i.e., because underage gambling is illegal), they like to show off to their friends, they like to feel older (gambling is "adult entertainment")

5. What is the social issue, or problem, that this article focuses on?

the legalization of gambling, and the susceptibility of young people to become problem gamblers; also the lack of public awareness about this risk

6. What could be done about this problem?

public education, particularly for parents and youths, about the serious potential for gambling problems among young people; tighter government controls



The Rise and Fall

8.4

Summary

A case study illustrates the negative consequences of an obsession with winning "at all costs."

Students will be able to...

- critique social messages pertaining to winning and losing
- define what it really means to be a "winner"
- analyze a case study

Curriculum Tie-in (PDR)

Unit II-A, Self-Concept: Social and Environmental Influences

Time

45 min.

Preparation

Ask students to bring to class T-shirts imprinted with sports slogans, or other slogans they've seen in ads.

Copy "The Rise and Fall of a Canadian Sports Hero," p. 69 – one for each group (or student).

Copy "Think About It," p. 70 – two for each group.

Copy "Passion's Prize," p. 71 – one for each student (optional).

Method

Class Discussion
10 min.

Discuss popular sports slogans on the topic of winning and losing. For example, "Winning isn't the important thing—it's the only thing." The following are from imprinted T-shirts:

Losing is not an option.

Second place is a first-place loser.

If you can't win, don't play.

Ask for examples of other slogans they've seen on sports ads and T-shirts. Discuss the relationship between competition and self-image:



- It is fun to compete, especially when we win, but some people say that our society puts too much emphasis on “measuring up” to someone else’s standards. Do you agree?
- If you can’t meet your own or others’ expectations, how do you feel? How does it feel when you label yourself or someone else a “loser”?
- What happens when “a game stops being a game” and is taken too seriously? (see, for example, “Passion’s Prize,” p. 71)

Small Group Discussion
20 min.

Divide the class into groups and assign a discussion leader, reader, and notetaker for each group. Give each reader a copy of “The Rise and Fall of a Canadian Sports Hero.” Give a copy of “Think About It” to each notetaker and group leader. After the article has been read, the notetaker records the group’s ideas.

Variations: The article is first read by the teacher or by students, individually, before the class breaks into groups. Students complete the discussion guide as an individual exercise.

Individual Exercise (opt.)
15 min.

Read “Passion’s Prize,” p. 71. How would you explain “what gets into these people”?

Curriculum Connections

Art: Create a “winners” montage, using advertising slogans and magazine images that illustrate the pervasive focus on competition and winning in North American society.

The Rise and Fall of a Canadian Sports Hero

In 1977, a skinny 15-year-old named Ben tagged along with his older brother to the Track Club in Scarborough, Ontario. Not long before, Ben and his five brothers and sisters had moved to Canada from Jamaica. Charlie Francis, a coach at the Club, took an interest in Ben and began training him.

Ten years later, in August 1987, a muscular Ben Johnson became "the world's fastest man" when he ran the 100-metre dash in 9.83 seconds at the World Track and Field Championships in Rome. He was soon earning \$1 million a year from companies who hired him to advertise their products.

Then, in September 1989 at the Olympic Games in Seoul, Korea, Johnson broke his own record, running 100 metres in 9.79 seconds. Around the world, millions of fans applauded Johnson's amazing performance. The prize: an Olympic gold medal for Johnson and for Canada.

But Canada's glory soon turned to shock and disgrace when Johnson tested positive for steroids. Three days after his victory at Seoul, Johnson was forced to turn over his gold medal to second-place Carl Lewis, his longtime U.S. rival. Steroids, which imitate the male hormone testosterone, give athletes an "edge" by building muscle mass, strength, and endurance. However, the drug is known to have dangerous side effects and is banned from all professional sports. Ben Johnson had cheated.

In the months that followed, the shock waves grew. At an inquiry set up by the Canadian government and watched by the international sports community, Johnson's coach, Charlie Francis, testified that steroid use was common among professional athletes—that about 80 percent used them. He said

that taking the drug was the only way Johnson could have a chance of winning. And everyone wanted Johnson to win.

Following the inquiry, the international athletics community suspended Johnson from competition for a year, and then later stripped him of both world records—the Olympic record in Seoul and the earlier one set in Rome. Johnson vowed that he would continue to compete, that he had learned his lesson, and that he would stay drug-free.

But less than five years later, Johnson tested positive for steroids once again. Many felt that he had acted out of desperation to live up to his own promises. This time Johnson was banned from competition for life.

At the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, Georgia, the embarrassment of the Ben Johnson scandal was finally washed away by sprinter Donovan Bailey, who recaptured Canada's glory when he ran the 100-metre dash in 9.84 seconds, winning a gold medal and setting a new world record. Bailey was also the anchor for the men's 4 by 100-metre relay team, which brought home a second gold medal for Canada.

Sources:

"Back on Track: A Disgraced Champion Returns to Racing."
Maclean's (Jan. 21, 1991): 48.

"A Day of Reckoning: Ben Johnson Admits That He Took Steroids."
Maclean's (June 26, 1989): 32–33.

Dolphin, Rick. "The Steroid Scandal: Testimony About Ben Johnson's Use of Banned Drugs Stunned the Sports World."
Maclean's (Mar. 13, 1989): 36–39.

"Scandal: Act 2." *Maclean's* (Mar. 15, 1993): 18–19.

"Starting Over: Ben Johnson's Will Lose Two World Records."
Maclean's (Sept. 18, 1989): 66.

1. What was Ben Johnson's gamble? (What did he hope to win? What did he risk losing?)

2. Ben Johnson once said, "Why should I always have to be the only one to pay? What about the others?" Do you think it was fair that Johnson was punished for using steroids when so many others use them and don't get caught?

3. The idea that "winning is everything" can lead people to cheat. Sometimes it also leads to violence. Give some examples.

4. Some people say that the Olympics have become too commercialized, that there is too much focus on a handful of "superhero" athletes, and that the original spirit of the games has been lost. Do you agree?

5. What does it *really* mean to be a "winner"?

Passion's Prize

Montreal Stanley Cup triumph touches off joy and violence

Barry Came

A win. A riot.

They are the two faces of hockey in Montreal and they are fast becoming as inevitable as a Stanley Cup playoff in spring. The first inspires, spawning legends that ornament the history of the celebrated Canadiens' club that rolled over the Los Angeles Kings last week to capture the sport's ultimate prize for a record-setting 24th time. But the other face is ugly, a dark by-product—perhaps—of the charged atmosphere in a town where hockey is not merely a game but a tradition-laden, all-consuming passion....

The last time the Canadiens won the Stanley Cup, in 1986, joyous supporters celebrated by trashing the downtown core. Only last month, the Quebec courts found Montreal's police negligent in failing to control the 5,000 hockey fans who looted and burned to celebrate the Canadiens' victory over the Calgary Flames. This time, to prevent a repeat occurrence, Montreal's authorities deployed close to 1,000 police, many of them helmeted riot troopers.

But it all proved fruitless. Just moments after Montreal thumped Los Angeles last week, the rioting

flared. A mob of thousands ran amok, smashing windows in the Forum and along Ste-Catherine Street. They tore the branches from the frail trees that line the thoroughfare, overturned cars, ransacked more than 100 stores and started bonfires. "We're celebrating, of course," screamed one youth who, after urinating on the windows of a downtown hotel, proceeded, along with several companions, to try to kick in the panels of a network TV van.

When city officials grimly totalled the damage the following day, they found 300 separate acts of mischief. Fifteen city buses and 47 police cars were destroyed. There were 115 arrests, 168 people injured, including 49 police officers. The Insurance Board of Canada estimated the loss in property damage at more than \$10 million. It was, said Mayor Jean Doré, "a regrettable and appalling situation."

It was also inexplicable, certainly for those who suffered. "God only knows what gets into these people," said Fred Zaher, who stood holding a bloody handkerchief to his broken nose as he surveyed the damage to his convenience store not far from the Forum. In a town where hockey is as much a religion as a game, perhaps it does require a deity to offer an explanation.

Maclean's (June 21, 1993). Reprinted with permission.



Scam Buster

8.5

Summary

A mock sweepstakes offer alerts students to deceptive marketing practices.

Students will be able to...

- analyze a direct mail flyer
- decide how they would respond to the flyer

Curriculum Tie-in (PDR)

Unit VI-D, Consumer Awareness; Unit II-C, Decision Making

Time

35 min.

Preparation

Copy the "Congratulations!" letter, p. 75, and the cheque, p. 77 – one for each student. Copy p. 76 onto the back of each letter. Personalize the letters and cheques by writing the students' names on the blanks (or ask them to write their own names).

Copy "Would You Do It?" p. 78 – two for each discussion group.

Method

Small Group Activity
20 min.

Distribute a copy of "Congratulations!" to each student. Explain that they have just received this letter in the mail, personalized with their names. Don't call attention to the paragraph on the back of the letter; let students discover it for themselves.

Note that this letter is based on a real sweepstakes offer and has been changed and simplified only slightly. The message, terms, and odds are the same as in the original.

Ask students to read the letter to themselves and decide how they will respond.

Divide the class into groups. Distribute a copy of "Would You Do It?" to a discussion leader and notetaker in each group.



Class Discussion
15 min.

Use the "Teacher's Discussion Guide" on p. 79 to lead a class discussion of the sweepstakes offer.

Ask students to look for, collect, and critique other "free prize" scams. One example: A company calls or writes with a promise to send a free prize or gift. The company says that the product is being held in a warehouse and that a "small fee" to cover shipping, handling, insurance, etc. must be sent before the prize can be "released." It turns out that the prize is worth much less than the fee. According to the Better Business Bureau of Nova Scotia, "'stereo sets' are simply hand-held battery-operated transistor radios, 'food processors' are fancier versions of carrot peelers, and 'five-piece luggage sets' arrive folded into a four-by-six-inch box."

Remember: The only free cheese is in the trap!

Curriculum Connections

Art/Computer Graphics: The Better Business Bureau has asked you to design a brochure that warns consumers of direct mail "get-rich-quick" scams. Use a combination of text and graphics to get your message across.

THE OFFICES OF
ABZ INDEPENDANT SWEEPSTAKES ORGANIZATION



Congratulations!

Dear _____:

Your name was entered in our sweepstakes contest, and we are happy to announce that you have won a prize of up to \$7,500.00 in cash. This is an important document regarding your cash prize. This is your Judging Organization Cash Cheque Disbursement Authorization. Do not misplace it. Read it carefully.

I regret that the enclosed cheque has not yet been signed, because of our strict regulation that we must hear from you before your prize can be awarded. You must contact us with your personal Security Code:

I.D. Number: 128 047 387.

Do not lose your Security Code I.D. Number, and DO NOT SHOW THIS NUMBER TO ANYONE UNTIL YOU HAVE REGISTERED IT WITH OUR OFFICE. Contact us as soon as possible by mail or phone to provide us with your Number and claim your prize.

FOR IMMEDIATE CHEQUE PROCESSING CALL:

1-900-243-8995

(24 hr./day, 7 days/week, 19 yrs. or older, touch-tone phone, \$4.99/min.)

Provide the correct answer to this skill-testing question, and we will promptly confirm the amount of your cash award. Your cheque will then be rushed to you, at your home address.

$$100 \times 10 + 100 - 25 = \boxed{}$$

Because of the large amount of money involved in this sweepstakes, you must correctly answer this skill-testing question within three minutes, without any assistance.

To respond by mail, cut out your name, Security Code I.D. Number, and the box containing the answer to your skill-testing question and attach to a 4" by 6" postcard. Do not use staples and do not place in envelope. Mail to: ABZ Disbursements, 111 Prize Lane, Scamborough, Ontario M2N 3I1. Entries must be received before the deadline. Improper, incomplete, and illegible entries are disqualified.

We hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Joe Schmidt

P.S. Remember we cannot act until we hear from you. Contact us without delay.

Consumer Disclosure: Awards and odds are: (1) \$7,500.00 (1:2,949,679); (1) \$2,500.00 (1:2,949,679); (1) \$1,000.00 (1:2,949,679); (1) \$750.00 (1:2,949,679); (1) \$175.00 (1:2,949,679); \$1.37 (approximately 1:1). Not responsible for lost, late, misdirected, or postage-due mail; or malfunctions in telephone transmission.

IN PAYMENT FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEM(S)

DATE	ITEM	AMOUNT
	IN RE. SWEEPSTAKES	
	CASH AWARD	\$7,500.00
	DISBURSEMENT HELD	
	PENDING WINNING	
	NUMBER REGISTRATION	
	AND PRESENTATION	
	TOTAL OF ITEMS	
	LESS % DISCOUNT	
	LESS	
	DEDUCTIONS	
	TOTAL	\$7,500.00

AUDIT CONTROL BUREAU
 DISBURSEMENTS DIVISION
 1 NCC PLAZA • POST OFFICE BOX 30790
 LAGUNA HILLS, CA 92654-0790 USA

NO. 128 047 387
 June 25 19 96
 16/2149
 4678

PAY
THE
SUM **SEVEN THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS**

IF YOU HAVE AND SUBMIT THE GRAND PRIZE WINNING NUMBER AND COMPLY WITH THE RULES, A GENUINE CASHIER'S CHEQUE WILL BE ISSUED IMMEDIATELY.

TO JOE PUBLIC
 THE 10 ANYSTREET
 ORDER EVERYTOWN, CAN
 OF

DOLLARS	CENTS
\$7,500	00

Authorized Signature, NCC SR. OFFICER

Security Code# 128 047 387
 NOT VALID/NOT A CHEQUE

Authorized Signature, NCC SR. OFFICER

00 286 122006 1 1 121617

Would You Do It?

1. How does the letter try to make you feel important—like a winner?
2. How does the letter try to impress you with the seriousness of the offer?
3. What is the letter asking you to do?
4. A long distance phone number with a 1-900 prefix is set up so that you pay a certain amount to the company receiving the call, on top of your usual long-distance charges. How much would you pay to call this company?
5. What do you think will happen when you call the company?
6. How does the letter try to discourage you from responding by mail?
7. What are the odds of winning \$7,500 in this "sweepstakes" lottery? What "prize" will you probably win?
8. Would you respond to this offer?

Would You Do It?: Teacher's Discussion Guide

1. How does the letter try to make you feel important—like a winner?

by addressing you by name, by promising you instant "cash," by giving you your own special "code," by testing your "skill" with an easy math question

2. How does the letter try to impress you with the seriousness of the offer?

by using official-sounding language, like "Security Code I.D. Number," "Judging Organization Cash Cheque Disbursement Authorization"; by warning against showing your ID number to anyone else

3. What is the letter asking you to do?

respond by mail or phone

4. A long distance phone number with a 1-900 prefix is set up so that you pay a certain amount to the company receiving the call, on top of your usual long-distance charges. How much would you pay to call this company?

\$4.99 per minute

5. What do you think will happen when you call the company?

The company will keep you on the line as long as possible. They will probably allow three minutes for the answer to the "skill-testing" question, they will allow time for reporting and processing the "Security Code" number, they may ask you to route your call using number codes, and so on.

6. How does the letter try to discourage you from responding by mail?

by making the phone option seem quick and easy; by making the mail option complicated (obtaining a stamp and postcard of the correct size, then cutting and pasting); and by warning that "improper, incomplete, and illegible" mail entries will be disqualified

7. What are the odds of winning \$7,500 in this "sweepstakes" lottery? What "prize" will you probably win?

See the "consumer disclosure" on the back of the letter, as required by law. The odds of winning the \$7,500 prize are one in almost three million. The odds are the same for winning the prizes of \$2,500, \$1,000, \$750, and \$175. You are almost certain to win the prize of \$1.37. You will probably have spent \$50 or more on long distance charges in the process.

8. Would you respond to this offer?

Don't do it!

Grade 9

When Gambling Becomes a Problem

Introduction	81
Lesson Overview	83
9.1 Young Gamblers	85
9.2 Winning Streak	89
9.3 You Lose!	99
9.4 Stories	111
9.5 Where Lies the Risk?	125



Grade 9

When Gambling Becomes a Problem

Most young people exchange bets for fun, for something to do, as a way to challenge their friends. They enjoy the risk and the excitement, but they can set their own limits and stop when they need to. But for some, gambling becomes more than a game. Losing is too hard to accept, winning is too important, and the excitement of playing becomes a hook. More and more time and money are consumed, as gradually—or not so gradually—other interests and commitments fade to the background. Gambling can become the central focus, and the central passion, of a young person's life.

This unit takes a detailed look at how a gambling problem can develop and where it can lead. A video introduces the topic by challenging students to assess their own attitudes and behaviour. Do they gamble? Do they ever say "I betcha..."? Do they think that gambling has its risks?

In subsequent lessons, activities that include a game, case studies, and group exercises lead students to see what makes some people more vulnerable to the lure of gambling than others. They discover that most of their peers are placing bets of some kind or another and they think of ways to warn others of the risks involved.

During these lessons, be sensitive to the fact that there may be students in your class who are living with a parent who is a problem gambler. These students may be especially vocal in their criticism of problem gambling, or they may tend to withdraw during classroom activities and discussion. Other students may be problem gamblers themselves. They will likely react to this topic with a mixture of piqued interest and uncomfortableness. A nonjudgemental, supportive classroom climate will help prevent students from retreating into passivity or expressing their defensiveness in inappropriate ways.

Be sure that your presentation of this topic includes information about where young people can go for help with a gambling problem. Let them know about the province's toll-free Problem Gambling Help Line, which they can call for counselling, information, or referrals: 1-888-347-8888. Also, contact the Drug Dependency Services office in your region for information about the services they provide (see "Resources," p. 181).



Before You Start

- Let parents know that you will be teaching lessons from *Drawing the Line*. Use the sample letter on p. xiv, or write a letter of your own.
- Browse through the InfoSheets at the back of this book, especially InfoSheet F, "Why Some People Gamble Too Much," and InfoSheet G, "Stages of Problem Gambling."
- Decide which lessons you will teach. The Lesson Overview on the following page shows where each lesson fits into the PDR curriculum. This unit can be taught within Unit VI, Healthy Active Living: C. Substance Abuse Prevention (esp. influences, risk factors, support services). Problem gambling is included under the topic of substance abuse because both issues share many of the same risk factors, dynamics, and progressive stages, and therefore involve the same prevention strategies.
- Order a copy of the video *Spare Time, Spare Cash* from the Learning Resources and Technology Media Library.



Grade 9 Lesson Overview

SUMMARY

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be able to...

CURRICULUM

TIE-IN (PDR)

9.1 Young Gamblers

A video stimulates a discussion about gambling among young people. Students design and conduct a survey of gambling behaviour among their peers.

- suggest motives for gambling
- identify the consequences of gambling too much
- conduct a survey
- compare the results to those of a provincial survey

Unit VI-C,
Drug Use and Abuse/
Problem Gambling:
Influences

9.2 Winning Streak

A dramatized story evokes the intoxication of winning and introduces the topic of problem gambling. Simple probability exercises illustrate the sobering reality of unfavourable odds.

- compare gambling addiction with addiction to a substance
- apply the mathematical law of averages and the law of independent events
- calculate the odds of winning prizes

Unit VI-C,
Substance Use and
Abuse/Problem
Gambling: Influences

9.3 You Lose!

A class activity illustrates the self-deception that leads to "chasing losses" and introduces the stages of problem gambling.

- restate, in note form, the stages of problem gambling
- suggest reasons why a problem gambler continues to chase losses
- recall where someone can go for help with a gambling problem

Unit VI-C,
Substance Use and
Abuse/Problem
Gambling:
Consequences

9.4 Stories

Two case studies give students an opportunity to apply what they have learned about the stages and dynamics of problem gambling.

- present one section of a case study to the rest of the class
- analyze case studies in terms of influences, progressive stages, underlying motivation, and the possibility of early intervention

Unit VI-C,
Substance Use and
Abuse/Problem
Gambling: Influences,
Consequences

9.5 Where Lies the Risk?

Students establish their own guidelines for low-risk gambling and use the medium of their choice to communicate these.

- evaluate risk levels
- infer indicators of high-risk gambling
- communicate the principles of low-risk gambling
- assess whether they have a gambling problem

Unit VI-C,
Substance Use and
Abuse/Problem
Gambling: Risk Factors



Young Gamblers

Summary

A video stimulates a discussion about gambling among young people. Students design and conduct a survey of gambling behaviour among their peers.

Students will be able to...

- suggest motives for gambling
- identify the consequences of gambling too much
- conduct a survey
- compare the results to those of a provincial survey

Curriculum Tie-in (PDR)

Unit VI-C, Drug Use and Abuse/Problem Gambling: Influences, Consequences

Time

45+ min.

Preparation

*Order a copy of the video *Spare Time, Spare Cash*.*

Make transparency—"Gambling Among Grade Nine Students," p. 88.

Refer to "A Few Facts," p. xv.

Method

Class Activity

45 min.+

The video *Spare Time, Spare Cash*, produced by the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission in 1996, features teens talking about gambling and problem gambling. The video is about 23 minutes long and is divided into three segments, or modules. Show each segment, then stop the video for discussion, using the following questions as a focus. Or ask these questions first, as a way of introducing the segment. You can also select some of the questions for a follow-up written exercise.

Module 1. Betting

- What is gambling?
- Do you gamble? Do you bet? How often do you say "I betcha...?"
- What kinds of bets do you make?
- Is gambling an important issue for you?



Module 2. Motives/winning and losing

- Why do people gamble?
- Is it about money?
- How does it feel to win? to lose?

Module 3. Consequences

- What are the risks? What can happen?
- What is the worst that can happen?
- Are you worried about this?
- How can you stay out of trouble with gambling?

The video concludes by displaying Alberta's toll-free Gambling Help Line. In Nova Scotia, the number is 1-888-347-8888.

Extension/Homework

Design a survey that will find out whether teens in your school or community are gambling and, if so, what types of gambling activities they are engaged in and how often. You could use the same questions that were asked in a province-wide school survey conducted in 1996, shown on the following page.

Include the variables of gender and age. Make copies of your questionnaire to distribute to students, and set a deadline for collecting results.

Use the "Gambling Among Grade Nine Students" transparency to compare the results with those of the province-wide survey.



In the past 12 months, how often have you done done the following	never	less than monthly	monthly	weekly	daily
played cards for money					
played bingo for money					
bet on sports activities					
played Sports Select lottery					
played any other lottery					
played any video lottery games or machines					
made other bets					

Include the variables of gender and age. Make copies of your questionnaire to distribute to students, and set a deadline for collecting results.

Use the "Gambling Among Grade Nine Students" transparency to compare the results with those of the province-wide survey.

Gambling Among Grade 9 Students: A Nova Scotia Survey

	Any time in the past 12 months (%)	At least monthly (%)
Lottery other than Sport Select	41.7	15.3
Cards for money	42.4	17.4
Bingo for money	28.9	7.4
Bet on sports activities	31.2	13.3
Video lottery machines	21.0	6.2
Sport Select lottery	19.2	9.0

Population: Grade 9 students in the four Nova Scotia Health Regions

Sample Size: approx. 948 students

Method: Anonymous questionnaires distributed by university students while the teacher was out of the room and collected in sealed unlabeled envelopes.

Date of Survey: April/May 1996

Published in: *Nova Scotia Student Drug Use 1996: Technical Report*, Drug Dependency Services, Nova Scotia Dept. of Health, and Dalhousie University, 1996.



Winning Streak

9.2

Summary

A dramatized story evokes the intoxication of winning and introduces the topic of problem gambling. Simple probability exercises illustrate the sobering reality of unfavourable odds.

Students will be able to...

- compare gambling addiction with addiction to a substance
- apply the mathematical law of averages and the law of independent events
- calculate the odds of winning prizes

Curriculum Tie-in (PDR)

Unit VI-C, Substance Use and Abuse/Problem Gambling: Influences

Time

45 min.

Preparation

Refer to InfoSheet E, "The Odds," InfoSheet F, "Why Some People Gamble Too Much," InfoSheet H, "Gambling as an Addiction," and InfoSheet M, "Video Gambling Machines."

Read "Bingo at the Elks Club," pp. 91–92, in preparation for presenting it to the class (or assign this presentation to a male student with a talent for acting).

Bring to class a handful of pennies.

Copy "What Are the Odds?" pp. 93–95 – two for each group.

Method

Class Activity
20 min.

Read aloud "Bingo at the Elks Club," dramatizing the suspense leading up to Ma's big win.

Follow up with a discussion:

- What did Dumas learn that night at the Elks Club?
- What do you think will happen to Ma's \$1,400?
- What did Dumas mean when he said that Ma "did more than play [bingo]: she lived for it"? Would you say this means Ma is addicted to gambling?



- What is the difference between being addicted to a substance like nicotine or heroin and being addicted to an activity like gambling? How are they the same? How are they different?
- Do you think Dumas will become addicted to gambling? Explain.

Note that, although Dumas's story is fictional and its setting and plot are exotic, aspects of his testimony are typical of problem gamblers everywhere. Many people who get into trouble with gambling point to their first big win as the turning point, the first hook. As with Dumas, the exhilaration of winning leaves them wanting more. Sometimes it happens at a young age, often when nothing else is going right. Perhaps they come from a family that is in some way unstable or dysfunctional (in this story, Ma is not Dumas's mother; everyone calls her Ma. Dumas was an unclaimed orphan). Often their first experience of gambling is associated with longed-for admiration and praise. Suddenly they are "lucky"; finally they can feel like a real winner.

The kind of parental modelling and positive reinforcement illustrated in this story can imprint deeply on a young person. In some cases, it can lead to increased involvement with gambling later in life. Many other factors, such as self-esteem and opportunities to gamble, also come to bear on whether a young person will develop a problem with gambling. See InfoSheet F, "Why Some People Gamble Too Much."

Variations: Assign the follow-up questions to discussion groups, or turn them into a written exercise.

Small Group Activity
25 min.

Divide the class into groups and assign a leader and notetaker for each group. Distribute one or two pennies and two copies of "What Are the Odds?" (for the leader and notetaker) to each group. Use the "Teacher's Discussion Guide" on pp. 96–98 to lead a class discussion of the results.

Bingo at the Elk's Club

The year is 1948, the place is Vicksburg, Mississippi. Fifteen-year-old Dumas Monk is sitting in his cell, writing his story. This is his last chance to avoid a lifetime in prison. Dumas was caught in the Hot Springs Casino, the only survivor of a high-stakes poker game that turned sour and ended in a deadly shoot-out. In court, the judge told him to explain exactly how he came to be in this fix and sent him to his cell with paper and pencils. In the following passage Dumas describes how he first got involved with gambling.

by Otto R. Salassi

The way it got started was through Ma. You will remember that I told you she played bingo, and she did. She did more than play: She lived for it....

The night I first played, the Jackpot was up to 60 numbers, the highest it had ever been, and \$900. Every woman in the place was playing as many cards as she could watch, and there wasn't room for another one on any table anywhere.

Ma had hit three of the nickel games for over \$100, and the X game for \$350, and then I'll be darned if she didn't have to wait for the jackpot on the fiftieth number. I-30 she was waiting for, and everybody around her knew it because she started telling them about it.

"I got a wait! I got a wait!" she started saying, and it was sort of like she was praying, and sort of like she was moaning and in pain. I'd say it started out more like praying. "Come on, I-30... Come on I-30," it started, and then the caller, a man named Ward, called out "Under the O—" and she moaned and just about died, dreading what he was going to say next because it meant somebody else might win.

"Seventy," he called, and nobody said anything, and Ma swelled up again like a walrus, closed her eyes, and started praying, "I-30... I-30... Come on, I-30..."

And the caller said, "Under the I—" and Ma sucked in her breath, closed her eyes, and clenched her teeth, and he said, "29," and it was just like you had a blowout on the highway.

And then it got up to the fifty-seventh number, and she had four waits, and everybody around her had waits, and she didn't think it was fair because she'd been waiting for I-30 forever. And by that time she was making so much noise that she was bothering everybody in the place. The caller, Ward, knew what she was sitting on and liked teasing her. On the next number out of the tumbler he looked right at her and smiled and said, "Under the I—" and he made her wait till she opened her eyes to see what was wrong, and then he said "30," and the place almost went wild. Everybody started cussing and beating on the tables and, if there hadn't been laws against it, would have gladly killed her.

She had won more money that night, that first night I went with her and picked out the cards, than any player had won at any game of bingo in the history of Vicksburg, almost \$1,400.

The third period of the night at the Elks, after another intermission, was nickel bingo again, and we didn't hang around for that. We took the money and got out during the intermission, with women all around us wanting to know who I was and some of them wanting to rub my head.

That was my introduction to gambling, and because of it Ma wanted me to go play bingo

with her from then on, and pick out the cards. Luckily, nobody can keep up with that kind of luck very long, and pretty soon I was picking cards that turned out to be terrible and she was losing money again like a normal person.

But that first night is still important, because some of the thrill of her winning rubbed off. I hate to admit it, but every time they called a number that wasn't hers, I was dying, too. And when she won, I couldn't help it, I jumped up out of my chair and went jumping all the way down the aisle, and they had to grab me and hold me down, it was that exciting.

And there's more about winning I could say. It doesn't matter whether it's in bingo or in pool or in poker, winning gets your juices going and all your nerves on edge so that when it's all over and you've won, you're starving. Winning has never failed to make me hungry enough to eat a horse.

That why, I've noticed, there always seems to be some kind of restaurant or food for sale around

where people gamble. Around racetracks, for instance, there's always tons of steak houses.

In front of the Elks Club that first night, just like he was waiting there for us, there was a man with a cart full of hot tamales,* and Ma was starving too and bought him out. We went home that night like we'd gone to battle and won the war, with \$1,400 in cash and nine dozen hot tamales....

I tell you all of this, your honor, because it's the only way I know to tell you what gambling, at least at first, was like. Nothing has ever tasted so good in my life as those tamales did that first night.

And that's how I got started gambling.

** Tamale: ground meat and chili rolled in a cornmeal skin, wrapped in corn husks, and steamed.*

Source:

Excerpted from *Jimmy D., Sidewinder, and Me*, an historical novel for young adults. ©1987 by Otto R. Salassi. Reprinted by permission of Greenwillow Books, a division of William Morrow & Company, Inc.

What Are the Odds?

Take your time—some of these aren't as simple as they seem! Express all odds as percentages.

1. Suppose you and a friend toss a coin to see who is going to wash the dishes. You call heads. What are the odds you will have to wash the dishes?

2. Based on these odds, *about* how many times would you expect to get heads if you flipped a penny

60 times? _____

a thousand times? _____

3. Take turns predicting exactly how many times a coin will come up tails out of 20 flips. Then do it and record the outcome. Whose guess was the closest?

4. True or false? The more times you flip a coin, the closer the actual outcome (expressed as a percent) will be to the odds.

True

False

5. If you flip a penny nine times and it comes up tails every time, what is the chance that it will come up heads on the tenth toss?

6. Joe buys several lottery tickets every week. If Joe always plays the same six numbers (his "lucky numbers") will the odds of his winning stay the same or improve over time?

7. A scratch-and-win game announces: "Every ticket is a chance to win \$5,000!" Each ticket costs \$1. Does this seem like a fair game? What other information would help you decide?

8. Study the following information about a scratch-and-win game, then use a calculator to answer the questions.

Number of scratch-and-win tickets for sale: 6,000,000. Cost of each ticket: \$2

Prizes:

<i>If you get...</i>	<i>You win...</i>	<i>Total no. of prizes awarded</i>
3 X's	\$2	1,000,000
3 flags	\$5	400,000
3 pirate hats	\$10	150,000
3 ships	\$20	30,000
3 jewels	\$50	10,000
3 rings	\$100	250
3 gold coins	\$1,000	100
3 treasure chests	\$10,000	13

Assuming that all tickets are sold and all prizes are cashed in, how much money is paid back to players as prizes?

Where do you think the rest of the money will go?

What percentage of tickets pay more than \$100? _____

What are the odds of winning the \$10,000 prize? _____

What are the odds of winning the \$2 prize? _____

If all the tickets are sold to separate buyers, how many people will come out ahead? _____

How many will break even? _____

How many will lose their \$2? _____

On the back of each ticket it says, "Total prize payout, 57%. Overall chances of winning: 1 in 4." Do you think this is enough information about the odds? Explain.

9. Even when they know the odds are against them, many people still like to play gambling games. Suggest reasons for this.

10. Some people keep playing until they have lost everything—and then they borrow money so they can play some more. Suggest reasons for this.



What Are the Odds? Teacher's Discussion Guide

1. Suppose you and a friend toss a coin to see who is going to wash the dishes. You call heads. What are the odds you will have to wash the dishes?

50%

2. Based on these odds, *about* how many times would you expect to get heads if you flipped a penny

60 times? about 30

a thousand times? about 500

3. Take turns predicting exactly how many times a coin will come up tails out of 20 flips. Then do it and record the outcome. Whose guess was the closest?

Note that it is common to expect a short sequence of events to reflect the odds. However the odds refer to an average that may only appear over a large number of trials. Total all trials and outcomes for the groups. Quite likely, the composite outcome will be closer to the 50% probability than that of the smaller groups.

4. True or false? The more times you flip a coin, the closer the actual outcome (expressed as a percent) will be to the odds.

True. As suggested by the "law of averages," also known as the "law of large numbers," the more times an event is repeated, the closer the actual outcome will be to the theoretical probability.

5. If you flip a penny nine times, and it comes up tails every time, what is the chance that it will come up heads on the tenth toss?

50%. The odds that a single coin will come up tails is always 50%. The outcome of the previous trials does not affect the tenth trial in any way. The coin does not "remember" the previous outcomes. These are independent events; each toss has to be seen separately. A confusion between dependent and independent events often leads to "gambler's fallacy" or "magical thinking"—the belief that "luck" or probability follows a pattern that isn't random.

6. Joe buys several lottery tickets every week. If Joe always plays the same six numbers (his "lucky numbers") will the odds of his winning stay the same or improve over time?

They will always be the same (i.e., the odds of winning the jackpot are 1 in 14 million). Every drawing of the winning numbers is an independent chance event. Like the coin toss, past outcomes have no influence over the next outcome. It doesn't matter if Joe plays the same or different numbers each time. The odds of his winning will always be the same.



Teacher's Discussion Guide

7. A scratch-and-win game announces: "Every ticket is a chance to win \$5,000!" Each ticket costs \$1. Does this seem like a fair game? What other information would help you decide?

To determine the odds, you will need to know how many tickets are being sold and how many \$5,000 prizes will be awarded.

8. Study the following information about a scratch-and-win game, then use a calculator to answer the questions.

Number of scratch-and-win tickets for sale: 6,000,000. Cost of each ticket: \$2

Prizes:

<i>If you get...</i>	<i>You win...</i>	<i>Total no. of prizes awarded</i>
3 X's	\$2	1,000,000
3 flags	\$5	400,000
3 pirate hats	\$10	150,000
3 ships	\$20	30,000
3 jewels	\$50	10,000
3 rings	\$100	250
3 gold coins	\$1,000	100
3 treasure chests	\$10,000	13
Total	\$1,494,125	6,850,000

Assuming that all tickets are sold and all prizes are cashed in, how much money is paid back to players as prizes?

\$6,850,000

Where do you think the rest of the money will go?

If this was an Atlantic Lottery Corporation game, about half of the profit (25% of total wagers) would go to the provincial government, to be used as general revenue. The rest would be paid to the retailers that sell the tickets and would also cover the expenses of printing the tickets and running the lottery.

What percentage of tickets pay more than \$100?

125 tickets out of 6,000,000, or .002%



Teacher's Discussion Guide

What are the odds of winning the \$10,000 prize?

25 in 6,000,000 or 1:240,000

What are the odds of winning the \$2 prize?

1,000,000 in 6,000,000 or 1:6

If all the tickets are sold to separate buyers, how many people will come out ahead?

494,125

How many will break even?

1,000,000

How many will lose their \$2 bet?

4,505,875

On the back of each ticket it says, "Total prize payout, 57%. Overall chances of winning: 1 in 4." Do you think that this is enough information about the odds? Explain.

A payout table, such as the one above, is needed in order to determine the odds of winning the larger prizes, if that is the potential buyer's main concern. It may be misleading to only give the odds of winning any prize, since so many of these involve merely breaking even.

9. Even when they know the odds are against them, many people still like to play gambling games. Suggest reasons for this.

Reasons may include: the fun of playing, the chance of winning, it's something to do, they can afford to lose, the social aspect, etc.

10. Some people keep playing until they have lost everything—and then they borrow money so they can play some more. Suggest reasons for this.

Reasons may include: the hope of winning, illusions about the odds, the excitement of playing, addiction. See also InfoSheet F, "Why Some People Gamble Too Much." Note that video gambling machines are the type of gambling most often linked to gambling addiction. The machines are particularly seductive because they offer both "action" (ongoing anticipation, suspense, excitement) and escape (passive absorption). See also InfoSheet M, "Video Gambling Machines."



You Lose!

Summary

A class activity illustrates the self-deception that leads to "chasing losses" and introduces the stages of problem gambling.

Students will be able to...

- restate, in note form, the stages of problem gambling
- suggest reasons why a problem gambler continues to chase losses
- recall where someone can go for help with a gambling problem

Curriculum Tie-in (PDR)

Unit VI-C, Substance Use and Abuse/Problem Gambling: Consequences

Time

35 min.

Preparation

Refer to InfoSheet F, "Why Some People Gamble Too Much," and InfoSheet G, "Stages of Problem Gambling."

Copy "Place Your Bets," p. 102. Cut into strips, fold each strip, and put all the strips into a paper bag. Label the bag "Place Your Bets."

Copy "Win or Lose," p. 103. Cut into strips, fold each strip, and put all the strips into a paper bag. Label the bag "Win or Lose?"

Copy "How Does Gambling Become a Problem?" p. 109-110 – one for each student.

Make transparencies – "Money Graph," p. 104, and "The Journey Back," p. 108.

Use the colour transparencies of "Stages" (see pp. 105-107), located in the back-cover sleeve.

Have ready a red and black marker, for use with the "Money Graph" transparency.

Method

Class Activity
20 min.

The objective of this activity is to illustrate how "chasing losses" leads to a downward spiral of problem gambling. You can enhance the activity by role-playing the "voice" of the problem gambler.



Introduce the situation: You were at a bingo game with your aunt last night and you won \$100. You feel great! You feel lucky! You are “on a roll”—a winning streak. Why not use some of the money to test your luck? Maybe you can double your money.

Ask a student to choose a slip of paper from the “Place Your Bets” bag and read what it says to the class. Ask the student to decide how much of the \$100 to bet. Then ask a second student to choose a “Win or Lose?” slip and read the outcome.

Use the “Money Graph” transparency, covering the bottom half (i.e., “Get More Money”) with a sheet of paper. Plot the result of your wager. Continue placing bets and plotting the outcomes. Once the graph dips below zero, ask the class what choices are available. (They could either stop playing and count their losses or get more money so they can keep playing.)

Convince the class to keep placing bets: You are confident this is just a temporary setback. Remember what it was like to win \$100—it happened so quickly, so easily. It could just as easily happen again next time. You just need one more chance. You know where you could get more money.

Uncover the heading “Get More Money” on the transparency. Once students agree to go along, uncover the first option: “withdraw \$100 from your savings account.” After that option has been used, cross it out.

Continue placing bets. Uncover options for getting more money as needed, crossing out each one as it is used up. Because the odds of the “Win or Lose” strips are stacked against the players, they will invariably end up deeply in debt, after having borrowed money and committed crimes in the process.

- Why does the person keep gambling at this point? (possible answers: because he or she has become addicted to the “action” of gambling and can’t stop; he or she is chasing losses, as a desperate attempt to get out of debt; out of nostalgia for the winning phase and the illusion that the next big win is just around the corner; to escape the pain of losing, debt, deception)

At the final point on the graph write: “You are here. What are your options?”



Use the "Stages" transparencies and InfoSheet G to discuss the stages of problem gambling. When discussing "The Journey Back," let students know about the problem gambling services available in Nova Scotia (see "Resources," p. 181). All of these services can be accessed through the province's toll-free Problem Gambling Help Line: 1-888-347-8888. The Help Line is staffed by trained counsellors 24 hours a day, who can offer confidential advice or refer the caller to services in their region.

Individual Exercise
15 min.

Students complete "How Does Gambling Become a Problem?"

Place Your Bets

Bet on your favourite sports team.

Play a high-stakes card game.

Buy scratch-and-win tickets.

Play pool for money.

Play at a VLT.

Play bingo for cash prizes.

Bet on your favourite sports team.

Play a high-stakes card game.

Buy scratch-and-win tickets.

Play pool for money.

Play at a VLT.

Play bingo for cash prizes.

Bet on your favourite sports team.

Play a high-stakes card game.

Buy scratch-and-win tickets.

Play pool for money.

Play at a VLT.

Win or Lose?

Lose your bet.

Lose your bet.

Lose your bet.

Lose your bet.

Lose your bet.

Lose your bet.

Lose your bet.

Lose your bet.

Lose your bet.

Win back $\frac{1}{2}$ of your bet.

Win back $\frac{1}{2}$ of your bet.

Break even.

Break even.

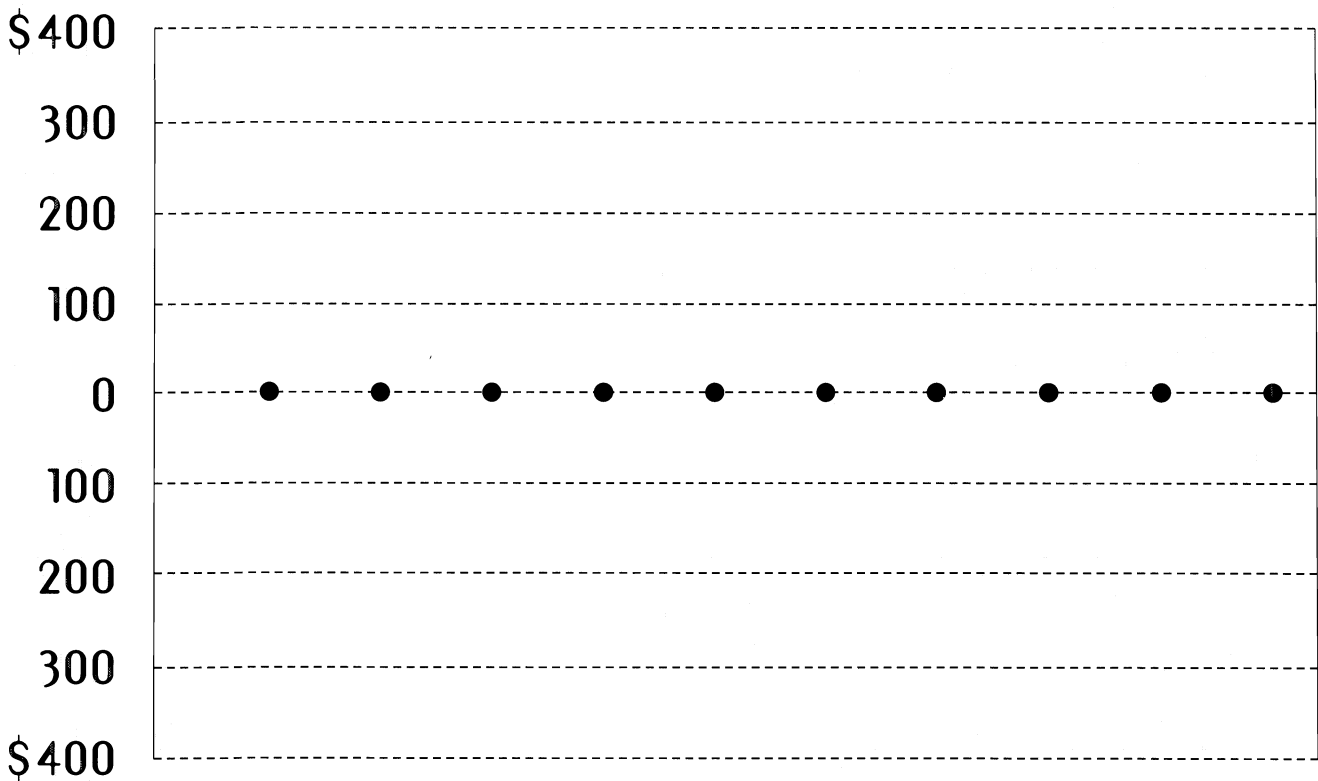
Break even.

Win 2 times your bet.

Win 2 times your bet.

Win 3 times your bet.

Money Graph



Get More Money

Withdraw the money from your savings account.

Borrow from a friend.

Borrow what you need from Grandma, who promises not to tell your parents.

Borrow what you need from a parent. Lie about the reason.

Borrow against the bonds that your parents set aside for your university education.

“Borrow” what you need by forging a parent’s cheque. Promise to yourself that you’ll pay it back.

“Borrow” the money you need for the cash register where you work. Promise to yourself that you’ll pay it back.

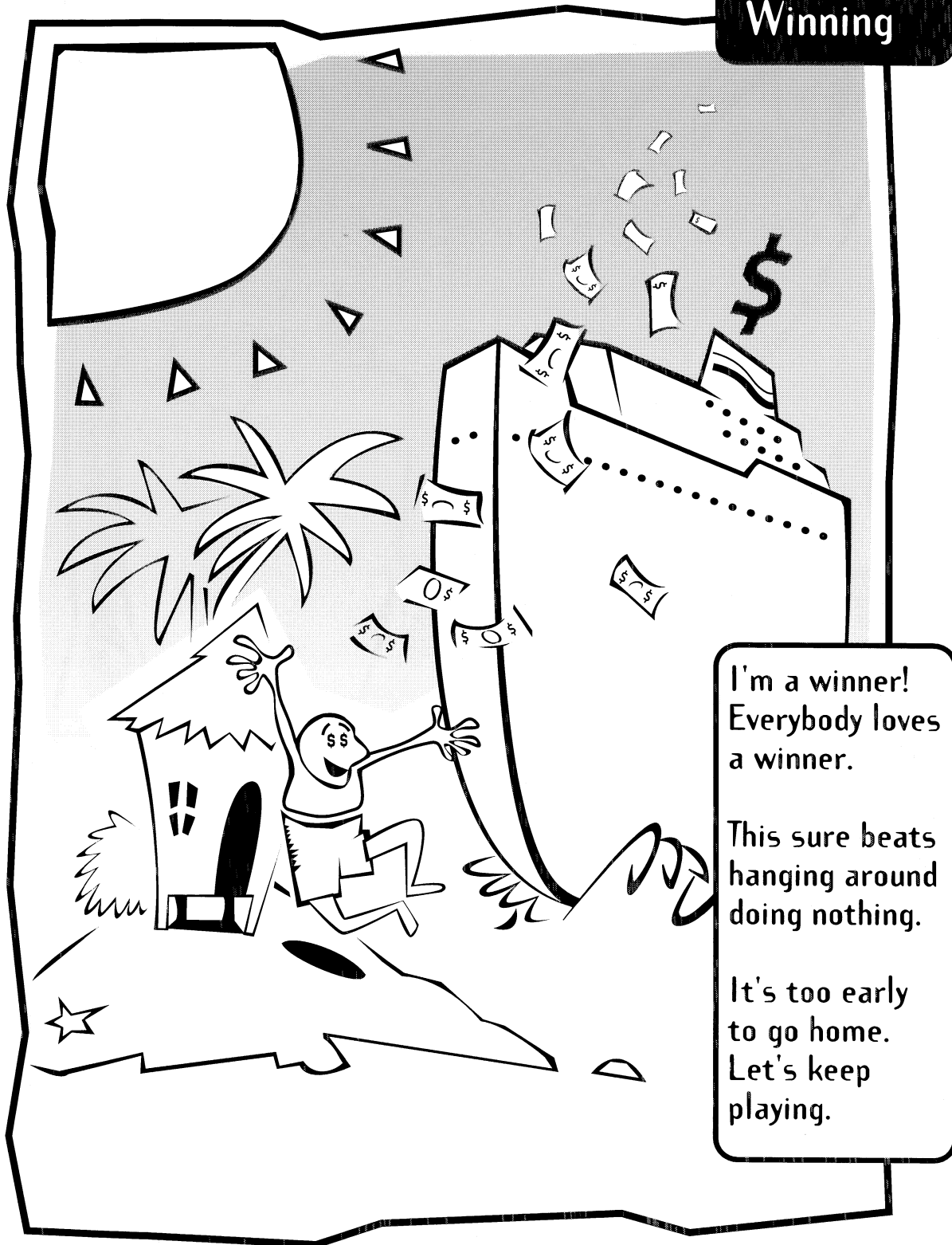
Sell your parents’ watch to get the money. Make it look like the watch was lost.

Sell drugs to get the money.

Steal a wallet and use the person’s credit card to get the money.

Break into a house and steal cash and goods to get the money.

Winning



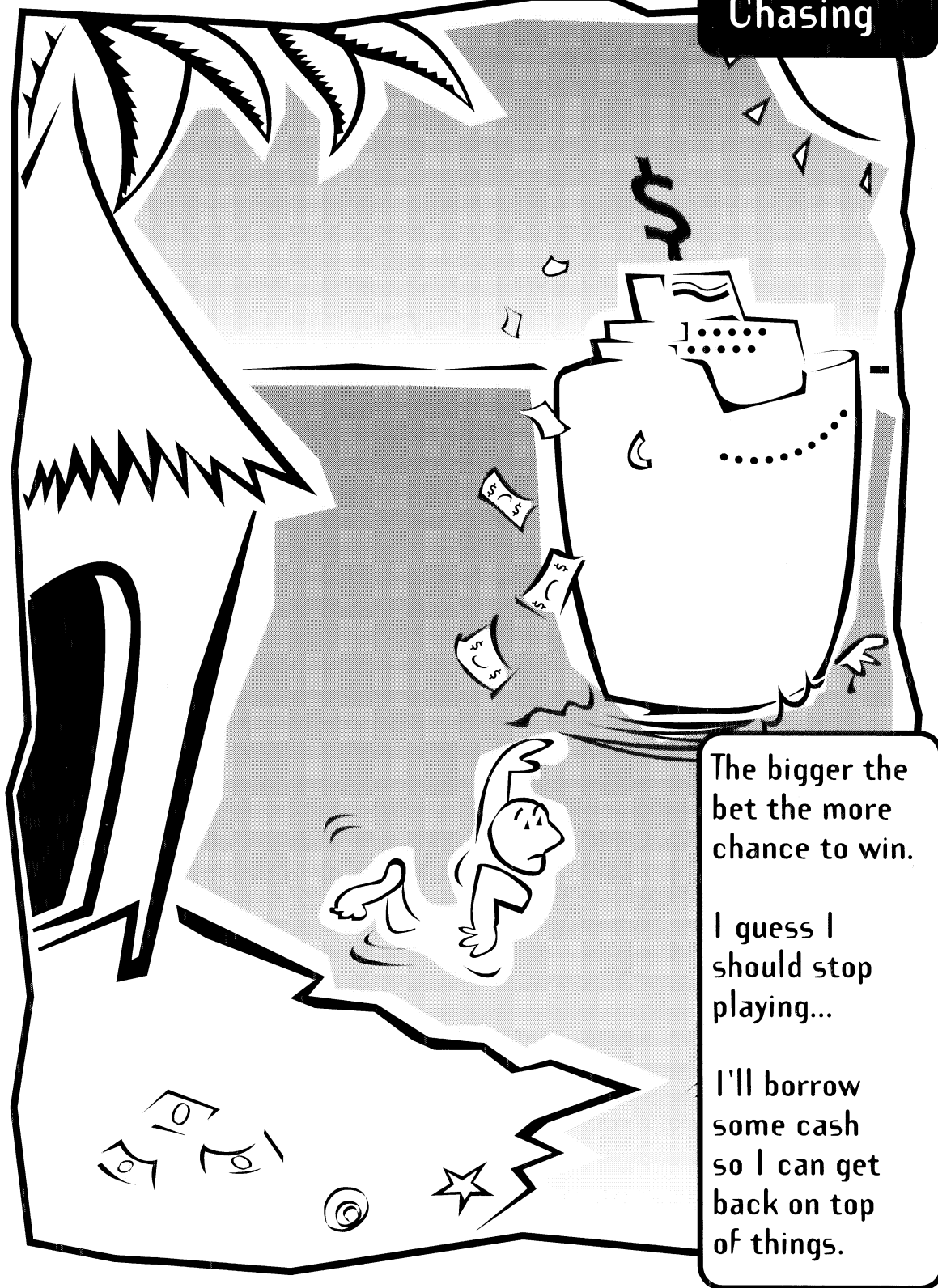
I'm a winner!
Everybody loves
a winner.

This sure beats
hanging around
doing nothing.

It's too early
to go home.
Let's keep
playing.

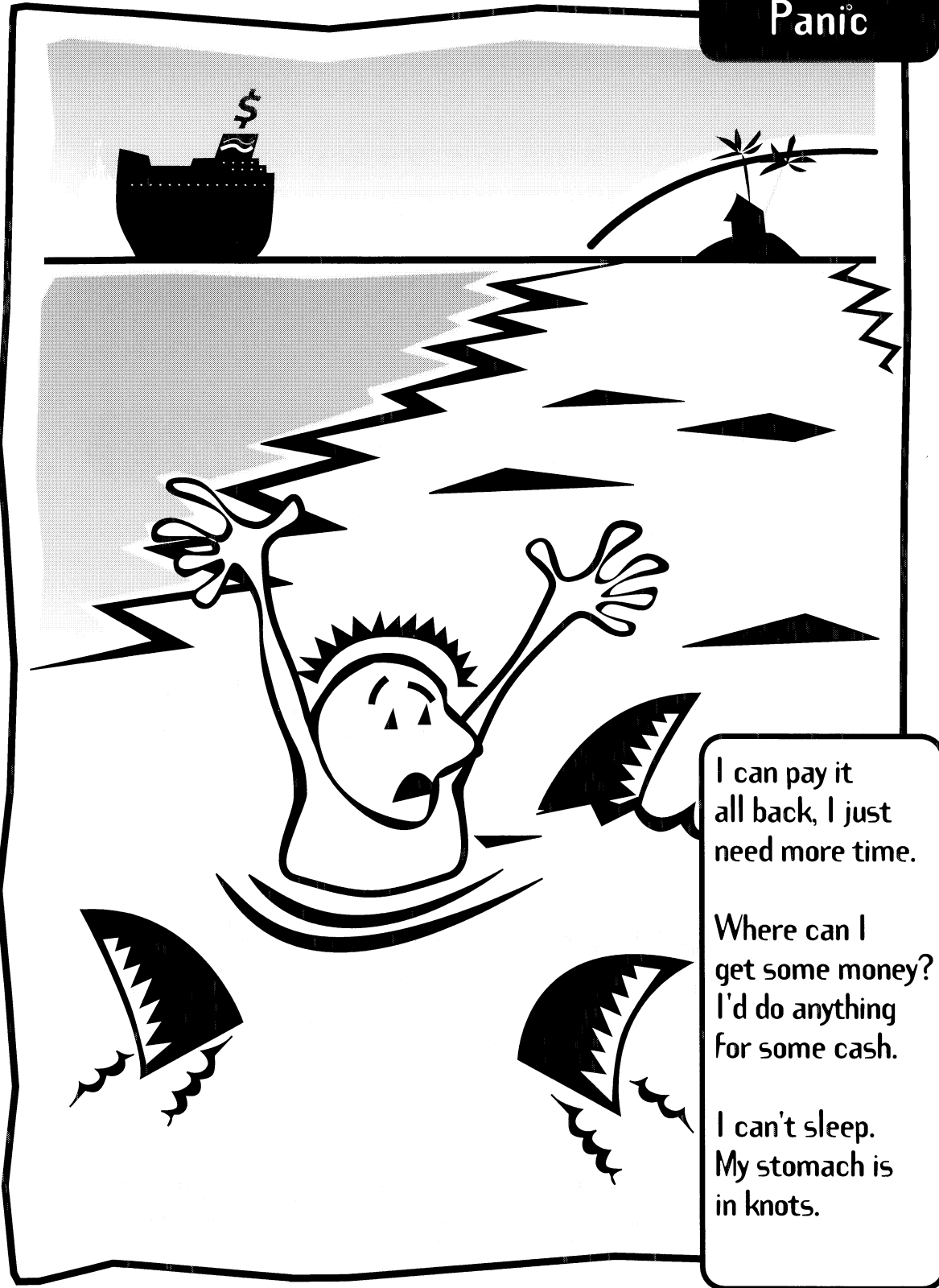
- Winning gives you a "high" – you keep going back for more.
- You tend to ignore losses or explain them away.
- Gambling can be a way to avoid painful feelings or a difficult home life.

Chasing



- You start to feel guilty about money lost.
- You try to make up for losses by gambling more, or with larger bets.
- You keep thinking you will win again – next time.

Panic



- You are out of control – you can't stop.
- When you're not gambling, you feel worried, anxious, moody.
- You are over your head with debts, broken promises, and lies.

The Journey Back

Recognizing there's a problem

Facing the truth



Getting more information

Talking to someone



Deciding to do something

Being ready to change



Making a plan for change

Setting goals



Holding to the plan

**Avoiding old habits,
resisting temptation**

How Does Gambling Become a Problem?

1. Describe the four stages of problem gambling, in note form:

Winning

-
-
-
-

Losing

-
-
-
-

Panic

-
-
-
-

Getting Help

-
-
-
-

2. Explain how a winning streak or a big win can lead to problem gambling.

3. What does it mean to "chase losses"?

Why would someone do it?

4. If you were concerned about your own or someone else's gambling, where could you go for advice?



Stories

9.4

Summary

Two case studies give students an opportunity to apply what they have learned about the stages and dynamics of problem gambling.

Students will be able to...

- present one section of a case study to the rest of the class
- analyze case studies in terms of influences, progressive stages, underlying motivation, and the possibility of early intervention

Curriculum Tie-in (PDR)

Unit VI-C, Substance Use and Abuse/Problem Gambling: Influences, Consequences

Time

45 min.

Preparation

Refer to InfoSheet G, "Stages of Problem Gambling."

Copy "Doug's Story," pp. 113–16, and "Amber's Story," pp. 119–21 – two copies each. Cut one copy of each story into parts.

Copy "Think About It," pp. 117 and 122 – one for each student.

Method

Class Activity
45 min.

"Doug's Story" is in six parts. Ask for seven male volunteers to present the story to the rest of the class. One will be the narrator, introducing each part. The other six students will present their parts either by reading them or telling them from memory. They should also try to convey the emotional tone of the story through intonation and body language.

Distribute the story parts to the volunteers (including one complete set to the narrator). Ask them to go to a front corner of the classroom and prepare their parts. Distribute "Think About It" to the rest of the class. When they listen to the presentations, they should be listening "between the lines" for the answers to these questions. Ask them to read over the questions.



Place one chair at the front of the class. The presenters take turns sitting on the chair and telling their parts of the story. The audience sits in a semi-circle facing the chair. The narrator stands to one side. Wait until the presenters have finished before discussing the questions. (See p. 118, "Teacher's Discussion Guide.")

Repeat for "Amber's Story," using female presenters and the Discussion Guide on p. 123.

Doug's Story: 1

When Doug was 11 years old, he made extra money shovelling snow for neighbours.

After finishing work for the day, all the guys headed over to Steve's house to warm up. Steve's father was not employed at the time, so he was usually at home when we arrived. It was Steve's Dad who taught all of us to play poker.

Playing poker with the guys. What a great way to pass the hours during the darkest part of the afternoon. Here I was with the guys, having fun and feeling like I belonged. That was really important to a shy person like myself....

I wasn't the worst poker player in the group, but I began to lose often. I watched my nickels, dimes, and pretty soon my quarters disappear. Though the guys teased me a lot and said I should call it quits, I was determined that wouldn't happen. I wasn't a quitter....

Dad was gone a lot because he worked two jobs. When he finally came home, the fights would start between them. And when Dad was worn out from yelling at Mom for getting drunk, he'd start yelling at me for not keeping the bottles away from her.

The poker games finally came to an end when the parents of one of the guys saw him bringing home the loot I had lost. They called my folks, and the shouting at home really accelerated.

My parents forbade me to go to Steve's house or ever to gamble again, and since there was enough yelling at our house normally, I figured I had learned my lesson.

Doug's Story: 2

Doug found another way to handle the stress at home. He started to eat—a lot. In junior high, he was 1.8 m (6 ft.) tall and weighed 107 kg (235 lb.). He became known as Funny Doug, the big guy with the sense of humour.

It occurred to me that maybe I could be somebody if I lost weight. Then the other kids would like me. Runners are skinny, I observed. I could take up running and make the wall of fat I was hiding behind vanish....

That summer, I lost forty pounds in two months. Returning to school in the fall, I got noticed. In fact, I had lost so much weight so fast that my classmates wondered if I had developed cancer.

No longer was I the funny, fat kid. I was the lean, mean running machine. I became obsessed with running. If I didn't run five miles every day, I didn't feel good. If I had to work after school until ten o'clock, I couldn't go to sleep until I had run my miles for the day....

Doug's Story: 3

After finishing high school, Doug worked at a construction job and got married. Then one day at work he fell and chipped a bone in his ankle. The day after he was released from the hospital, he was riding in a pickup truck with some buddies from work. The driver, who had been drinking, crashed into a cement pillar. Doug went through the windshield.

I shattered my left wrist, smashed my face, and tore my hip from its socket. The gashes on my face required over 100 stitches to repair, and I needed plastic surgery. Pieces of my pelvic bone were used to rebuild my wrist during the next nine months.

During this time, I became increasingly disheartened with my marriage. The relationship, which had never been truly happy, deteriorated even more. Shortly after the accident my wife and I were divorced.

This accident ended all chances of returning to construction work or any kind of heavy labor. It certainly ended my dreams of become a major-league ball player. The old feelings of emptiness and abandonment were returning.

I was a loser again, just as I had been ever since junior high.

Doug's Story: 4

While recovering from his accidents, Doug got a job bar-tending. His customers and co-workers enjoyed watching sports and placing bets. Doug, who had always been a sports fan, felt he could pick a winning team as well as the next person.

I studied the teams, placed a couple of small bets, and won. And I won, AND I WON! What a great way to get attention. I was Doug the winner, not Doug the loser....

I started out betting one game at a time, then went to two games and then five. Betting and winning \$20 felt good. But after a while, \$20 was no big thrill, so I bet \$30. Then, when I'd win \$50 back, I couldn't see why I should bet only small amounts again.... Before long, I was betting \$200 to \$500 per night....

Customers would cheer the games I had bet while they watched the big-screen television in the bar. Heck, they were cheering for me, asking me for advice about how to place their bets next time. When I won, I bought a round of drinks. When I lost, well, that was blamed on bad luck. I justified the losses by saying that my system of picking the teams just needed refining....

Doug's Story: 5

Doug started spending more on gambling than he was winning or earning.

I began to bet even more heavily, trying to win back what I had lost. If I was down \$500 one night, I would bet a thousand dollars trying to win back part of what I had lost.

As a sports bettor, I didn't have to pay the bookie up front. If I owed him \$3,600 and didn't have a penny to pay him, I figured I might as well try to get myself out by betting more. If I couldn't come up with money I already owed, it didn't matter to me if I bet several thousand more that I didn't have. I just kept trying to win it back.

I bet on everything: football, basketball, hockey. I worried all day about where I would get money to gamble on the games, and I was in a state of panic until I had the bets placed. I agonized at night, losing sleep thinking about how I would bet the next day to make up my losses.

I neglected my friends and my family. I told Mom I wouldn't come to a holiday family dinner unless I could have the game on TV. I'd sneak into the bathroom to listen on the radio if I wasn't near a TV. My health was suffering too. I skipped meals and filled up on junk food while I nervously watched the games I had bet.

Doug's Story: 6

During one attempt to give up gambling, Doug switched jobs and went to work at a hospital, in the chemical dependency unit. But his mind was not with the patients; it was on the money he owed and the bets he'd placed. When Doug remarried, he told his new wife a partial truth—he liked to gamble sometimes. She had no idea of the size of bets he was placing every single day.

I was leading a secret life, and it was killing me. My nerves were shot trying to juggle the mounting debts, and my stomach was in knots....

The football season was starting again. Secretly, I started to place a few bets on games, betting over \$2,000 on weekdays and up to \$3,000 on weekends. I was well over \$30,000 in debt, and I tried to extend loans I already had. I devised a scheme to commit a crime: a way to get gambling money illegally—something I had never dreamed I was capable of doing.

The continual tension and pressure were making me ill both physically and mentally, and my temper was taking a toll on our marriage. One night, during another fight about lack of money, Jeanne threatened to leave me. Because I didn't want to lose my wife, I broke down and told her about all the gambling I was doing.

This was Doug's first cry for help. He went back to gambling once more, before he was able to go to a counsellor and begin the road to recovery. He joined Gamblers Anonymous, became a gambling counsellor himself, and now likes to warn teens of the dangers of problem gambling.

I can sometimes laugh now when I think how my addiction started with a few matchsticks and a nickel bet. I understand that I spent my whole life looking outside myself for peace and self-worth, when in reality I was capable of finding it within myself. I know, when it comes to gambling, I have a choice whether or not I will do it. And that's what you need to know too.

From *Coping with Teen Gambling* by Jane Haubrich-Casperson with Doug Van Nispen (New York: The Rosen Publ. Group, 1993).

This is the true story of the book's co-author. Reprinted with permission.

1. Could the roots of Doug's gambling addiction be traced to his childhood? Explain.
2. When was Doug's "winning phase"?
3. Would you say that he went through a "desperation" or "panic phase"?
4. Why did Doug get hooked on gambling? What "problems" did gambling seem to solve for him?
5. In what ways were his eating jag in junior high and his running jag in senior high similar to his gambling problem later in life?
6. If Doug hadn't had the two accidents, do you think he would have gone on to live a reasonably happy life? Would he have gotten into gambling? Explain.
7. If you had been Doug's friend in junior high, do you think you could have helped him in some way? Could someone else have helped him? How?



Doug's Story. Teacher's Discussion Guide

1. Could the roots of Doug's gambling addiction be traced to his childhood? Explain.

Doug had a difficult home life: his father was always working, his mother drank too much, and he was blamed for her drinking. He grew up in an environment that provided little opportunity for developing a healthy sense of confidence and self-worth. At Steve's house, he learned that gambling was a way of feeling like he "belonged" and a way of escaping the pain at home.

2. When was Doug's "winning phase"?

when he took up sports betting

3. Would you say that he went through a "desperation" or "panic phase"?

He became desperate when his debts were getting out of control but he couldn't stop gambling. This created tension, pressure, and the need to lead a "secret life" that he couldn't share with his wife.

4. Why did Doug get hooked on gambling? What "problems" did gambling seem to solve for him?

It seemed to change him from a loser into a winner. He "won" admiration, acceptance, and feelings of self-worth. He was also able to escape from painful feelings of low self-esteem.

5. In what ways were his eating jag in junior high and his running jag in senior high similar to his gambling problem later in life?

In all three cases, he was looking for an "external" solution to an internal problem. He was using food, running, and gambling to compensate for deeply rooted feelings of self-doubt.

6. If Doug hadn't had the two accidents, do you think he would have gone on to live a reasonably happy life? Would he have gotten into gambling? Explain.

The accidents triggered feelings of depression, and through circumstance gambling presented itself as a relief. It is common for gambling episodes such as this to be triggered by a loss of some kind. In Doug's case, gambling also helped to mask and avoid buried feelings that could be traced to his childhood. Even if Doug hadn't had the accidents, those old feelings could have resurfaced at another time, under different circumstances. And if he hadn't found gambling at his moment of vulnerability, there is a good chance he would have found something else—some other addiction or self-defeating behaviour.

7. If you had been Doug's friend in junior high, do you think you could have helped him in some way? Could someone else have helped him? How?

A friend or a mentor who accepted Doug unconditionally could have helped him start to build self-acceptance. A skilled counsellor could have helped Doug acknowledge the underlying pain that drove him to overeat, then turn into a "running machine," then become addicted to gambling.

Amber's Story: 1

When Amber was 12, her parents divorced. She and her two younger brothers moved into a two-bedroom apartment with their mother.

I missed my old neighbourhood, but I didn't really mind the move. It was a kind of adventure. Mom seemed happier, so that made life easier for us kids. My dad was always depressed because he couldn't get work, and he'd take it out on the rest of us. Finally he moved away, out West. Mom said we'd join him later, when he found work and got settled. We never heard from him again. That was six years ago. Mom says he didn't want us to know where he was because he didn't want to have to pay support money.

Mom started doing shift work at the hospital. Sometimes I had to make supper and put the other kids to bed. She used to joke that some day she'd either marry a millionaire or win the lottery. Then we'd all live in a mansion, and have another house in Florida. She'd always buy a couple of lottery tickets on her way home from work. Sometimes she'd buy scratch tickets, too, and she'd let me scratch them for her. Once we got \$100. Mom was so excited, she was dancing up and down and hugging me and saying, "We won, baby. You're my lucky girl." We all went out for supper that night.

Amber's Story: 2

When Amber turned 16, she started working part-time at an Italian restaurant.

I was making \$60 a week at the restaurant, and sometimes more on the weekends. I'd give some of it to Mom, to help out at home. Then one day she brought home Steve, a guy she'd met through a friend. He acted really friendly towards us kids, but I could tell he didn't really care about us. He was just trying to impress Mom. He liked to show off by buying us presents, and taking Mom out to fancy restaurants.

I didn't like Steve. He acted like he owned our place, and started bossing us around. Mom just seemed to think he was the greatest. He had a big car, he was cute, and he had a pocketful of money...

Once I saw Steve looking at me in a way that made me shrink inside, and another time he put his arm around my shoulders and tried to hug me close. I started finding excuses not to go home, in case he'd be there. I began hanging out at the restaurant, even when I wasn't working. Sometimes when there weren't many customers, the manager let me play the VLT. I was underage, but I looked older than I was, and she didn't really care.

Amber's Story: 3

The restaurant became Amber's second home.

Soon I was spending most of my time when I wasn't at school at the restaurant. All the money I made working went into the VLT. When I sat in front of it everything else would just disappear. There was just me and the machine, hour after hour.

It got to the point where nothing else could really hold my interest. At school, I was usually distracted. It all seemed boring and senseless. I couldn't wait till I could get back to the restaurant and play the machine.

When I ran out of money, I was always trying to scheme some way of getting some more. I kept buying lottery tickets, hoping that I'd score a big win. Sometimes I'd make \$20 or even \$50, but that wouldn't last long.

Then one day when I was waiting on tables a customer paid before I'd written the bill, and I just slipped the money into my pocket without even thinking about it. I started finding other ways to slip money into my pocket here and there. Once I just took a \$50 bill out of the till. I felt badly about it, because the restaurant manager had always been good to me. It was like I was in a dream, just going through the motions. It was the same way I sometimes felt when I was playing the machine.

Amber's Story: 4

At home, Amber became withdrawn and restless.

At night, I often couldn't sleep. I was always scheming about how I could get more money so I could play the machine. I would think about all the money I had "borrowed" at the restaurant and what would happen if I got caught. Steve was hanging around more than ever, and I loathed him. I started getting in fights with Mom, who said I was being rude and moody. Then I would storm out and go for long walks. I would always end up at the restaurant, sitting in front of the VLT. It was as if the machine was my only friend. Sometimes I would have fantasies of robbing a bank. I even thought about drugging Steve and taking his wallet, then forging his cheques. Then I would realize what I was thinking and hate myself. A few times I began thinking that maybe I should just kill myself.

Amber's Story: 5

One day the manager called Amber into the restaurant office. Amber had a terrible feeling she knew what was coming next.

The manager, Rita, asked me sit in a chair beside the big oak desk. She said she knew that I'd been taking money from the restaurant. I started to deny it, but she just held up her hand and looked straight into my eyes. I burst into tears. She moved closer to me and held my hand. She said she knew I was using the money to play the VLT, and it was partly her fault for letting me do it. She said that I had become hooked on the machine, and she wanted to help me. She said if I would be willing to talk to a gambling counsellor and I promised never to steal again, she would let me keep working at the restaurant.

It was both frightening and a huge relief to think I would have to stop playing at the VLT. My emotions were all just rising up in a jumble and flowing out of me. I turned and gave Rita a long hug.

1. Doug and Amber each became dependent on gambling. What are some of the main differences between their stories? What are the similarities?
2. Was Amber's mother to blame for her gambling addiction?
3. If the restaurant manager had been less understanding, how might Amber's story have ended?



Amber's Story. Teacher's Discussion Guide

1. Doug and Amber each became dependent on gambling. What are some of the main differences between their stories?

Doug became hooked on gambling mostly because of the positive feelings that came with winning. For Amber, winning was less important. She was more attracted to the numbing escape that gambling offered. They were also addicted to different types of gambling.

2. Was Amber's mother to blame for her gambling addiction?

Amber's mother was trying to cope with the difficult situation of being a single mother. She passed on to Amber the belief that they could be "bailed out" of their situation by winning the lottery. Her mom was probably too caught up in her new relationship with Steve to realize that her daughter was feeling rejected and confused, or that Steve was making suggestive passes at Amber. Her mom cannot be blamed for her gambling addiction; Amber must take responsibility for this herself. However, Amber's mom was an important factor in the circumstances that led her in this direction.

3. If the restaurant manager had been less understanding, how might Amber's story have ended?



Where Lies the Risk?

9.5

Summary

Students establish their own guidelines for low-risk gambling and use the medium of their choice to communicate these.

Students will be able to...

- evaluate risk levels
- infer indicators of high-risk gambling
- communicate the principles of low-risk gambling
- assess whether they have a gambling problem

Curriculum Tie-in (PDR)

Unit VI-C, Substance Use and Abuse/Problem Gambling: Risk Factors

Time

45 min.

Preparation

Have ready—large sheets of paper and coloured markers.

Copy "Risk Ratings," p. 127 – one for each student.

Copy "How Do You Score?" p. 128 – one for each student.

Method

Individual Activity
15 min.

Distribute "Risk Ratings." After students have completed the work sheet, discuss each scenario.

- What is at risk in each case? (e.g., spending more than one can afford, becoming dependent on gambling as a coping mechanism, encouraging underage gambling, becoming hooked)
- In general, what kinds of behaviours suggest high-risk gambling?

On the chalkboard, list the suggestions. These could include

- gambling without a spending limit, or with more money than one can afford
- gambling while under the influence of alcohol or other drugs
- gambling to relieve stress, loneliness, or boredom
- gambling to impress others
- denying or not knowing the odds



- borrowing money to gamble
 - expecting (rather than just hoping) to win
 - gambling alone
 - increasing one's bets
- We know that we can get into trouble with alcohol or drugs, but do most people realize they could get into trouble with gambling? What slogans or messages would help people stay within the bounds of low-risk gambling?

Examples—

- Know what you can afford to lose. Never take along more than that.
- Never borrow money to gamble with.
- Bet with your head, not over it.
- If you win, it feels great! But in the long run, the odds are always against you.
- The dream of "easy money" is just that—a dream. Gambling is one way to have fun. It's not a way to make the money you wish you had.

Small Group Activity
20 min.

Divide the class into groups.

Introduce the activity: A group of recovering problem gamblers has asked you to help them educate the public about the risks of gambling. You don't want to send a message that all gambling is "bad," but you do want to help people recognize the signs of high-risk gambling and learn how to draw the line between social and problem gambling.

The task of each group is to decide on the messages they want to convey, and to brainstorm ideas for how to get those messages across. They will also decide whether they will develop a poster, a script for a short public service announcement on the radio, or use some other medium. Finally, they will need to describe their target audience.

Individual Activity
10 min.

Distribute "How Do You Score?" Assure students that you will not be collecting the results of this self-test. Conclude by discussing where they can go for advice if they are concerned about their own or some one else's gambling. Refer students to the school counsellor and the provincial toll-free Problem Gambling Help Line: 1-888-347-8888.

Risk Ratings

Give each scenario a risk rating.

L = low risk , M= medium risk, H= high risk, U = undecided or not enough information

- a. Mindy cashes her pay cheque then heads down to the casino alone. She feels lucky and excited.
- b. A mother buys her six-year-old daughter some scratch-and-win tickets for her birthday.
- c. A group of high school students are drinking at a bar. Two of them begin to play the VLTs (video gambling machines), while the others watch and cheer them on.
- d. Bryan bets two dollars that his team will win the game.
- e. Whenever she feels depressed, Cathy goes down to the corner store and buys some lottery and scratch- and-win tickets.
- f. Rita meets some friends at the casino. She takes \$20 and leaves the rest of her money at home.
- g. A group of men play poker every Saturday night, for dimes and quarters.
- h. Joe is a recovering alcoholic. Whenever he feels restless, he plays the VLTs at a local restaurant.
- i. Friends shoot pool for a dollar a game.
- j. Janice plays bingo three times a week and doesn't tell her husband how much she is spending.
- k. Jake borrows \$50 from his sister and heads down to the racetrack. He hopes he will be lucky so that he can pay back the \$300 he still owes his brother.
- l. Every time he goes to the mall, Jason buys a lottery ticket.
- m. Winnie goes to the casino most nights, because it is so lonely at home.
- n. A high school student wants a car, so he spends the money he earns at a part-time job on a scratch-and-win game that offers new cars as prizes.
- o. Julie spends her "entertainment money" at the bingo hall once a week.
- p. Judy used to spend about \$10 a week at the VLTs, but now she spends about \$100 a week.
- q. A mother buys ten raffle tickets in support of her son's soccer team.
- r. Randy is good at video games and thinks he can probably get an edge on the VLTs.

How Do You Score?

Gamble: risking money or other valuables on a game of chance or skill. Includes card games, pool, sports bets, video gambling machines (VLTs or slots), bingo, lottery tickets, scratch-and-win, betting on horses.

YES NO

- 1. Do you find it difficult to walk away from a betting game, even when you know you should?
- 2. Does most of your spending money go to some kind of betting?
- 3. Do you ever brag about how much you've won?
- 4. Do you find yourself thinking about gambling and looking forward to when you can gamble again, even when you're busy doing something else?
- 5. After a win, do you have a strong urge to go back and play some more?
- 6. Do you feel more powerful when you are playing, and especially when you are winning?
- 7. Do you think you can beat the odds at games of chance (e.g., VLTs, bingo, the lottery)? Do you feel you have a special luck or talent?
- 8. Do you sometimes play to win back the money you've lost?
- 9. Do you find it hard to stop playing as long as you still have some money in your pocket?
- 10. Do you ever borrow money so you can keep gambling?
- 11. Do you find that as time goes on you are placing larger and larger bets?
- 12. Do you often feel guilty after you've been gambling?
- 13. Do you lie about how much time you spend gambling or how much you've lost?
- 14. Do you feel restless and irritable if you can't gamble?
- 15. Is gambling an escape for you, do you lose track of the time and forget about everything else?
- 16. Do you spend a lot of time playing the VLTs?
- 17. Have you ever stolen so you can gamble, or so you can pay back gambling debts?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you should probably think twice. These can all be signs of problem gambling. Getting hooked on gambling is like riding a fast train. As the train speeds up, it gets harder and harder to jump off.

If you gamble a lot, ask yourself whether you might be riding that train. Being honest with yourself is the first step towards taking back control. The second step is being willing to ask for help. Call 1-888-347-8888 for free, confidential advice, from anywhere in Nova Scotia.

Appendix

InfoSheets	129
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The InfoSheets can be used as background information for class discussion, as reference materials for students carrying out group or individual projects, or as handouts. You are free to make class sets of any of the InfoSheets.

A. Historical Notes	129
B. Gambling in Nova Scotia	135
C. Legalized Gambling: Pros and Cons	139
D. Changing Values	141
E. The Odds	145
F. Why Some People Gamble Too Much	149
G. Stages of Problem Gambling	153
H. Gambling as an Addiction	157
I. The Effect of Problem Gambling on the Family	159
J. Men and Women Gamblers	161
K. Three Famous Gamblers	163
L. The Lottery	167
M. Video Gambling Machines	171
N. Casinos	175
Resources	181
Glossary	185

Historical Notes

No one knows when people first began to gamble, but we do know that gambling is a universal phenomenon. Nearly all societies in every period of civilization have played games of risk, and at least some of these games have involved staking something of value on the outcome.

Early Games of Chance

- Archaeologists in Africa, Asia, and Europe have found objects that appear to be the forerunners of today's dice.
- The ancient Egyptians played a guessing game where two people stood back to back and extended an odd or even number of fingers. A third person announced the results and kept score.
- Early dice, called astragals or knucklebones, were made from the anklebones of sheep. The Greeks first used astragals for divination, then later used them to play a gambling game.
- In the ancient country of Lydia in Ancient Minor, the ruler gave dice to his people during a famine, to take their minds off their hunger.
- The Greeks called "night or day" when they tossed shells that were black on one side and white on the other.
- Roman coins had the head of the god Janus on one side and a Roman galley on the other. When they tossed the coin, they called "head or ship." The Romans also bet on chariot races and gladiators' duels.
- The Roman emperors forbade the commonfolk to gamble, except during festivals. For working people, gambling was a distraction and a waste of time. However, the emperors themselves loved to play dice: "Nero regularly staked huge sums of money on a single throw of the dice. Caligula got so furious when he lost that he would order innocent citizens executed and seize their property to make up for his losses. Claudius, who liked to play dice when he traveled, had the interior of

his carriage designed so that the vehicle's motion would not interfere with his game."¹

- During the Middle Ages, inns along the old Roman roads provided food, lodging, and entertainment, including gambling.
- Roman resorts established near hot springs and natural bath waters in the far reaches of Europe became gambling havens for the privileged classes. Spas in Belgium, Baden in Germany, and Bath in England continued to be opulent "watering places" for the aristocracy of Europe through the 18th and 19th centuries.
- In 16th-century France, King Henry III had special rooms in the Louvre for dice and card playing.
- In a game of dice with one of his noblemen, England's King Henry VIII lost the famous Jesus bells that hung in the tower of St. Paul's Cathedral.
- Playing cards evolved from tarot cards, which were used for both playing and fortune telling. The first European card deck dates to 14th-century Italy. Card games quickly became popular throughout Europe, and Christopher Columbus brought a deck on his first voyage to the New World.

New World Gamblers

- In North America, gambling games such as foot and horse races, contests of skill, and games using peach stones as dice were an accepted part of precontact native culture.
- The Mi'kmaq have played a gambling game named *waltes* since at least 1609, when Marc Lescarbot first reported seeing the game, and probably for much longer. The game set consists of a bowl or platter of wood and six round dice made of bone. Each die is flat on one side and convex on the other, with the flat side incised with designs. The bowl is struck on the ground so

that the dice jump and then land randomly. Sticks are used to keep score.²

- European settlers brought with them their own gambling traditions, the most popular being horse races, lotteries, and card playing.
- The newly formed American colonies were funded in part by lottery profits. In 1612, King James I gave permission to hold a lottery in London to raise funds for the colony of Virginia. Lotteries were soon held throughout the colonies to subsidize the building of roads, bridges, schools, churches, and hospitals. Colonial Americans also used lotteries to found the first colleges, such as Columbia, Harvard, and Yale. A lottery paid for the uniforms and equipment of Massachusetts soldiers who fought under General James Wolfe at the battle of Quebec in 1759.
- Card playing was extremely popular in the French colony of Louisbourg. In 1754 the town imported 7,200 decks of cards—almost enough to supply every man, woman, and child that lived in the fortress city.³
- The first heyday of gambling in North America came to a close as scandals of corruption and fraud discouraged governments from authorizing public lotteries. One of the most flagrant cases was the Great Louisiana Real Estate Lottery of the 1830s, in which some of New Orleans' most valuable buildings were offered as prizes. Thousands of tickets were sold, but on the day of the drawing the promoters were nowhere to be found.

The Second Wave of Gambling in North America

- Between the U.S. Civil War and the end of the 19th century, gambling in North America enjoyed a second wave of popularity. Especially in the southern states, devastated governments turned to the lottery to fund the reconstruction effort. During the same period, promises of gold, silver, and adventure drew fortune seekers west, and

gambling houses sprung up in frontier boom towns. Stories of gambling are woven into the folk history of the Canada's great railway-building era, and into the saga of the Klondike Gold Rush.

- At the turn of the century, reformers clamped down on public gambling once again. Legal casinos disappeared, and lotteries were eliminated by federal legislation in both Canada and the U.S. When the *Criminal Code of Canada* was enacted in 1892, a section entitled "Offenses against Religion, Morals and Public Convenience" prohibited virtually all types of public gambling in this country, including "common gaming-houses, conducting lotteries, cheating at play, and gambling in public conveyances."

The Third Wave

- Since 1892, gambling in Canada has been regulated under the *Criminal Code*. Amendments to the *Code* in the early 1900s permitted small fund-raising raffles at religious and charitable bazaars (1900) and pari-mutuel racetrack betting (1910).
- In 1922, the scope of the *Code* was broadened, to prohibit dice games, shell games, punch boards, and any unregulated games of chance involving money or other valuables. The game of three card monte was added to this list in 1927. These prohibitions remain in effect today.
- A 1925 amendment to the *Code* permitted gambling games at annual community fairs and exhibitions.
- In the U.S., a renewed interest in "easy money" began with the Depression. Casino gambling was re-legalized in Nevada in 1931, and in the years that followed 21 states opened race tracks with pari-mutuel betting.
- In Canada in 1954, a joint committee of the Senate and House of Commons held public hearings on the issues of capital punishment, corporal

punishment, and lotteries. The committee found that there was widespread public support for lotteries and bingos, and that the prohibition against them was often ignored.⁴

- In the 1960s, the third wave of gambling popularity gathered momentum. In the last three decades, there has been an unprecedented explosion of legalized gambling in North America.
- The Canadian government opened the door to legalized gambling in 1969. An amendment to the *Criminal Code* removed the prohibition on public gambling and gave both provincial and federal governments the authority to operate lotteries and casino-type games.
- The federal government launched a national lottery in 1973 to finance the 1976 Olympic Games.
- The first provincial lottery was held in Quebec, in 1970. By 1976 every province and territory was conducting government-run lotteries.
- In 1985, another amendment to the *Code* gave the provinces the exclusive right to "manage and conduct" lotteries and other forms of gambling, legalized video gambling machines (slot machines and VLTs), and allowed gambling on public transportation.
- The provinces have applied different interpretations to the phrase "manage and conduct." The governments of Manitoba and Quebec exercise direct ownership and operation of their casinos. Ontario has chosen a joint venture approach, with a crown corporation and a private business sharing ownership and management. In Alberta and British Columbia, the proceeds from short-term "charity casinos" are divided among the casino operator, the province, and the charity. See InfoSheet N, "Casinos."
- In 1988 the U.S. Congress passed the *Indian Gaming Regulatory Act*, confirming that, as sovereign nations, native American tribes had the right to set up their own gambling operations on reservation lands, tax free. By 1996, 126 native

American tribes had taken advantage of this opportunity. Casinos moved from the exclusive preserve of two states, Nevada and New Jersey, into the American mainstream. Commercial companies lobbied for equal rights, and state governments eager for tax revenues began legalizing both casinos and lotteries. By 1994, some form of gambling was legal in every state except Utah and Hawaii. In 1995, Americans spent more than \$50 billion on legalized gambling, compared with \$10.4 billion in 1982. By 1996, casinos were legal in 24 U.S. states, lotteries in 37.⁵

- Bingo has become a lucrative and highly developed industry in Canada, and racetrack betting has continued to hold a share of the gambling market. Ontario, which accounts for 60 percent of all Canadian betting on horse races, has more race meets a year than any other jurisdiction in North America.⁶
- One of the newest gambling frontiers is the video lottery terminal (VLT). Although controversial because they are also described as one of the most addictive forms of gambling, by 1996 British Columbia was the only province to have resisted legalizing VLTs.
- Casinos have been slower to proliferate in Canada than in the U.S. In 1989 the first commercial casino opened in Canada, the Crystal Casino in downtown Winnipeg. As of 1996, casinos were in operation in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, and Nova Scotia.
- Gambling revenues are now a significant portion of provincial budgets. In 1995, the provinces took in \$4.9 billion in net revenue from government-run lotteries, casinos, and VLTs. This is almost four times more than they received a decade earlier. As a proportion of all provincial revenues (excluding transfer payments), gambling income has increased from 1.7 percent in 1985 to 3.8 percent in 1995. The highest proportion was in the Maritime Provinces, where gambling revenues accounted for 4.8 percent of all government

revenues in New Brunswick, 5.4 percent in Prince Edward Island, and 5.6 percent in Nova Scotia.⁷

- "The pattern of the quiet relaxation of gambling prohibitions that is observed in Canada, largely uninformed by state sponsored research, has not occurred in other national jurisdictions such as Australia, Great Britain, and the United States."⁸
- In the U.S., casino gambling has been left largely to the private sector. Following a period of rapid and uncontrolled expansion, many areas of the U.S. have seemingly reached their saturation point. Meanwhile, the "moral majority" has led a crusade against gambling, with widespread public support. As a result, "a backlash against gambling has taken firm hold in statehouses and at the ballot box, slamming the door on a once-surging movement to expand gambling beyond the traditional jurisdictions. Though Las Vegas and Atlantic City are both booming, communities today seem more likely to keep gambling at arm's length from their homes."⁹
- In Canada, provincial governments have occasionally backpedaled in response to moral outcries and controversy over the social costs of gambling, especially VLTs. It is still early to tell, however, whether these are signs that the third gambling wave has peaked and will soon crash towards another trough of prohibition, or whether they are mere bubbles, soon to be consumed by the overwhelming economic forces that have pushed the wave to its present heights.

Some Trends Abroad

- In many Asian countries, gambling is illegal. Hong Kong residents, Taiwanese, and mainland Chinese have to go to Macau if they want to play casino games. However, some Asian governments have built casinos as a way of attracting tourist dollars. Vietnam has a casino near the port of Haiphong; Cambodia has one in Phnom Penh. Laos, one of the world's poorest and most remote countries, plans to build a holiday resort near Vientiane, the country's capital, that will feature both a casino and "eastern gambling" such as cock fighting. Although gambling is illegal in Singapore, travellers aboard Singapore Airlines' international flights can use their credit cards to play poker, roulette, and blackjack on video gambling machines.¹⁰
- In Japan, pachinko is all the rage. More than 30 million fans play this evolved form of pinball, supporting a gambling industry that is twice as big as the Japanese auto industry. About 18,000 pachinko parlours are located in malls, on nearly every downtown street corner, and in new pachinko complexes. The player buys a bucket of little steel balls, then drops them into the machine. The balls fall down through the machine, bouncing off nails, eventually dropping into a winning hole or being swallowed up and recycled through the machine. When the player hits the jackpot, the machine spews out a gush of steel balls. The winnings can then be traded for prizes, such as cigarettes, magazines, CDs, and software. In Japan, more of these items are shipped to pachinko parlours than to retail stores. Winnings can also be saved on electronically marked "smart cards." These RoboCards can also be used to access information about machine payoffs—and just about anything else. Data Robo terminals display rail and bus timetables, issue toll and parking vouchers, provide access to online catalogues, and give information about bars and restaurants. In other words, pachinko parlours are becoming multimedia information-recreation-commercial centres. Recently, a fashion mall in Tokyo's trendy youth-oriented district converted six of its eight floors into pachinko parlours. Elsewhere, supermarket chains have begun adding on pachinko halls. And in some cities pachinko fans can use the internet to find out how the machines in their favourite parlour are paying off. Some Japanese entrepreneurs dream of exporting "pachinko culture" to North America.¹¹

- Australia has a full range of legalized gambling, including large-scale casinos. Internationally, Australia plays a prominent role in problem gambling research.

Notes

1. Alice Fleming, *Something for Nothing: A History of Gambling* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1978), 6. Most of the examples in the first section are from this source.
2. Ruth Holmes Whitehead, *Elitekey: Micmac Material Culture from 1600 AD to the Present* (Halifax: Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History, 1980), 47–49.
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5. Margot Hornblower, "No Dice: The Backlash Against Gambling," *Time* (Apr. 1, 1996): 45.
6. Based on a survey of provincial lottery commissions, gaming boards, and horse-racing regulators conducted by *The Globe and Mail* and quoted by Peter Moon in "Canadians Are Hooked on Gambling" (May 9, 1992).
7. Katherine Marshall, "A Sure Bet Industry," *Perspectives on Labour and Income* (Autumn 1996): 40. Publ. by Statistics Canada.
8. Introduction, *Gambling in Canada: Golden Goose or Trojan Horse?*, ed. by Colin S. Campbell and John Lowman (Burnaby, B.C.: Simon Fraser University, 1988), xxvix.
9. Bruce Orwall, "Gambling Industry Heads for Reshuffling," *The Globe and Mail* (June 10, 1996).
10. "Gracious Living, Singapore Style," *The Economist* (Apr. 20, 1996).
11. Yukihiro Hatano, "Pachinko über Alles," *Wired* (June 1996): 152–55, 212–15.

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- Campbell, Colin S., ed. *Gambling in Canada: The Bottom Line*. Burnaby, B.C.: Criminology Research Centre, Simon Fraser University, 1994.
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Gambling in Nova Scotia

Laws and Regulations

- *The Criminal Code of Canada* says which types of gambling are legal in this country. Fund-raising raffles have been legal since 1900, horse race betting since 1910, lotteries and casinos since 1969, and video gambling machines since 1985.
- A 1985 amendment to the *Criminal Code* handed over the control of most types of gambling to the provincial governments. Each Province decides when to introduce a particular type of legal gambling, under what conditions, and how the profits will be distributed. The provincial governments also manage the business of gambling and enforce regulations.
- With the exception of race track betting, gambling in Nova Scotia is regulated under *The Gaming Control Act* (1995). The government created the Nova Scotia Gaming Control Commission to enforce regulations and carry out inspections of gambling venues. The Commission plays a similar role to the province's Liquor Control Commission, which enforces alcohol regulations.
- The Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation oversees the business aspect of the province's gambling enterprises, including lotteries and casinos. The Atlantic Lottery Corporation, based in Moncton, New Brunswick, promotes and manages lottery games in the four Atlantic Provinces.

Table 1.
Legal status of gambling activities in Nova Scotia

	Illegal	Legal, Gov't Regulated (min. age 19)	Comments
Private betting (e.g., pool, card games, pitching coins, sports bets)	X		Betting among friends for small amounts of money is generally tolerated by law enforcers; high stakes card games and other types of betting involving large amounts of money are not
Betting on card games at the casino		X	
Playing organized bingo games for cash or merchandise prizes		X	Historically, bingo regulations have been loosely interpreted and enforced. Regulations do not set an age limit; this is left to the discretion of the operator.
Betting on sports through a bookmaker ("bookie")	X		A bookie often receives bets over the telephone, then places them on the gambler's behalf in states where sports betting is legal.
Betting on sports through Sports Pro Line		X	This is treated as a form of lottery in Nova Scotia.
Buying lottery tickets		X	
Buying scratch-and-win tickets		X	
Betting on horse races at the track or at an off-site bar.		X	
Playing video lottery terminals (VLTs) in a bar or slot machines at a casino		X	

- Betting on horse races, a kind of pari-mutuel betting, is monitored by the Canadian Parimutuel Agency, not by the Province. However, the Maritime Harness Racing Commission, created by the three Maritime governments, administers and promotes the races themselves. Horse racing is the only gambling-related activity subsidized by the Nova Scotia Government.

Who Gambles, and Where

- A 1996 survey of adult Nova Scotians found that about 96 percent had gambled for money at some time in their lives. Approximately 43 percent participated in at least one type of gambling on a weekly basis.¹
- According to another 1996 survey, the types of gambling with the highest rate of at least occasional participation are the lottery and raffles. See Figure 1.
- Lotto 6/49, bingo, VLTs, and scratch-and-win are the four most "popular" types of gambling in Nova Scotia. The prevalence scores in Figure 2 take into account the number of people who play, how often they play, and the amount of money they spend in a typical month.
- Attitudes towards gambling vary from person to person and type to type. For example, the most accepted types of gambling, such as the lottery, playing cards for money in someone's home, and bingo, are often not thought of as gambling at all, but as entertainment. See also InfoSheet D, "Changing Values."

Figure 1.
Percent of Nova Scotian adults who played at least once in 1995/96²

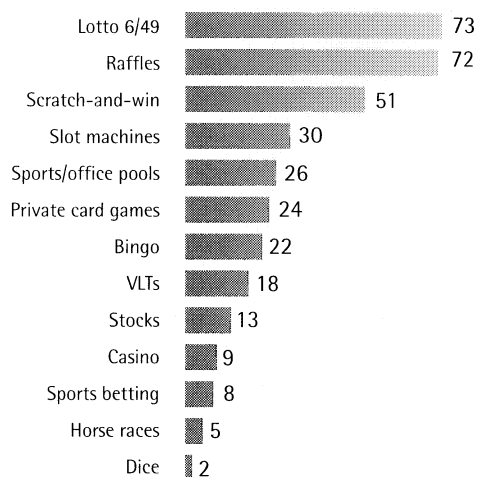
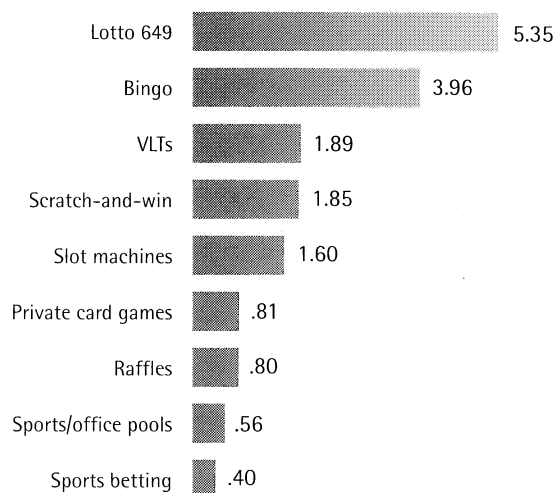


Figure 2.
Prevalence scores for nine gaming activities, 1995/96³



Problem Gambling

- In 1993, 8.7 percent of surveyed Nova Scotia youths showed signs of being "problem" gamblers and another 3 percent showed signs of being "pathological" or addicted gamblers, compared to 3.1 and 1.7 percent of adults, respectively.⁴
- The preferred game for adult problem gamblers is VLTs, followed by playing cards for money. For adolescents with a gambling problem, the preferred types of gambling are playing pool or other games for money, VLTs, and cards.⁵ As many as 94 percent of problem gamblers in treatment play the VLTs. These gamblers are also involved in other activities, such as the lottery, card games, bingo, and casinos.⁶
- Adult problem gamblers are more likely than the general population to be single, male, under 45, and with high school education or less.⁷
- In 1993, the Province committed \$462,500 annually for the treatment of problem gamblers and their families. Across Canada, only Saskatchewan and Manitoba spend more per capita.⁸ In 1995, the Nova Scotia Government allocated an additional \$1.2 million for prevention and treatment programs, including education, expanded treatment services, and research. Much of the funding for government treatment and prevention programs comes from casino and VLT revenues.
- In Nova Scotia, Problem Gambling Services and Drug Dependency Services, of the Department of Health, are responsible for the prevention and treatment of problem gambling.

Controversies

- Many Nova Scotians have reservations about the growing presence of legalized gambling, and especially about the potential negative effects on community and family life. Some blame the government for overlooking social costs out of financial self-interest. On the other hand, an overwhelming majority of Nova Scotians partici-

pate in at least some form of gambling. Some reserve the term gambling for those games that they find distasteful or that they feel is harmful, such as VLTs, slot machines, racetrack betting, high stakes card games, and other casino games; while other popular forms of gambling such as the lottery, bingo, office pools, and raffles are defined as "entertainment" or "fund-raising for a good cause." Some people resent the fact that the government profits from gambling; however, supporters of legalized gambling point out that alternatives such as increased taxes may be at least as unpopular. See also InfoSheet C, "Legalized Gambling: Pros and Cons."

- Judging from media coverage and public opinion surveys, VLTs and casinos are the types of gambling that elicit the most controversy in Nova Scotia.
- Like every province, Nova Scotia permits charities to raise money through bingo games and raffles. Regulations require that at least 15 percent of gross bingo revenues go back to the sponsoring charities. However, a 1995/96 report estimated that only about 5 percent of the intake went to charities, with most of this amount used to pay expenses. Both bingo and raffle prizes have tended to get increasingly large, and some registered charities have "little or no history of community or charitable activity."⁹
- Although gambling regulation is a provincial responsibility in Canada, native lands are under the jurisdiction of federal governments. To at least some extent, Canadian courts and lawmakers have also acknowledged First Nations' claims to sovereignty over their lands, and to the right to direct their own lives and conduct their own business. In the absence of federal legislation on First Nations gambling in this country, provincial governments and native groups have wrestled with gambling policies. At times, negotiations and disagreements between Mi'kmaq Bands and the Nova Scotia government have flared into heated debate.

Notes

1. Baseline Market Research, *1996 Prevalence Study on Problem Gambling in Nova Scotia*, 10.
2. Nova Scotia Gaming Control Commission, *A Year in Review: Gaming in Nova Scotia*. First Annual Report, 1995/96, 99.
Statistics based on a 1996 survey of 1200 adults conducted by Omnifacts Research.
3. *Ibid.*, 105.
4. Omnifacts Research, *An Examination of the Prevalence of Gambling in Nova Scotia*, (May 1993), 12. The population surveyed comprised 810 randomly selected adults (18 years and over) and 300 randomly selected adolescents (13–17 years of age). A prevalence study conducted by Baseline Market Research in 1996 using the same measuring tool (South Oaks Gambling Screen) found similar results, with 3.6 and 1.9 percent of adults showing signs of "problem" and "pathological" gambling. The slight increase from 1993 is considered to be within the statistical margin of error. The sample comprised 400 adults, 19 years and older.
5. *Ibid.*, 16.
6. N. S. Gaming Control Commission, *A Year in Review*, 131.
7. Baseline Market Research, *1996 Prevalence Study on Problem Gambling*, 47.
8. Ian Kinross, "Provinces Commit \$4.8 Million to Tackle Gambling Problems," *The Journal of the Addiction Research Foundation* (Nov./Dec. 1995): 5. In 1995/96, Saskatchewan spent \$1.52 per capita and Manitoba \$0.92. Nova Scotia spends \$0.56 per capita annually (not including the infusion of an extra \$1.2 million in 1995).
9. N. S. Gaming Control Commission, *A Year in Review*, 30.

Legalized Gambling: Pros and Cons

Students should be encouraged to critically analyze both sides of this issue rather than accepting any particular statement on face value.

Arguments in favour

Gambling is best controlled when it is legal; if gambling is prohibited people will do it anyway, and this promotes lawlessness, feeds organized crime, and places a burden on the legal system and law enforcement agencies.

Only a small percentage of the population has a problem with gambling; a portion of gambling profits can be set aside for education, prevention, and treatment for these people.

For most people, gambling is a harmless and enjoyable form of entertainment; these people should be free to gamble if they choose to.

Gambling profits represent a significant contribution to the economy, funding worthy projects and helping governments tackle their fiscal problems, while also providing a boost for local businesses.

Legalized gambling is preferable to other means of government fund-raising, such as increased taxes.

Counter-arguments

Legalized gambling leads to increased problem gambling, which in turn leads to increased crime, especially in the form of theft, fraud, and embezzlement.

Prevention efforts are often eclipsed by the more powerful social forces that encourage gambling. Only a minority of problem gamblers ever come forward for treatment. For every problem gambler, many more friends, relatives, and colleagues also pay the price of legalized gambling.

Commercialized gambling is a low-level form of entertainment that exploits and perpetuates self-interest and materialistic values; as such it undermines the integrity of a society.

The pleasure of the majority cannot justify social costs in the form of disrupted and ruined lives.

Governments become addicted to gambling revenues and gloss over social costs. As promoters of gambling games, beneficiaries of profits, regulators of the gambling industry, and protectors of the public good, provincial governments are in a conflict-of-interest position.

It is almost impossible to weigh the real costs and benefits of legalized gambling, because there are so many hidden and far-reaching social costs, including gambling addiction, crime, and the promotion of unhealthy social values.

Politicians camouflage taxes and avoid tackling difficult economic realities head-on.

Arguments in favour

Casinos stimulate the economy, provide employment opportunities, and attract tourists.

Canadians have always flocked in large numbers to the gambling havens of Atlantic City and Las Vegas. Since the spread of legalized gambling across the U.S., Canadians have also begun to frequent small casinos near the border. If people are going to gamble, it would be better if they kept their money in Canada, where gambling profits provide needed government revenues.

Counter-arguments

Casinos draw money away from existing entertainment businesses, such as restaurants, nightclubs, sports events, and movie theatres. Although casinos do attract some tourists, the majority of patrons are local.

Casino jobs are generally low paying and require skills that have little application elsewhere. A high proportion of employees are part-time.

Most Canadians who gamble in the U.S. do so only occasionally. Their patronage of U.S. casinos does not represent a significant drain of Canadian dollars. When these same people are given easy year-round access to casinos and VLTs, many who would otherwise remain "holiday gamblers" are much more likely to become problem gamblers.

Changing Values

Among the forces that shape a person's gambling-related values are moral and religious beliefs, social climate and history, the media, personal background and experience, and economic concerns and pressures.

Moral Objections

Those who object to gambling on religious or moral grounds may assert that gambling

- reinforces covetousness, greed, and self-interest
- is a sin, as deemed by God, the elders, or a canon of scriptures
- distracts from more humanitarian or spiritual pursuits
- undermines "family values" and therefore the underpinnings of a stable society
- undermines the work ethic; it does not involve gain by reason of labour and supports a belief in magical solutions to financial problems
- is a form of stealing, since something is gained from losers without anything of concrete value given back in exchange
- dabbles in the realm of fortune and fate, which properly belongs to higher (or lower) forces
- breeds a glossy "get rich quick" ethic and dilutes social integrity

Social Climate

- The legal status of gambling, access to gambling opportunities, and the prevailing moral climate are all interdependent. In Australia, where gambling is probably more readily available in a wider range of forms than in any other country, the *nongambler* is negatively stereotyped as a "wowsler."¹

- The historical origins of a particular type of gambling may affect its social status. In Great Britain, racetrack gambling began as an aristocratic pastime. Although people from all walks of life now bet on horse races, it continues to be a predominantly upper-middle class pursuit. In Australia, on the other hand, horse racing began in farming communities and was organized by the working class. Today it continues to be associated primarily with the working class.²
- In North America, gambling has enjoyed three waves of popularity, alternating with periods of prohibition. At the opening of this century, a moral backlash resulted in tough gambling and drug laws across the continent. In 1898 a national referendum on alcohol prohibition also won a slight majority. See also InfoSheet A, "Historical Notes".
- In Canada, most forms of gambling have been legal since 1969. Since that time, the types of gambling available, the size of prizes, and the money wagered have all steadily increased. In less than 30 years, the moral stigma so widespread at the turn of the century has all but vanished—with a few exceptions.
- In the U.S., where the spread of legalized gambling has been more sweeping than in Canada, a growing movement to block the expansion of gambling is being fought largely on moral grounds. One activist declared, "We're fighting a battle for the soul of America." In 1996, presidential candidate Pat Buchanan announced that "gambling should return to the swamp whence it came."³
- The popularity of gambling can also be measured by the amount of money spent. In 1995 the net revenue in Canada from government-run gambling (money gambled minus prizes and winnings returned to players) was \$5 billion.⁴ Gambling is presently Canada's most lucrative entertainment industry.

- In Alberta, a decline in public support for gambling coincided with the proliferation of VLTs. In 1993, 37 percent of people surveyed agreed with the statement "Gaming is an evil influence on society." In 1995, the percentage in agreement jumped to 50.⁵ In the same period, the number of VLTs increased from a few hundred to 6,000.
- A 1996 public opinion survey revealed that almost two-thirds of adults in this province are not opposed to gambling "in principle." Of those who are opposed, 70 percent indicated negative social consequences (affect on families, addiction, impact on the poor) as the reason, while 10 percent gave religious or moral reasons. Tables 2 and 3 show some detailed results of this survey.

Table 2.
Beliefs and values in Nova Scotia⁶

	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	Don't Know %
Gambling is an exciting and fun pastime.	3	41	7	33	13	3
Most people gamble in moderation.	4	58	3	25	6	5
For most people, gambling is a chance to socialize with others.	4	47	4	35	7	3
There will always be gambling in Nova Scotia, whether it is legalized or not.	30	65	1	3	0	1
Gambling in Nova Scotia is as big a social problem as alcohol or drugs.	18	33	2	34	6	6
Problem gambling is a bad habit that anyone can get over.	4	25	3	45	20	4
Wherever there is gambling, there is some form of crime.	11	41	4	35	3	6

Table 3.
Attitudes towards four types of gambling in Nova Scotia⁷

	Strongly Oppose %	Oppose %	Neutral %	Support %	Strongly Oppose %
Lotteries and lottery tickets (scratch-and-win)	6	12	19	57	6
Bingo	6	12	20	57	5
Casinos	26	24	16	32	2
VLTs in bars	37	33	12	17	1

The Media

- Movies such as *Bugsy*, *Casino*, and *The Godfather* associate gambling with organized crime and the mega-casinos of Nevada. *The Hustler*, *The Color of Money*, and *The Cincinnati Kid* dramatize and romanticize pool hall hustling and poker playing. Most film portrayals of gambling feature exotic period settings, flamboyant personalities (usually cool risk takers), and suspenseful action.
- On television, glitzy game shows provide viewers of all ages with opportunities for vicarious gambling.
- Lottery winners make newspaper headlines, and casino ads include images of treasure chests brimming with coins. Nothing is heard of the millions of people who lose money on a regular basis—unless their gambling leads them to commit suicide or crimes, or their testimony of personal and financial ruin is picked up as a human interest story.
- In recent years, reporters have focused on controversial issues surrounding gambling, including the social costs of problem gambling. This has


helped to raise awareness about the risks of legalized gambling.

Personal Background and Experience

- Besides those already discussed (i.e., the social and religious context), experiences likely to influence a person's values include family attitudes, peer attitudes, leisure time, money available, a significant gambling loss or win, involvement with a problem gambler, and knowledge of the risks of gambling. See also InfoSheet F, "Why Some People Gamble Too Much."

Economic Pressures

- At different times, economic forces have had both negative and positive influences on attitudes towards gambling.
- A strong work ethic is often accompanied by the fear that gambling undermines the worker's sense of discipline and social responsibility.
- At the present time, both critics and supporters of legalized gambling agree that current liberal



attitudes can be attributed to fiscal pressures. Moral and religious issues are no longer at the forefront of the debate over legalization. At a time of growing government deficits and widespread resistance to increased taxes, gambling profits have become extremely attractive.

- In times of economic strain, gambling may become more appealing to those who see few other opportunities for significantly improving their situation. Unemployment also results in increased leisure time, but a decrease in disposable income.
- On an individual level, gambling can seem like a viable way of escaping burdensome debt. Fyodor Dostoevsky, for example, traced the early stages of his gambling addiction to the time when his financial troubles were greatly exacerbated by his unrealistic promise to pay the debts of his deceased brother. See InfoSheet K, "Three Famous Gamblers."

Notes

1. Michael B. Walker, *The Psychology of Gambling* (Pergamon Press, 1992), 123.
2. *Ibid.*, 105–106.
3. Margot Hornblower, "No Dice: The Backlash Against Gambling," *Time* (Apr. 1, 1996): 46.
4. Katherine Marshall, "A Sure Bet Industry," *Perspectives on Labour and Income* (Autumn 1996): 39. Publ. by Statistics Canada
5. "Gambling Loses Support As It Spreads," *The Globe and Mail* (June 10, 1996).
6. Nova Scotia Gaming Control Commission, *A Year in Review: Gaming in Nova Scotia*, First Annual Report, 1995/96. The survey involved 1200 people from various regions of Nova Scotia.
7. *Ibid.* Respondents were asked, "Overall, do you support or oppose the presence of the following activities in Nova Scotia?"

The Odds

- By definition, gambling involves at least some degree of risk. The allure of gambling is in the uncertainty, the suspense, and the possibility of winning, however great or remote.
- All gamblers ask themselves, "Can I win?" Unless they are foolish, impulsive, or out of control, they also ask, "Can I afford to lose?" Even the "sure bet" can fall through.
- The risk of gambling comes from an element of randomness, or unpredictability, in the outcome. The more chance and the less skill involved, the greater the degree of randomness.
- In games of pure chance, the player has no influence over the outcome. Examples: lottery, dice, video gambling machines, and roulette.
- In games involving a mix of skill and chance, the player's expertise, strategy, and/or knowledge can influence the chance of winning. Examples: betting on card games such as blackjack, horse races, sports, and other competitive games.

In Theory

- When people talk about the odds, they are usually referring to the statistical probability of winning. However, in the context of gambling, "the odds" also refer to payoff ratio. This is the amount paid on a successful bet. For example, if the payoff odds are two to one, the "house" (the bingo hall operator, lottery commission, casino dealer, or gambling machine) pays two dollars for every dollar bet on a winning outcome.
- The outcome of most games follows a pattern over time. For example, if you toss a coin over and over, you will turn up heads about half the time. Thus the odds of turning up heads are one in two, also expressed as 1:2, 0.5, or 50 percent. However, in reality you could turn up heads nine times in a row.

- Probability (P) is expressed as the mathematical relationship between the outcome you want and the total number of possible outcomes:

$$P = (\text{no. of favourable results}) \div (\text{no. of possible results})$$

For example, if you throw a die, the probability of rolling a six are one (favourable result) in six (number of possible results) or $1 \div 6$ or 0.166.

Probability is a *theoretical* relationship that describes a pattern, or a likelihood. It does not tell you what the outcome of a specific event will be—that is left to chance.

- *Dependent events* influence each others' outcome. Suppose you are drawing cards from a deck, one at a time, and holding on to the cards you have drawn. Your chance of drawing a jack on the first try are 4 in 52 or 1 in 13. If you don't draw a jack on the first try, the chance of drawing a jack on the second try are 4 in 51 or 1 in 12.75. The odds have changed. If you do draw a jack the first time, the chances of drawing a jack on your second try are different again: 3 in 51 or 1 in 17.
- *Independent events* do not influence each others' outcome. If you flip a coin nine times and turn up with tails every time, the odds of turning up tails on the tenth toss are still one in two or 50 percent. The coin does not "remember" previous outcomes. Similarly, the odds of winning the jackpot on a VLT or slot machine are always the same, regardless of how the machines has been paying out over the previous hour, day, or month.
- The *law of large numbers*, known more popularly as the *law of averages*, says that the more times you repeat independent events with a random outcome, the closer the actual outcome will be to the theoretical probability. The more times you flip a coin, the more likely you will end up with half heads and half tails. The longer you play a game of pure chance, the more likely your winnings will match the odds.

Gambling Games in Nova Scotia

- The odds of coming out ahead during a particular session of gambling depend on the payout percentage (percent of all money played that is returned to players as prizes), the length of time it takes to complete a game cycle, the length of time played, and how the prize money is distributed.
- For all commercial gambling games, the payout percentage is less than 100 percent. This means that the odds are in favour of the house. Over time, the house will make a profit, and the players will lose a percentage of their money.
- Different gambling games have different payout percentages. In Nova Scotia, the minimum payout percentage for slot machines and VLTs is set by law at 80 percent. However, most VLTs pay back about 95 percent of the money played, averaged over ten million plays. The maximum payout for a single play is \$1,000. Slot machines, which have a 90–95 payout percent, generally offer larger jackpots and a greater variety of games. On average, charity bingos pay back about 82 percent. Most government-run lotteries pay back about 50 percent of the money played.¹
- A high payout percentage doesn't necessarily indicate the best "gambling investment." More relevant is the "walk-away percentage"—the final loss or gain at the end of a gambling session. For example, because VLTs and slot machines have a short play cycle, losses can accumulate quickly. Also, the payout percentage for VLTs and slots is based on an average that spans millions of plays. In any one gambling session, there is no guarantee that the player will win back any of the money played.
- Some games pay out a few big jackpots; others pay out numerous small prizes. One big jackpot means that the odds of winning something are less favourable than if the prize money is divided among many small prizes. If the player doesn't win the jackpot, her "walk-away percentage" may be much lower than the payout percentage,

which includes all prizes, large and small. If she does win the jackpot, her walk-away percentage will be high.

- When bets are pooled and then divided among players, this is called *pari-mutuel* betting. The size of the prize is determined by the number of players. Examples: office and sports pools, race track betting, Lotto 6/49.
- From the point of view of the house, the promise of a big jackpot attracts more players (e.g., lotteries, high-stakes bingo). Frequent, small payouts keep the excitement level high and make it harder for players to walk away (e.g., VLTs).
- VLTs have a high "hit frequency" and low jackpots (i.e., players win small prizes often). Slots have a somewhat lower hit frequency, with higher jackpots. Lotteries usually have the highest jackpots. The odds of winning any Lotto 6/49 prize: 1 in 54. The odds of winning the top prize (getting six out of six numbers right): 1 in 13.98 million. To put this in perspective:²

If you were to buy 50 Lotto tickets each week, you would win the jackpot about once every 5,000 years.

If you drove 16 kilometres to buy your ticket, you would be three times more likely to get killed in a car crash on the way to buy your ticket than you would to win the jackpot.

Your chances of picking a single coloured strand of hair from a person's head—while blindfolded—would be better than your chance of picking the winning combination of numbers.

Generally, it is difficult to think of anything more unlikely than winning the jackpot; the chance of winning is so small it barely exists. The law of very large numbers says that "with a large enough sample, any outrageous thing is apt to happen."³ Even though the chances of winning the Lotto 6/49 jackpot are infinitesimally small, if enough people play someone will win. Each week, millions of players buy tickets in the hope that they will be that "someone."

Wishful Thinking

- Gambling is not always a rational activity. For many people, it is hard to accept that the outcome of a game of chance is completely beyond their control. Even when they know better, gamblers often behave *as if* they could predict or influence the outcome in some way. "The gambler's task is to predict an outcome which is essentially unpredictable. In attempting this difficult task, gamblers typically display two kinds of bias. First of all they behave as if they can influence the outcome of the unpredictable event. Secondly, they behave as if the event is more predictable than in fact it is. Clearly, these two sources of bias may occur together. These biases are identified in the experimental literature by a variety of names: illusion of control, superstitious beliefs, biased evaluations, erroneous perception, and irrational thinking."⁴
- "Gambler's fallacy"—a classic example of a false sense of predictability—is based on the erroneous intuition that even in a relatively small sample of events, each number or outcome will turn up an appropriate number of times, according to the statistical probability. Therefore, if heads have turned up eight times in a row, the next toss of the coin is more likely to turn up tails than heads. "Some studies suggest that many players have a deep-seated misconception of the nature of randomness. In particular, they appear to deny the independence of trials which is fundamental to the notion of randomness."⁵
- The element of chance, or randomness, is often made personal, even human, through the notion of *luck*. "Lady Luck" has long been considered the gambler's muse. "Blackjack players have the illusion that they can control luck, by playing when their luck is in and quitting when their luck is out. These players appear to conceptualize luck as a personal characteristic that comes and goes rather like emotional moods."⁶

- In gambling games involving some degree of skill, such as card games and racetrack or sports betting, players tend to believe more skill is involved than is actually the case.⁷
- In games of chance, the illusion of control tends to increase when players
 - exercise some choice (e.g., choose their own lottery numbers as opposed to buying a preprinted ticket)
 - participate actively (e.g., pull down a lever on a slot machine as opposed to pressing a button)
 - have previous experience with the game (e.g., they are "expert" rather than novice players)⁸

Notes

1. Nova Scotia Gaming Control Commission, *A Year in Review: Gaming in Nova Scotia*, First Annual Report, 1995/96. Note that VLT prizes don't include vouchers won and then played. Bingo revenues are not closely monitored; percentage paid out in prizes is based on estimates only.
2. Most of the analogies in this section are from Mike Orkin, *Can You Win? The Real Odds for Casino Gambling, Sports Betting, and Lotteries* (New York: W. H. Freeman and Co., 1991).
3. Quoted in *ibid.*, attributed to Professors Persi Diaconis and Frederick Mosteller.
4. Robert Ladouceur and Michael Walker, "A Cognitive Perspective on Gambling," *Trends in Cognitive Therapy*, ed. by Paul Salkovskis (Oxford University Press, 1996).
5. *Ibid.*
6. Michael B. Walker, *The Psychology of Gambling* (Pergamon Press, 1992), 41.
7. *Ibid.*, 57.
8. Ladouceur and Walker, "A Cognitive Perspective on Gambling."

Why Some People Gamble Too Much

Why Most People Gamble

1. Entertainment

- the risk of losing, the hope of winning
- the suspense of waiting for the outcome
- the excitement/thrill of winning or nearly winning
- as something to do—a diversion, a break from the usual routine
- to relax a usually rational and frugal approach to money

2. Social setting and camaraderie

- e.g., casino, bingo hall, sports bar

3. The chance to win

- because of the possibility of coming out ahead in games involving skill
- in the hope of changing one's financial and social position (esp. the lottery)

Why Some People Gamble Too Much

Problem gambling—how it develops and why some gamblers lose control while others don't—can be explained in a number of ways. Some explanations focus on the nature of gambling itself; from this perspective, those who are vulnerable become victims of gambling's deceptive lure. Other explanations focus on psychological reasons, such as forces within the unconscious that are acted out as a gambling problem, personality types that predispose the gambler to lose control, or cognitive habits that lead the gambler astray. Still other explanations stress social factors—childhood experiences, social values and messages, role modelling, the availability of opportunities to gamble.

Although the following "reasons" touch on all these areas, they are more like signposts than explanations. They point to subjective experiences along the boundary between social and problem gambling. No one of these is necessarily a cause or indicator of problem gambling, but each comes with its own warning.

1. Absorption

Playing an exciting game can be absorbing because it captures the player's attention and emotions. Sometimes gambling becomes so absorbing that the player enters a trance-like state. Playing against a machine can be especially absorbing, to the point where the player loses track of time, physical feelings, and other ordinary reference points. At that point, gambling becomes an escape, a familiar haven, a way of numbing painful feelings and avoiding responsibilities.

2. Big win

Winning is fun; it feels good. Everyone likes to win, and "everyone loves a winner." The feelings of euphoria, success, and self-importance leave a strong imprint. Some people keep trying to recreate these feelings, ultimately in vain. Addicted gamblers often point to a big win or an early winning streak when telling the story of how they first became hooked.

3. Chasing losses

Most people quit playing when their spending money is gone, or when they start to lose. But when the player refuses to admit that the odds are against him, or when he can't walk away from the action, he starts "chasing losses." He keeps playing in an effort to win back the money lost. He starts placing larger bets and digging himself into deeper and deeper debt.

4. Depression

Gambling can seem like an oasis of fun, good feelings, and popularity in the midst of a boring, unhappy, or painful life. A person who is depressed, or whose underlying self-esteem is low, is particularly vulnerable to the lure of gambling.

5. Early experiences

With the best of intentions, parents often initiate their children into the world of gambling by giving them lottery tickets, taking them to bingo games, letting them join adult poker games, or expressing their excitement over their own gambling. Research shows that children of problem gamblers are especially likely to develop gambling problems themselves.

6. Feelings of power

Some people like to gamble because it makes them feel like a big shot. The bigger the bet, the more powerful they feel.

7. Going along with friends

Gambling is often "something to do," a way to spend time with friends. Sometimes it's easier to go along with what's happening than to step back and do what's best for oneself.

8. High energy

The risk of winning or losing makes gambling stimulating, fun, and exciting. *Action* is a gambler's term for that excitement. Some gamblers are so drawn to being "in action" that they become dependent on it. When the addicted gambler runs out of money, he or she typically becomes nervous, depressed, and desperate to get back into action.

9. Illusions of control

People often imagine they have an edge or advantage, even in games of pure chance. They think they can tell when a video gambling machine is "hot" or use special "techniques" to influence the outcome. Sometimes gamblers develop a superstitious belief in the power of luck. Or they think can beat the odds by using their "smarts" or their competitive drive.

10. Jackpot fantasies

Everyone likes to dream about winning the jackpot, and newspaper stories about big-time lottery winners make the possibility seem real. This dream keeps many people buying tickets week after week, month after month. Many lottery players don't realize that the chance of winning is so small it only barely exists.

Influences on Gambling Attitudes and Behaviour

1. Personality and experience

- risk-taking tendency
- competitiveness
- money available
- leisure time
- self-esteem
- experience with gambling

2. Family background

- success of family environment in fostering self-esteem
- family attitudes and habits related to gambling
- attitudes towards money and material wealth

- willingness to "bail out" family member in debt
- money available

3. *Social environment*

- friends' attitudes and gambling habits
- broader social values related to gambling, money, winning (see also InfoSheet D, "Changing Values")
- opportunities to gamble
- laws
- availability of other things to do

Stages of Problem Gambling

Winning

Did you hear how much I won tonight?

I'm a winner! Everybody loves a winner.

This sure beats hanging around doing nothing.

Luck is my middle name!

Hey, let me buy you some pizza.

It's too early to go home. Let's keep playing!

Winning can be a first step towards problem gambling when it gives you a real "high," so you keep going back for more. This can easily happen if you are the kind of person who has a strong competitive drive. You like to push yourself hard, you like to compete, and you love to win. If you have underlying doubts about your self-worth, winning gives you the surge of confidence you need. But then, when your luck changes, losing is just too difficult to accept. It's such a downer. Your self-concept and image are at stake. You tend to ignore these losses, blaming them on bad luck and telling yourself that you just have to work harder at it. Maybe you think you can outsmart your opponent, or the machine. You aren't one to give up easily. You brag about your wins and soak up the attention. You love gambling, the feeling of risk, the rush of winning, and you just want to keep doing it, more and more. You've found a way to be a winner, and you're not going to give it up.

Note: This description of the winning stage is most typical of a certain type of gambler—the competitive, risk-taking male. Most women, and some men, get hooked on gambling because it is an escape. Sitting at a VLT hour after hour or losing oneself in the suspense of a bingo game becomes a way of relieving boredom, taking a break from painful feelings, or avoiding a difficult or lonely home life.

Losing (or Chasing)

So I lost a few rounds. I'll be back on top soon. My luck is about to change.

The bigger the bet, the more chance to win.

I'll win again. Remember how much I won last month?

I'll borrow some cash so I can get back on top of things.

Never mind how much I lost. It's none of your business.

I guess I should stop playing...

Don't bug me. Ok?

For all commercial gambling games, the odds are that the more you play, the more you'll lose. If you love to gamble and don't want to stop, this is terrible news. As you lose more and more money, gambling stops being fun. You start feeling less sure of yourself. You feel guilty about the money you've spent. You can't quite look yourself in the eye. You feel angry with yourself, and take it out on other people. You get irritable, cranky. You can't stand the thought of giving up gambling, so instead you keep fooling yourself into thinking you can win—next time. It might happen with the next coin in the VLT, the next lottery ticket, the next sports bet. You start thinking about it all the time. You skip school, stay out late, stop seeing old friends. You often gamble alone. Your money is all gone, so you borrow from family and friends. You're not sure how you're going to pay it back. You try to win it back with larger and larger bets. You find yourself lying more than you ever have before. Perhaps you go to your parents and confess that you've gotten into trouble with gambling debts. They bail you out in exchange for a promise that you'll stop gambling. You say you will, but before you know it, you're back in action.

Panic (or Desperation)

I can pay it all back; I just need more time.

Just one big win would solve everything.

I can't sleep. My stomach is in knots.

When I'm playing, everything else disappears.

Where can I get some money? I'd do anything for some cash.

How could I be so stupid to get myself into this mess? I won't get in so deep again.

I can't be bothered with small-time bets. It's too petty.

I'll quit once my debts are paid.

I'm such a loser.

You are out of control. Your spending is wild, your bets are desperate. Your gambling has become a "secret life" that you don't talk about much, but that you think about all the time. Your personality has changed. You are always worried, anxious, quick-tempered. You do things you never would have done before—like "borrowing" money that doesn't belong to you, stealing, and lying. If you can't gamble, you feel restless, nervous, depressed. The fear and stress are making you sick. You've borrowed from everyone you know, and they've stopped believing you'll pay them back. They don't trust you anymore. Your need to keep gambling is so strong you don't even care who you gets hurt, or what you are risking. Sometimes you feel so badly about yourself that you think about suicide.

Exhaustion

You have given up thinking that you can win back your losses, or that you can stop gambling. You don't care about anything anymore. You just gamble because it's all that's left. You just do it, often to the point of exhaustion.

Getting Help

I'm out of control. I've got to stop.

I don't think I can get out of this by myself.

My life is a mess.

I'm tired of hurting myself and everyone else.

There's more to life than gambling.

Maybe I'll cut back.

I'm ready for a fresh start.

I don't like what gambling is doing to me.

I need to talk to somebody.

It's hard to "face the music" when you know you have a problem that's out of control. It seems easier to deny it, to yourself and to others. You pretend you can stop any time, or that getting more money will solve the problem. It takes courage to face the truth—to admit that the problem is bigger than money, and you don't know how to stop gambling.

People used to think that gambling was just a sign of a "weak will" or an indulgent personality. Now we know that gambling can be just as serious a problem, and just as hard to give up, as alcohol or drug abuse. Most people need help to give up a gambling addiction and sort out the problems it has caused. Of course, it's better to get help before the problem gets to the addiction stage.

If you think you might have a problem with gambling, talk about it with someone you trust. Telling the truth is the first, important step. When you have someone's support it's easier to go and get the help you need. Around the province, Drug Dependency Services counsellors have been specially trained to work with gambling problems. Teens can also call 1-888-347-8888 anytime for confidential advice and to find out what services are offered in their area.

Sources

The stages of Winning, Losing, and Desperation were first defined by Robert L. Custer, medical advisor to the U.S. National Council on Compulsive Gambling, in 1987. The "Chart of Compulsive Gambling and Recovery" he developed was similar to an earlier chart developed by E. M. Jellinek to describe the progressive stages of alcoholism. These charts have been widely adopted by Alcoholics Anonymous and Gamblers Anonymous, self-help groups following a 12-step method of recovery. In 1991, H. R. Lesieur and R. J. Rosenthal modified Custer's chart to reflect their clinical experience, and to address differences between male and female problem gamblers. ("Pathological Gambling: A Review of the Literature" in *Journal of Gambling Studies* 7[1]: 5-39). At that time, Rosenthal proposed a fourth stage, which he called Exhaustion. In recent years, professionals concerned about the growing numbers of teen gamblers have adapted the stages for adolescents.

Gambling as an Addiction

- Addiction can be defined as the compulsion to continue using a substance or engaging in an activity, despite harmful consequences to oneself and others.
- The symptoms of gambling addiction are similar to those of other addictions. These include preoccupation, craving, dependence, tolerance (the need for higher doses or escalated degrees of activity to produce the same effect), withdrawal (restlessness, tension, anxiety, depression), loss of self-control, and "rushes" (exhilaration, sweating, rapid heartbeat, nausea, queasiness).
- There is no hard-and-fast distinction between a "habit" and an "addiction." It is not always possible to determine the exact point at which a heavy drinker becomes an alcoholic or an avid gambler becomes an addicted gambler.
- In many times and social situations, excessive gambling has been viewed as a moral weakness worthy of disdain or even punishment. However, public attitudes towards gambling have followed the same trend as those towards alcohol. Since 1956, alcoholism has come to be viewed as a disease needing treatment rather than a moral and social crime. Excessive gambling has also become recognized as a treatable disorder, but not until 1980, when the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders III* (DSM-III) classified compulsive gambling as an "impulse control disorder."
- The DSM-III's (and the revised DSM-IV's) list of criteria for diagnosing compulsive gambling was modelled after those used for diagnosing substance abuse. Since that time, there has been a tendency to focus on the similarities, rather than the differences, between compulsive gambling and substance abuse.
- More recently, some professionals in the addictions field have become critical of the "medical model" which views addiction as a disease. An alternative behaviorist model places more emphasis on the continuum of behaviours that leads from a healthy to a progressively unhealthy relationship to a substance or activity. This model tries to steer away from black-and-white distinctions and all-or-nothing treatment options.
- Gambling is sometimes called the "invisible addiction" because, unlike alcoholism and drug addiction, there are no telltale signs like the smell of liquor on the breath, dilated pupils, or needle marks.
- There is considerable overlap between substance abuse and gambling problems. Problem gamblers have a much higher rate of alcohol and other drug abuse than the general population. Conversely, alcohol and drug abusers demonstrate a significantly higher rate of problem gambling. However, the nature of the relationship between addictions is not always clear. Does drinking accelerate the stages of problem gambling by reducing inhibitions and self-control? Do the financial losses, mood swings, and stresses of heavy gambling lead to substance abuse? Do both problems derive from the same psychological and social roots? Most likely, all of these explanations apply in different cases and under different circumstances.
- When the underlying problems have not been addressed, it is common for individuals to switch from one type of addictive behaviour to another. For example, a recovering alcoholic may become heavily involved in gambling. The person replaces the chemical high from alcohol with the high from being "in action."
- Adults in treatment usually report that their pattern of addiction began to emerge in early adolescence.¹
- Clinicians find that adolescents who are addicted to gambling and those who are addicted to drugs have much in common. "Both groups of adolescent addicts expect a mood change, an escape, a relief and a way to cope with reality that is alienating. Both want to avoid pain and increase pleasure, and both are willing to pay a high price

to achieve the desired effect. Problems in living, relating, working, recreating, coping, along with financial and legal difficulties do not deter either group from stopping the behavior. To get high, to transcend the tedium of day-to-day boredom, to avoid responsibility, these adolescent addicts will risk much."²

- Addiction can replace the developmental process of adolescence. "Addiction provides answers to questions, anesthesia for awkwardness, people to experience it with, an identity, a place to be, something to do, an antidote for affective difficulties and an easy way to change mood.... Listening to adolescents describe their addiction in treatment, it becomes apparent how deeply 'in love' and committed to the addictive relationship they really are. The deepest needs for acceptance and love become enveloped into the addictive process and replace the normal developmental process, making it virtually impossible to grow into a full functioning autonomous adult."³
- Some attempts have been made to come up with an overarching "theory of addiction" that encompasses both substance abuse and addictions involving gambling, sex, shopping, work, food, and the internet. There is general agreement that there is no one "addictive personality." Rather, psychologists point to deep feelings of rejection and powerlessness, originating in an unhappy childhood, as predisposing the individual towards addictive behaviour.⁴ The substance or behaviour provides a "dissociative state that blurs reality testing, lowers self-criticalness and self-consciousness, and permits complimentary daydreams about oneself."⁵ In the case of gambling, the dissociative state is the excitement and absorption of being "in action." Other risk factors for addiction include heredity, personality type, and social influences. See also InfoSheet F, "Why Some People Gamble Too Much."

Notes

1. William L. Pursley, "Adolescence, Chemical Dependency and Pathological Gambling," *Journal of Adolescent Chemical Dependency* 4 (1991).
2. *Ibid.*, 33.
3. *Ibid.*, 35.
4. See, for example, Durand Jacobs, "A General Theory of Addictions: A New Theoretical Model," *Journal of Gambling Behavior* 2 (1986): 15-31; and Peter Michaelson, *Secret Attachments: Exposing the Roots of Addictions and Compulsions* (Prospect Books, 1993).
5. "A General Theory of Addiction," *Behavior Today* (Feb. 20, 1989). This article documents the views of Dr. Durand Jacobs.

The Effect of Problem Gambling on the Family

- Problem gambling affects the family in ways similar to substance abuse. If one person gambles excessively, the entire family suffers.
- At first other family members may respond by denying the problem and trying to "cover" for the gambler. As the problem progresses and the financial crisis grows, stress and arguments increase.
- The parent of a young gambler may react with denial, anger, self-blame, or even protectiveness. Sometimes the parents will respond differently. One will bail out the teen gambler, while the other parent will express anger and rejection. This produces conflict within the marriage and affects the other children.
- When a parent becomes addicted to gambling, he or she effectively abandons the rest of the family. For much of the time the gambler is absent, physically and emotionally. "Action" consumes all of the gambler's interest and passion.
- The spouse of a gambler may feel angry, depressed, and humiliated; may become isolated from friends; and may turn to alcohol or other drugs as a way of coping. As rage, panic, and a feeling of rejection mount, the spouse considers divorce and possibly even suicide.
- For the wife left at home night after night, gambling becomes the "other woman" who steals away her husband and undermines her feeling of self-worth: "The other woman invades your mind every day; she chains your soul leaving me no chance to touch it. Your every motive in life includes only her. Your obsession with her steals your honesty, making it easier to lie than breathe, taking with it your laughter and tears. She consoles you the best and even satisfies your lust, always leaving no room for me. Even when you're not with her she's on your mind and devours your every breath. She's exciting; I'm boring. I, as your wife, concede—I cannot compete."¹
- When it is the wife who gambles, the husband feels abandoned and confused. He may be more likely to act out his frustration and impatience, rather than withdrawing into a passive depression. In one news story, a 54-year-old Nova Scotian man smashed three VLTs with a sledgehammer because his wife was spending too much money playing the machines.
- The gambling parent's absence and extreme moods, and the spouse's feeling of frustration and helplessness create a stressful environment for the children. Discipline may be inconsistent, alternating between harsh punishment and guilt-induced indulgence. The children may try to protect the nongambling parent, so that roles become confused. Trust breaks down when the gambler misses birthdays, forgets promises, and is never there when needed. Many marriages strained by gambling addiction end in separation or divorce before the children are 15 years of age.²
- The children of a problem gambler adapt by taking on specialized roles in the family and by trying to compensate for deep feelings of abandonment, anger, guilt, confusion, and insecurity. They may become passive and withdrawn, overresponsible, or act out the family's hidden problems. At school, their academic work may suffer, or they may become overachievers. Often their stress management and coping skills are underdeveloped, giving them a further disadvantage as they face the challenges of adolescence. In their teen years they may become involved with substance abuse, eating disorders, promiscuity, problem gambling, or psychosomatic illnesses.
- As with substance abuse, treatment for problem gambling involves the entire family. As the gambler comes to terms with debts and starts rebuilding trust with family and friends, other family members examine how they have adapted to the gambler's behaviour, and how they can begin to meet their own needs. Otherwise, the scars of problem gambling can lead to a second generation of self-defeating behaviour in the form of addiction and involvement in abusive relationships.

Notes

1. Joanna Franklin and Donald R. Thoms, "Clinical Observations of Family Members of Compulsive Gamblers," *Compulsive Gambling: Theory, Research, and Practice*, ed. by Howard J. Shaffer, Sharon A. Stein, Blase Gambino, and Thomas N. Cummings (Lexington Books, 1989), 140.
2. Durand F. Jacobs, "A Review of Juvenile Gambling in the United States," *Gambling Behavior and Problem Gambling*, ed. by William R. Eadington and Judy A. Cornelius (Reno, Nevada: Institute for the Study of Gambling and Commercial Gaming, 1993), 436.

Men and Women Gamblers

- Until recently, popular images of the "typical gambler" have been shaped by media renditions of historical characters and Vegas-style casino patrons. These images include the independent macho risk-taker and the sophisticated high roller. Historically, gambling was seen as a male domain. Since 1957, Gamblers Anonymous (GA) has contributed another less glamorous view, based on testimonies of recovering compulsive gamblers. The typical GA profile is of the 40-year-old male with above-average intelligence who is strongly competitive, perhaps a workaholic. However, because GA has tended to attract a particular segment of the population, it appears that other segments have been underrepresented in this profile, particularly young people, ethnic minorities, seniors, and women.
- As legalized gambling has spread and all types of gambling have become more accepted and widely available, people from all walks of life have taken up gambling as a pastime. More than ever, it is difficult to describe the "typical" gambler or problem gambler as belonging to any one group, or as having a specific predisposition or personality type.
- Researchers and clinicians have tended to conclude that women and men gamble for different reasons. The usual thinking is that women who gamble too much do so out of despair, loneliness, boredom, or stress. Through gambling, they are able to distance themselves from everyday reality. Men are more likely to be attracted to the "high" of risk-taking and being in action. However, some clinicians believe that the reasons for gambling are converging, especially as video gambling machines become increasingly popular. Both men and women are attracted to the machines because of their fast-paced, continuous action—which becomes a form of escape.
- In Nova Scotia,² women account for about
 - half of all lottery, scratch-and-win, and raffle ticket buyers
 - 68 percent of occasional bingo players and 92 percent of weekly players
 - half of occasional slot machine players and 18 percent of weekly players
 - half of occasional VLT players and 21 percent of weekly players
 - 21 percent of occasional sports pool bettors and 39 percent of weekly bettors
 - one-third of problem gamblers
- Most research suggests that between one-third and one-half of problem gamblers are women.³
- Women tend to place smaller bets than men. A 1996 U.S. study of the gambling behaviour of 104 children ranging in age from 9 to 14 found that boys made significantly higher bets and had larger winnings than girls in the group, suggesting that males tend to take larger financial risks.⁴

Notes

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2. Baseline Market Research, *1996 Prevalence Study on Problem Gambling in Nova Scotia*.
3. Joseph Hrabá and Gang Lee, "Gender, Gambling and Problem Gambling," *Journal of Gambling Studies* 12, no. 1 (1996): 84.
4. J. L. Derevensky, R. Gupta, and G. D. Cloppa, "A Developmental Perspective of Gambling Behavior in Children and Adolescents," *Journal of Gambling Studies* 12 (1996): 49–66.

Three Famous Gamblers

Because some cases of problem gambling involve celebrities or astronomical amounts of money, they capture the imagination of the media and the public. While there is something to be learned from these colourful accounts, it should also be kept in mind that most problem gamblers are ordinary people who quietly slip over an invisible line and become caught in a trap of compulsion and self-deception. The only people that will ever know their stories will be those who suffer with them—families, friends, colleagues—and those who help them recover.

Fyodor Dostoevsky

One of Russia's greatest novelist, Dostoevsky (1821–81) is best known for such colossal works as *Crime and Punishment*, *The Possessed*, and *The Idiot*. Dostoevsky was an epileptic. In Thomas Mann's words, he was "a quivering bundle of nerves, subject to spasms at a moment's notice" who nonetheless "erected a stupendous lifework of an unheard-of novelty and audacity, a surging wealth of passions and visions."¹

Mann goes on to identify gambling as Dostoevsky's "second disease." His gambling obsession took hold after he returned from ten years' exile in Siberia and tried to solve his financial problems at the roulette table. From 1862 to 1872 he was constantly in debt or racing to meet publishing deadlines so he could keep creditors at bay. In fact, the short novel *The Gambler* was itself written under duress caused by gambling debts. Dostoevsky had promised to deliver the manuscript to an unscrupulous publisher by November 1, 1866, or he would have to forfeit the copyright to all his writings. By October 1, Dostoevsky had not yet written the first word, as he was still busy working on *Crime and Punishment* for another publisher. At the last minute, Dostoevsky's career was saved by a friend who recommended that Dostoevsky hire Anna Grigorievna Snitkina, a pretty young secretary who was an expert at taking shorthand. Over the following weeks, Dostoevsky dictated the

story of *The Gambler*, a vivid and astute account of the psychology of gambling addiction.

Anna became Dostoevsky's second wife, experiencing first-hand the disastrous consequences of gambling addiction. In 1867, Anna recalled in her diary: "When there remained nothing more to put on the gaming table and when all our resources had been exhausted, Fyodor fell into a deep melancholy. He moaned, threw himself at my feet, implored my forgiveness—for he was not unaware of the torment he had caused me—and seemed at the extreme limit of despair."²

Remarkably, Dostoevsky was able to recover from his addiction on his own. On April 28, 1871, Dostoevsky wrote to his wife from Wiesbaden, Prussia:

I went back to the casino, I was so ashamed of having robbed you of those 30 thalers. Believe me, my angel, the whole year I have dreamt of buying you a pair of earrings to replace those which I have not yet redeemed for you. You have pawned everything for me during these last four years, and you have been roaming about abroad with me and longing to be at home. Anna, Anna, do remember I am not a scoundrel, but only a gambler in the toils of passion....

For ten years (or rather since the death of my brother, when I was suddenly loaded with debts) I always had this dream of winning. I dreamed this seriously, passionately. Now it is all over! Now it has happened for the very last time! Can you believe it, Anna, my hands are free at last. I was chained to the gambling table. From now on I shall think only of my work and will not dream of gambling all night as I used to do. Now my work will be better, and God will bless me!³

After that day, Dostoevsky never gambled again.

Brian Molony

At the age of 24, Molony had worked his way to the position of assistant manager at a Toronto branch of the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce. His superiors were impressed by his astuteness, his ambition, and his loyalty to the bank. His colleagues thought of him as a workaholic; he was often the first to arrive in the morning and the last to leave at the end of the day. None of them knew Molony the gambler. Not even his girlfriend was aware that he lived for the next bet—on the World Series, at the racetrack, at a local craps game, at the casinos. When his debts piled up and his bookie insisted that he pay, Molony deftly took out a “loan” in his bookie’s name. He never thought of it as fraud; he had every intention to win back the money he needed to pay the loan. Molony’s biographer, Gary Ross, describes that point of no return:

He had solved a short-term problem. He had done something else, too, but before the thought could take shape he hurried out of the branch. The something else was intangible, like the state lines you crossed on the drive to Florida. A sign announced that you’d left Michigan and entered Ohio, but everything looked exactly the same—blue sky, tilled fields, blackbirds rising from the power line. Nothing had changed, except you were no longer in Michigan.⁴

As Molony’s gambling escalated to a feverish pitch, he continued to draw from fictitious accounts he had set up at the bank. The accounts were empty, but the bank’s records showed that they contained large amounts. Molony spent evenings at the racetrack, nights tuned to the sports channel, and weekends at casinos in Las Vegas and Atlantic City. At the casinos he became a “mythical figure”:

Unlike most high rollers, he wore cheap, ill-fitting clothes. His moustache and glasses made him look like a nerd. He was also gaining a reputation as an unflinching loser. “Lock up the cash,” the floormen said to one another with a wink. “Look who’s

back”... Some players used a scorecard to keep track of their hands. Molony remembered what had happened in each of the last fifteen or twenty hands. Unbelievable memory. He didn’t talk much but wasn’t unfriendly. He never drank. When one of the casino executives gave him a present—a jogging suit, or a gumball machine, or a Rolex watch—he tucked it away without even looking at it. He came to play, and his intensity was something to see.⁵

Molony lost so much money that one casino in Atlantic City chartered a Learjet to fly him back and forth from Toronto. The last time he gambled there he lost over a million dollars—in one night.

When he most needed to win he had hit the cold run of his life. Looking in the mirror, seeing his hunched shoulders and ravaged face, he wanted to weep. He thought of weeping, but what would weeping accomplish? Would it get the money back? Would weeping pay down the loans? If he wept, would that wash Colizzi’s name off the documentation? Would weeping guarantee a win? Would it make him a better handicapper? No, of course not. What would be the logic behind weeping? He collected his bag and went downstairs.⁶

After that night, Molony flew back to Toronto and was arrested on the way home. He was later charged with stealing more than \$10 million from the bank and was sentenced to six years in prison. Altogether, his wins and losses at the casinos and the racetracks totalled over \$457 million.

Pete Rose

Pete Rose became a baseball legend in the 1970s, when he helped the Cincinnati Reds become a powerhouse team. During his playing career he became an all-time hit leader, with 4,256 hits. Rose later became the team’s manager and seemed to be headed for baseball’s Hall of Fame. But even with a \$500,000 a year salary, gambling led to cash flow problems, which led to Rose’s downfall.

Major league baseball has strict no-betting rules. But an investigation found that Rose's bets sometimes reached \$34,000 on the Super Bowl and \$2,000 on single baseball games—including bets placed on his own team. A three-month betting binge in 1987 left Rose owing \$400,000 to a New York bookie. To pay off debts, and to get more cash for gambling, Rose sold his cars and his own baseball memorabilia. A former friend testified that Rose had considered dealing cocaine as a way of raising the cash he needed to keep gambling.⁷

The baseball legend's "final humiliation" came in 1990 when Rose was given a five-month jail sentence for evading taxes. He had failed to report income of \$354,968 from memorabilia sales, autograph appearances, and gambling earnings between 1984 and 1987.⁸

Notes

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3. *Ibid.*, 124.
4. Gary Ross, *Stung: The Incredible Obsession of Brian Molony* (Toronto: Stoddart, 1987), 12.
5. *Ibid.*, 97.
6. *Ibid.*, 199–200.
7. Charles Leerhsen, "All the Odds Against Him," *Newsweek* (July 10, 1989): 74–75.
8. "The Fall of a Titan: Pete Rose Faces Five Months in Jail," *Maclean's* (July 30, 1990): 38.

The Lottery

What It Is

- The lottery is a game of pure chance. In a classical lottery, a fixed number of tickets are sold for small amounts of money, so that a large number of people can afford to buy them. Each ticket represents a small chance to win a large sum of money. The winning tickets are selected randomly. Usually about 50 to 60 percent of the revenue from the sale of tickets is awarded in prizes. After administration costs have been paid, the remaining 40 to 50 percent is profit.
- Traditionally, lottery profits were used to fund "good causes," such as charities or public works. Since the widespread legalization of gambling, profits from provincial and cross-country lotteries have been collected by governments as revenue. In recent years, government-run lottery agencies have developed spin-offs to expand their markets, or to break into new ones. Scratch-and-win tickets, sports betting, and video lottery terminals (VLTs) have all been subsumed under the heading of "lottery games." See also InfoSheet M, "Video Gambling Machines."
- An 1892 prohibition of lotteries and other forms of gambling in Canada lasted until 1969, when the *Criminal Code Amendment Act* permitted "state lotteries at the option of the federal or provincial governments."
- By 1976 every provincial government was conducting lotteries. That year, the four Atlantic provinces established the Atlantic Lottery Corporation to market and manage ticket lotteries in Atlantic Canada.

Lottery Games Available in Nova Scotia

- *National Ticket Lotteries.* People all across Canada play, hoping to win the jackpot, but the lottery is promoted and managed regionally. The player selects or is assigned a string of numbers, which are then compared to the numbers drawn. For example, Lotto 6/49 players buy a ticket for \$1, then pick six numbers between 1 and 49. On a certain date, the winning six numbers are drawn. The chances of winning any prize are 1 in 54. This means that if you play the Lotto 54 times you will likely win once, but you probably won't win the grand prize (which is in the millions of dollars). You may win a free ticket or, say, \$10. The odds of winning the top prize (getting six out of six numbers right) are 1 in 13,980,000, or almost 1 in 14 million! The player wins a prize if some or all of the selected numbers are drawn. Other national ticket lotteries: Super 7 (across Canada, except B.C.) and special event games (e.g., Celebration).
- *Regional Ticket Lotteries.* As above, but limited to Atlantic Canada. Atlantic Choice players choose anywhere from 2 to 10 numbers between 1 and 70, and bet either \$1, \$2, \$5, or \$10. On a predetermined date, the Atlantic Lottery Corporation draws 20 numbers between 1 and 70. Anyone whose selected numbers match those that are drawn receives a prize. The chance of picking two

History

- The drawing of "lots" as a way of deciding fate or redistributing wealth dates back at least to Biblical times (see also InfoSheet D, "Changing Values"). The first lottery organized for the purpose of raising funds is attributed to Madame Jan van Eyck, widow of the Flemish painter. In 1466 she gave lottery profits to the poor in the city of Bruges. A hundred years later, Queen Elizabeth I authorized England's first lottery, to cover the costs of repairing the docks and harbours of five coastal towns.¹ Since that time, governments and charities around the world have used lotteries as a way of generating revenue.
- A 1781 lottery in Halifax helped to finance the town's first school.²

numbers that match are 1 in 13, while the chance of picking 10 numbers that match are 1 in 2,147,181. That's why the top prize is in the millions. Other regional lotteries: Pik 4, TAG.

- *Scratch-and-Win.* The player scratches a latex-covered area on the ticket, in the hope of revealing the right symbol, letter, dice throw, or whatever is required to win a prize. Some resemble traditional board or solitary games. Examples: Auto Plus, Instant, Bingo, Monopoly, Crossword.
- *Pull-Tab.* The player pulls open a tab to reveal rows of symbols. Matching symbols indicate a prize. Example: Breakopen.
- *Sports Betting.* The player predicts which team will win a future game. The prizes are calculated according to predetermined odds. Example: Sport Select Pro Line.

Who Plays, Where

- The age limit for purchasing lottery tickets is 19 years.
- Across Canada, over \$5 billion worth of lottery tickets were sold in the 1994/95 fiscal year.³
- In 1992, 69 percent of Canadian households bought lottery tickets, spending an average of \$225 each. Family with higher income spent the most on lottery tickets, although it was a smaller percentage of their total income. Just over half of households with incomes less than \$20,000 bought tickets, spending an average of \$149 (1.2 percent of their average income); about three-quarters of households with incomes of \$60,000 or more bought tickets that year, spending an average of \$266 (0.3 percent of their income).⁴
- Similarly, a 1996 study of Nova Scotian lottery players found that the number of players increased with income level, up to \$50,000; however the number declined in the above-\$50,000 income category.⁵

- In March 1996, 35 percent of adult Nova Scotians purchased some kind of lottery ticket every week. During the same month, 46 percent of the adult population played Lotto 6/49, Nova Scotia's most popular lottery game.⁶
- In Nova Scotia, lottery tickets are sold in 1,120 lottery retail outlets—in magazine stands, licensed establishments, corner stores, malls, and gas stations throughout the province.

Where Does the Money Go?

- In Nova Scotia, approximately 52 percent of the money spent on lottery tickets is returned to players in the form of prizes. Another 25 percent is handed over to the provincial government, as revenue. About 13 percent goes towards operating costs, and 10 percent is returned to the retailers where tickets are sold.
- In 1995, the Province of Nova Scotia received almost \$41 million in revenue from lottery sales.⁷
- In Atlantic Canada, lottery profits go into the provinces' general revenue fund. In some other jurisdictions, this money is earmarked for specific causes or projects.
- Between 1976 and 1995, the Atlantic Lottery Corporation turned over \$1.6 billion to the four provincial governments.⁸
- Provincial governments have a monopoly over lotteries within their jurisdiction. This could lead to lack of accountability, unfair odds, and conflict of interest (see also InfoSheet C, "Legalized Gambling: Pros and Cons"). Lottery corporations point out that their operations are at "arm's length" from the government, and that they are bound by strict regulations. In Nova Scotia, the lottery is regulated by the Gaming Control Commission, while it is promoted by the Atlantic Lottery Corporation.

- Because the lottery is not widely perceived as a form of gambling, many people are unaware that it can lead to problems. Some adults buy lottery tickets as presents for their children. Others pass on the belief that a lottery win will solve the family's problems. Playing the lottery can be a steppingstone to more addictive forms of gambling, such as VLTs. A recent Alberta study concluded that scratch-and-win lottery tickets are more addictive than other types because they provide instant feedback or "action."⁹
- According to some, lottery ads give people unrealistic expectations of winning, fuel a sense of greed, and obscure the real odds. However, Canadian lottery corporations point out that they are far more responsible than their U.S. counterparts, who routinely broadcast euphoric, high-powered TV commercials that include people jumping into piles of money.
- In 1991 the National Hockey League, which officially opposes all forms of betting on its games, asked the Federal Court of Canada for injunctions to stop the B.C., Prairie, and Quebec sports lotteries.
- Some scratch-and-win games are of obvious appeal to young people. For example, "Monopoly" is a scratch version of the board game. In its 1995/96 annual report, the Nova Scotia Gaming Control Commission noted, "Given the evidence from our focus group research that some people allow their children to scratch the tickets and/or purchase tickets for them, the Commission has concerns that ticket lotteries with comfortable, family played themes might entice minors to attempt to purchase tickets."¹⁰

- Historically, critics have seen government-run lotteries as a form of regressive taxation.

*The lottery's a taxation
On all the fools in creation.
But Heav'n be praised,
The money's rasily raised.*

—Henry Fielding, 1732

Notes

1. Alice Fleming, *Something for Nothing: A History of Gambling* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1978). See especially chapter 6, "The Luck of the Draw."
2. Nova Scotia Dept. of Health, "History of Gambling in North America," *Problem Gambling and Addiction* (1994), 2.
3. Katherine Marshall, "A Sure Bet Industry," *Perspectives on Labour and Income* (Autumn 1996): 37. Publ. by Statistics Canada.
4. *Ibid.*, 38–39.
5. Baseline Market Research, *1996 Prevalence Study on Problem Gambling in Nova Scotia*, 26.
6. Source: Atlantic Lottery Corporation.
7. Nova Scotia Gaming Control Commission, *A Year in Review: Gaming in Nova Scotia*. First Annual Report, 1995/96, 33.
8. Source: Atlantic Lottery Corporation.
9. "Compared to non-problem gamblers, problem gamblers are more likely to engage in all forms of gambling, but show a clear preference for continuous versus non-continuous games. Continuous forms of gambling are those games which include repeated sequences of wager, play, and outcome (win or loss) within a relatively short period of time. The continuous forms of gambling identified by problem gamblers in the Alberta study included instant or scratch lottery tickets, pull-tab or Nevada tickets, card games, bingo, local casino play, horse races and video lottery terminals." Reported in "Characteristics of Problem Gamblers in Alberta," Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (Dec. 1994).
10. N.S. Gaming Control Commission, *A Year in Review*, 34.

Video Gambling Machines

Video gambling machines include both video lottery terminals (VLTs) and slot machines. The term slot machine is usually reserved for those machines that discharge coins and that are usually restricted to casinos. VLTs discharge vouchers, which can be exchanged for cash on-site.

History

- Today's video gambling machines are computerized versions of the old "one-armed bandits," which featured spinning reels of symbols (e.g., cherries, lemons, 7s, and bars). If the symbols lined up in a certain way when the reels stopped spinning, the player won and coins were discharged into a metal tray.
- A 1985 amendment to the *Criminal Code of Canada* removed the prohibition against slot machines and other mechanical gambling devices, which had been in effect since 1924.
- In 1990, VLTs were introduced into New Brunswick, under the jurisdiction of the Atlantic Lottery Corporation. In early 1991, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island followed suit.
- Soon after VLTs were legalized in Nova Scotia, the machines were installed in corner stores, bowling alleys, gas stations, bars, and laundromats throughout the province. Although the law required players to be 19 years or older, minors often found easy access to the machines.
- VLTs are sometimes referred to as "the crack cocaine of gambling" because of their fast-paced action. Public concern over the social consequences of the ubiquitous machines led to a flurry of negative publicity. In 1993 the Province removed 2,500 VLTs and restricted the rest to establishments where liquor is served.
- In 1996 there were approximately 2,900 VLTs in bars, licensed restaurants, clubs, cabarets, and legion halls throughout the province.
- The release of the first annual report of the Nova Scotia Gaming Control Commission in 1996 sparked another flurry of concern over the social cost of VLTs. The report revealed that Nova Scotians spend more money on VLTs than into any other form of gambling—almost half of the total amount wagered. In 1995, Nova Scotians deposited \$351.7 million into the province's VLTs (see also InfoSheet B, "Gambling in Nova Scotia.") The report also found that 18 percent of the adult population plays the VLTs, which means that about 162,000 people spend an average of \$2,100 each.¹
- In casinos, slot machines historically took a secondary place to roulette, blackjack and other table games. In the mid-1970s they accounted for about 40 percent of Nevada casino revenues.² Now the machines are front and centre, representing the largest proportion of most casino revenues. Two writers describe this trend:

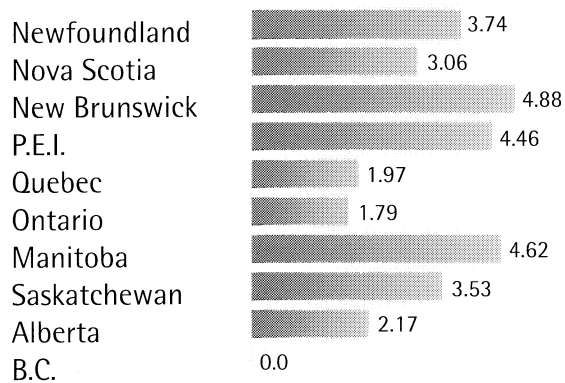
Not long ago, even in places like Nevada, slot machines were frowned on and consigned to a side room "for the ladies." No more. In Windsor, Las Vegas, Atlantic City and every other city in North America where they hold out promise of instant wealth, pride of place goes to slot machines.³

If the casinos had their way, no one would give even passing obeisance to table games, where the gods of chance can sometimes be overcome by a human edge: everyone would play slots. And really, those of you who have witnessed the slot-machine explosion in this country, and the decline of table game activity, can readily prophesy the future—aisle upon infinite aisle of mechanical deities, jingling, jangling, clanging, flashing—with mesmerized human acolytes sacrificing an untold amount of coin into the machines' voracious bellies; those same acolytes being nourished on a hope and a dream and, oh yes, a nice big adrenaline rush.⁴

Video Gambling across Canada

- In 1996, New Brunswick had the most VLTs per capita. Nova Scotia ranked sixth.

Figure 3.
Number of VLTs per thousand people⁵



- Other provincial governments have also responded to public uneasiness over VLTs. Alberta originally approved plans for 8,600 VLTs, but in 1996 it capped the number at 6,000, in response to growing disapproval. In the same year British Columbia, which already had an estimated 10,000 illegal machines, dropped plans to legalize video gambling, thereby depriving itself of more than \$100 million a year in anticipated revenues.⁶

How the Machines Work

- Instead of mechanical reels and levers, the new video gambling machines are run by computer microchips. Inside the machine, a memory chip is constantly generating random numbers at a rate of thousands per second, even when no one is playing. When someone drops in a coin and presses the button, whatever number is being generated *at that split second* determines the outcome of the play. The machine then goes through the motions of simulating spinning reels or displaying upturned cards, depending on the game. If the VLT player interrupts the process by

pressing the stop button, this only serves to reveal the outcome sooner. If a "winning number" was randomly generated at the moment of pressing the button, the machine displays a winning outcome. Once the number has been selected, nothing can influence the final outcome.

- "The random number generator... determines the slot player's fate—not the spinning reels, not the timing of the coins' entrance, not the handling of the handle or any of a dozen other fallacies that litter the landscape of slot play."⁷
- The random number generator selects numbers from a fixed pool of numbers (e.g., 1–10,000). All of these numbers have an equal likelihood of being selected at any one time. However, different numbers correspond to different game results (win/lose). Most of the numbers correspond to no prize or a small prize. Perhaps only one of the total pool of numbers corresponds to the machine's biggest prize.
- The machines are individually programmed to pay back a certain percentage of money fed into them—*over the very long run*. For example, in Nova Scotia VLTs pay back about 95 percent of the money played, based on averages that span literally millions of plays.
- The payback percentage is based on the statistical probability that, over time, the random number generator will select all of the numbers in its pool with equal frequency. However, in the span of a day or a week, or even months, there are no predictable patterns to the sequences of numbers generated (and therefore the outcomes). If a machine pays out the jackpot on a particular occasion, this does not in any way affect the probability that the machine will pay out the jackpot on the very next play.
- Because the machines are programmed to make a profit for the "house," and because the games are based on pure chance, they cannot be beaten. The only way a player can come out ahead is by being lucky enough to win during a particular session—and then disciplined enough to walk away.

Video Gambling Machines and Problem Gambling

- The spread of VLTs and slots into North American society is relatively recent, and there are no conclusive studies showing a causal link between video gambling machines and problem gambling. However, it has been shown that the machines are the activity of choice of many gambling addicts. In a survey conducted by Omnifacts Research in 1996, 61 percent of Nova Scotians said they associated problem gambling with VLTs and 24 percent with slot machines.⁸ It is difficult to know whether these associations were formed by personal experience, hearsay, media stories, or a combination of the above. Newspapers have been quick to publish the views and testimonies of gamblers who became addicted to the machines. Just nine months after VLTs were introduced to Nova Scotia, a Halifax newspaper reported that "the membership of Gamblers Anonymous is growing as people hooked on video games [sic] lose their jobs, their families, and their dignity."⁹
- Recovering gambling addicts and their counselors generally have little hesitation associating VLTs with problem gambling. Tibor Barsony of the Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling describes the VLT as "one of the most addictive forms of gambling—addictive because it is fast, addictive because it provides instant gratification, addictive because it is paced for the modern way of thinking of younger people, of computerized gambling instead of dealing cards or throwing dice."¹⁰
- Garry Smith, a gambling specialist at the University of Alberta, contrasts playing the machines to racetrack betting, once a favourite of gambling addicts. "You can complete a [VLT] game cycle in about one-and-a-half seconds once you're adept at playing. And because of that you get the feeling that you're constantly in action. That's what gamblers seek, this tingle of excitement when they're playing all the time. And they control the speed of the play, which you don't in most other forms of gambling,

where it's the dealer or something else that controls the speed. Here you can play as fast as you can." Racetrack betting, on the other hand, is now "sedate and curiously old-fashioned—a race every half-hour and a lot of dead time in between."¹¹ In an attempt to make up for declining business, many racetracks are now installing VLTs on-site, so that their customers can continue to gamble between races.

- After studying the overall impact of gambling on Canadians, the National Council of Welfare, a citizens' advisory group to the Canadian Government, made the strong recommendation that "provincial and territorial governments should consider an outright ban on video lottery terminals in places except for casinos or casino-like settings."¹²
- In Nova Scotia, 0.03 percent of a VLT's intake (or 1 percent of the VLT retailer's original 30 percent commission) goes into a problem gambling fund. The Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation matches this contribution.

Notes

1. Nova Scotia Gaming Control Commission, *A Year in Review: Gaming in Nova Scotia*. First Annual Report, 1995/96.
2. William R. Eadington, "Issues and Trends in World Gaming," *Gambling in Canada: Golden Goose or Trojan Horse?*, ed. by Colin S. Campbell and John Lowman (Burnaby, B.C.: Simon Fraser University, 1988), 13.
3. John Gray, "Slot Machines Hit the Jackpot," *The Globe and Mail* (May 11, 1996): D2.
4. Frank Scoblete, "The God in the Machine," *Casino Player* (March 1995).
5. N.S. Gaming Control Commission, *A Year in Review*, 24.
6. Gray, "Slot Machines Hit the Jackpot," D2.
7. Scoblete, "The God in the Machine."

8. N.S. Gaming Control Commission, *A Year in Review*, 91. Based on interviews with 477 people: 13% associated problem gambling with card games at casinos, 7% with lottery tickets, 6% with bingo, and 6% with private card games.
9. Peter Duffy, "Video Gambling: High Stakes," *The Mail Star* (Feb. 26, 1992).
10. Gray, "Slot Machines Hit the Jackpot," D2.
11. Ibid.
12. "Gambling in Canada: A Report by the National Council of Welfare," Winter 1996, Recommendation No. 1.

Casinos

Trends and Traditions

- Historically, the "watering place," or casino-spa, of Europe was an exclusive retreat for the intelligentsia and aristocracy. Often it was off-limits to the local population. Two of the most famous of these are Baden Baden in Germany, founded more than 200 years ago; and Monte Carlo in Monaco. "Monte Carlo is the one place synonymous with gambling all over the world. Even when they lose, the people who gamble there can tell themselves they have lost in style."¹ Canada's first casino, the Crystal Casino, opened in Winnipeg's classic Fort Garry Hotel in 1989. As the name suggests, the Crystal Casino tried to emulate the European model.
- Some of the first "gambling houses" in North America carried on the tradition of European elegance and exclusiveness, with dress code, chandeliers and plush carpets, and haute cuisine. Others were much more rough-and-tough, especially those that sprang up along the westward-moving frontier. "In the nineteenth century, the United States had two types of gambling houses: carpet joints and sawdust joints. The carpet joints were in the big cities; the sawdust joints were in the frontier towns.... Their patrons included miners, railroad workers, cavalry troops, and cowboys, as well as the usual collection of adventurers and drifters who turned up everywhere in the old West."²

The tradition of the grassroots gambling house has evolved into the community bingo hall, the charity casino, and gaming booths at the exhibition fair.

- Since the re-legalization of gambling, mega-casinos in the U.S. have evolved into round-the-clock entertainment centres, offering hotel rooms, restaurants, spas, night shows, and video arcades for children. They cater to convention-goers, bus tours, vacationers, and to the mainstream public. The dress code is casual, and there are few entrance restrictions. Although Canadian casinos generally follow this model, they are generally

smaller in scale. Also, the Canadian casino industry is more tightly controlled by government, so it is less flexible and less able to take advantage of opportunities to merge with other entertainment and tourist industries.

- Canadian provinces have tended to exercise more direct control over casino gambling than governments elsewhere. Although casinos in the U.S. and other industrialized countries must abide by government regulations, they are usually owned and operated privately, and they have to compete for their share of the gambling market. The Canadian governments exercise a casino monopoly over their jurisdictions, and some own their casinos outright. Outside Canada, government-owned casinos can be found in Holland, Austria, parts of Germany, the Philippines, and Argentina.³
- Some provinces operate "charity casinos," which offer low-stakes gambling. Charities apply for a license, then contract with a private company to operate the casino, sometimes for only a few days, or on a more permanent basis. The profits are collected by the charity.
- Every province has some type of casino gambling, but as of 1996, only five had full-scale commercial casinos. See Table 4.
- Other casinos in Canada are operated by partnerships involving the provincial government and private companies, often U.S.-based. Some of these casinos are becoming major revenue-generators for provincial governments. "Until 1991, all revenue from government-run gambling was derived from lotteries alone. In 1992, VLTs accounted for 3% of the total, and lotteries, 97%.... By 1995, lotteries represented 62% of the total, casinos 18%, and VLTs 20%."⁴
- In 1995/96, its first year of operation, the Hull casino attracted about 3.5 million visitors—eclipsing the Parliament Buildings, formerly the top tourist attraction of the area. About one million people visit the Parliament Buildings each year.⁵

Table 4.
Casino gambling across Canada, 1996⁶

Province	No. of Casinos	Type(s)
British Columbia	variable	charity
Alberta	variable	charity
Saskatchewan	1 4 3 5	government owned and operated will be native owned and operated permanent Exhibition part-time Exhibition
Manitoba	3	government owned and operated
Ontario	3 1	government owned, privately operated; 2 land-based and 1 riverboat First Nations
Quebec	3 variable	government owned, privately operated charity
New Brunswick	variable	charity; merchandise prizes only
Prince Edward Island	variable	charity; merchandise prizes only
Newfoundland	variable	charity
Nova Scotia	2	government owned, privately operated

- Windsor Casino attracts more than five million visitors a year, who spend close to \$600 million.⁷
- The Montreal Casino takes in \$1 million *a day*. In 1996 it expanded into the old Quebec pavilion at the Expo 67 site, bringing the total number of slot machines to 2,700, with 105 gaming tables and off-track betting. An editorial in *The Globe and Mail* entitled "Feeling the Effects of Creeping Americanism" lamented, "While the original casino was built in the European style, with lots of natural light and class, the \$74 million addition takes its cue from Las Vegas and Atlantic City. There are no windows—apparently gambling in daylight makes our American cousins feel guilty—but there are giant video screens. The casino's hours will be extended to 20 a day (the break being from 5 a.m. to 9 a.m.) and soon there will be a cabaret show."⁸
- Each of the Nova Scotia casinos has a different way of dividing up revenues. At the Halifax casino, the Province receives a 20 percent "win tax" (tax on the money left after the winnings have been paid out to customers). Next, the Province collects a percent of "profits" (money left after all expenses, except corporate taxes, are paid). In Sydney, the Province receives the same 20 percent win tax and percent of profits. But in this case the government then hands over half its share of the profits to the province's Mi'kmaq Bands and the other half to various charities.
- In the first year of operation, Nova Scotians spent less at the casinos than anticipated—about \$36 per person per visit, instead of the projected \$60. Conservative MLA George Moody commented, "Nova Scotians were never quick to part with their money easily; these are hard-earned dollars."⁹

Casinos in Nova Scotia

- In December 1994, the Nova Scotia government contracted ITT Sheraton of Boston to open and operate casinos in Halifax and Sydney. Several international companies had competed for the contract. The government struck a 20-year deal with ITT Sheraton that guaranteed the casino operator would pay the Province at least \$25 million a year for the first four years.
- In June 1995, ITT Sheraton opened a temporary casino in the Sheraton Hotel in downtown Halifax, with a promise to build a permanent facility on the waterfront. However, plans for a \$120-million "crystal palace" casino were later revised to a more modest \$90 million. The temporary casino has 39 gaming tables and 643 slot machines.
- ITT spent \$30 million building a permanent casino in Sydney, which opened in August 1995. The Sydney casino has 21 gaming tables and 350 slot machines.

Casino Games

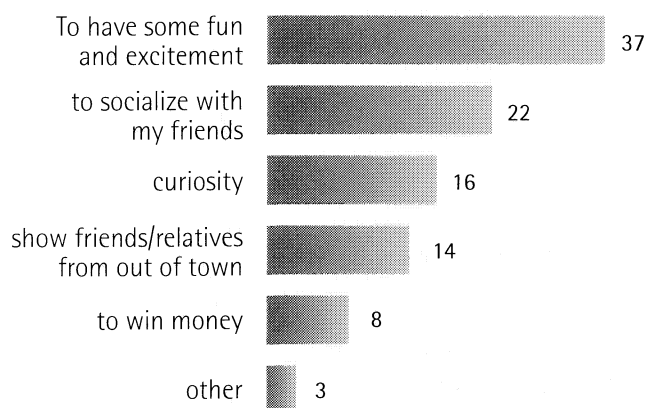
- *Blackjack*: The player accumulates cards, trying to exceed the value of the dealer's cards without going over 21 points.
- *Mini Baccarat*: This game uses eight decks of cards. Counting tens and face cards as zero, the player whose total points is closest to the number nine wins.
- *Let it Ride*: In this poker game, the player combines his own cards with the dealer's cards to wind up with the best possible poker hand.
- *Roulette*: The roulette wheel is divided into 37 sections (0 to 36). Players bet on a number or series of numbers, colour (red or black), and odd or even. The odds range from 35 to 1 (if the player bets on one number); to 17 to 1 (two numbers) to 1 to 1 (a colour or odd or even).
- *Big 6 Wheel*: Even simpler than roulette, in this game the player simply bets on a number.

- **Slot Machines:** A number of different games can be played on the slot machines, including the traditional "line games," where separate displays of numbers or symbols spin and then randomly stop. The player drops a coin in the slot and pushes a button. If the player wins, coins are discharged into a metal tray.

Who Goes to the Casinos, and Why?

- A 1996 survey found no statistical difference between the "typical visitor" to the Sydney casino and the rest of the population. Visitors to the Halifax casino were slightly more likely to be in a higher income bracket (\$50,000 and above) and to have some university education than the rest of the population.¹⁰
- Sixty-nine percent said they had set "spending limits" before arriving at the casino, ranging between \$1 and \$200. The median limit was between \$11 and \$25.

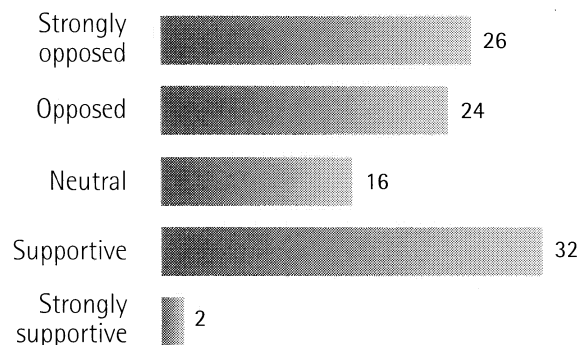
Figure 4.
Main reasons for visiting the casinos¹¹



Controversies

- Compared with other types of gambling, only VLTs elicit more opposition than casinos.

Figure 5.
How Nova Scotians feel about the presence of casinos in the province¹²



Problem Gambling

- Sheraton Casinos Nova Scotia has agreed to pay \$1 million a year to the Nova Scotia Department of Health to support programs related to problem gambling.
- Problem gamblers who want to nip future gambling in the bud can request to be excluded from the casino. The person's photo is circulated among security and surveillance staff. As of May 1996, about 50 people in Halifax and Sydney had chosen this route of voluntary exclusion.

Notes

1. Alice Fleming, *Something for Nothing: A History of Gambling* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1978), 90.
2. *Ibid.*, 100.
3. William R. Eadington, "Casinos in Canada: Policy Challenges in the 1990s," *Gambling in Canada: The Bottom Line*, ed. by Colin S. Campbell (Burnaby, B.C.: Criminology Research Centre, Simon Fraser University, 1994), 3–17.
4. Katherine Marshall, "A Sure Bet Industry," *Perspectives on Labour and Income* (Autumn 1996): 40. Publ. by Statistics Canada.
5. "Ottawa Area's Top Tourist Draw Sure Bet," *The Mail-Star* (June 5, 1996).
6. Nova Scotia Gaming Control Commission, *A Year in Review: Gaming in Nova Scotia*. First Annual Report, 1995/96, 158–81.
7. Peter Moon, "Gaming Law Leaves Deck Hands High and Dry," *The Globe and Mail* (Aug. 31, 1996): A7.
8. Andre Picard (July 16, 1996).
9. Kevin Cox, "Casinos Attract Low Rollers," *The Globe and Mail* (July 12, 1996): A4.
10. Nova Scotia Gaming Control Commission, *A Year in Review*.
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.* Based on a survey of 1200 Nova Scotians. Ironically, the survey found that people living in communities near the casinos were the least opposed to them. The major concerns expressed by those opposed were that casinos "would lead people to gamble more than they could afford to, that there would be a rise in crime and prostitution, and that the casinos perpetuated an unwholesome image of Nova Scotia that would either deter tourists or attract the wrong kind of people."

Resources

Prevention, Treatment, and Self-Help

Drug Dependency Services, N.S. Department of Health

The mission of Drug Dependency Services (DDS) is to provide prevention and treatment services to individuals, families, and communities, and in so doing to promote lifestyles that are free of dependency on alcohol, drugs, and gambling.

Drawing the Line has been developed by the DDS in consultation with the Department of Education and Culture. Other prevention materials produced by DDS which are currently in use in Nova Scotia schools include *Making a Difference: A Drug Prevention Resource* (Grades P-9), *Smoke-Free for Life* (Grades P-9), and *Alcohol and Other Drugs* (Grade 11).

Problem Gambling Services, within Drug Dependency Services, provides research, educational resources, training, and community services related to the prevention and treatment of problem gambling. Initiatives include the Problem Gambling Help Line, *Drawing the Line*, and the monthly *Gambling Awareness* newsletter. These and other projects are supported by a special fund that was first set aside in 1995, from casino and video lottery gambling revenues. This fund also assists nonprofit organizations to develop problem gambling prevention programs in their local communities.

Problem Gambling Help Line. Call 1-888-347-8888 from anywhere in Nova Scotia, any time of the day or night, for toll-free counselling, information, and referral services related to problem gambling. Trained counsellors are ready to answer your questions, send you information, tell you about other services available in your area, or discuss your personal concerns about your own or others' gambling.

Choices is a DDS program designed especially for adolescents, which offers individual and family counselling, group sessions, day programs, support groups, and in-patient programs. For more information, call Choices directly if you live in the

Halifax metro area, or call the regional DDS office nearest you.

Choices

P.O. Box 896, 300 Pleasant St.
Dartmouth, N.S. B2Y 3Z6
Tel: (902) 424-4422

Regional Services. DDS also offers community-based services throughout the province. Teachers are invited to contact the regional offices listed below for more information about prevention and treatment services available in their area, or to request free copies of brochures and recent issues of the *Gambling Awareness Newsletter*.

Central Region Drug Dependency
P.O. Box 896, 300 Pleasant St.
Dartmouth, N.S. B2Y 3Z6
Tel: (902) 424-5623
Fax: (902) 424-0627

Northern Region Drug Dependency
199 Elliot St., P.O. Box 359
Pictou, N.S. B0K 1H0
Tel: (902) 485-4335
Fax: (902) 485-7026

Eastern Region Drug Dependency
115 Alexandra St.,
P.O. Box 640
Sydney, N.S. B1P 6H7
Tel: (902) 563-2040
Fax: (902) 563-2550

Western Region Drug Dependency
Yarmouth Regional Hospital
50 Vancouver Street
Yarmouth, N.S. B5A 2P5
Tel: (902) 742-2406
Fax: (902) 742-0684



Gamblers Anonymous

Gamblers Anonymous is a network of self-help groups that offer support for recovery from gambling addiction, following a 12-step program similar to that of Alcoholics Anonymous. A related self-help program, GamAnon, is for the families and friends of problem gamblers. Founded in 1957, GA now has over 900 chapters worldwide. In recent years, GA groups have formed in most major centres in Nova Scotia.

Call 1-888-347-8888 for contact information in your area. On the internet, GA can be located at: www.gamblersanonymous.org/.

Government Regulation and Administration

The Nova Scotia Gaming Control Commission is responsible for the regulation of gambling in Nova Scotia. Tel.: (902) 424-6160. The Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation, which reports to the Minister of Finance, is responsible for the financial aspects of gambling and represents the Province in partnerships with casinos. Tel.: (902) 424-2203. The Atlantic Lottery Corporation, based in Moncton, New Brunswick, manages and promotes lotteries and video lottery terminals. Tel.: 1-800-561-3942, (902) 468-8343. The ALC's newsletter, *Luck*, available free at lottery retail outlets, describes new lottery games, publishes lists of winning numbers and prize winners, and includes short anecdotal profiles of substantial prize winners.

Fiction for Young Adults

Dygdard, Thomas J., *Point Spread*, New York: William Morrow & Co., 1993. About sports betting.

Ehrlich, Amy, *The Dark Card*, New York: Viking Penguin, 1991. About a teenage girl who is attracted to the anonymity and glamour of the casino when she is unable to come to terms with her mother's death.

Salassi, Otto R., *Jimmy D., Sidewinder, and Me*, New York: Greenwillow Books, 1987. About a teenage boy who gets in over his head when he becomes involved with gamblers in Mississippi. "Bingo at the Elks Club," in Lesson 9.1, is from this novel.

Selected Background Reading

The Gamblers Book Club claims to offer "the largest selection of gambling books, videotapes, and software in the world." Its online catalogue is found at URL www.gamblersbook.com. Mailing address: 630 South 11th St., Las Vegas, Nevada, U.S.A. 89101.

The *Journal of Gambling Studies* (pre-1989, *Journal of Gambling Behavior*) publishes current research findings, case studies, essays, and book reviews. Available from Human Sciences Press, Inc., 233 Spring St., New York, N.Y. 10013-1578.

Campbell, Colin S. *Gambling in Canada: The Bottom Line*. Burnaby, B.C.: School of Criminology, Simon Fraser University, 1994. Papers from the Second National Symposium on Gambling in Canada, October 1993.

Dolan, Edward F. *Teenagers and Compulsive Gambling*. Franklin Watts, 1994. An overview of history, prevalence, stages, effects on the family, and recovery, presented from the disease model perspective.

Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *The Gambler*. New York: Bantam Books, 1964. Written in 1866, this short novel offers an insightful portrait of the addicted gambler. See also InfoSheet K, "Three Famous Gamblers."

Fleming, Alice. *Something for Nothing: A History of Gambling*. New York: Delacorte Press, 1978. A classic overview, with a focus on U.S. history. Some of the transparencies for Lesson 9.1 were taken from this book.



Haubrich-Casperson, Jane, with Doug van Nispen. *Coping with Teen Gambling*. New York: The Rosen Publishing Group, 1993. A blend of personal testimonies and empirical literature, suitable for the adult or young adult reader. "Doug's Story," reprinted in Lesson 9.3, is from this book.

Ross, Gary. *No Limit: The Incredible Obsession of Brian Molony*. New York: William Morrow, 1987. A journalistic biography that vividly portrays how gambling addiction takes hold. See also InfoSheet K, "Three Famous Gamblers."

Brochures

Call the Problem Gambling Help Line or the Drug Dependency Services office nearest you to request brochures targeted to adolescents, problem gamblers, their families and friends, employers, seniors, or counsellors. Each brochure offers information and advice on how to recognize and deal with gambling problems.

Newspaper and Magazine Articles

Canadian Periodicals Index

Search this CD-ROM for articles documenting controversies, developments, and policies in the gambling industry across Canada.

Herald Information Services

All of the articles on gambling that have appeared in *The Chronicle-Herald* and *The Mail-Star* are available on diskette, at a cost of about \$30. The articles can be searched by key word. For more information, contact

Herald Information Services
1650 Argyle Street, Box 610
Halifax, N.S. B3J 2T2.
Tel.: (902) 426-3384.
Fax: (902) 426-2810.
E-mail: online@herald.ns.ca.

Internet

An internet search under the word *gambling* will turn up literally millions of URLs, but probably 99.9 percent of these sites are for gamblers—news-groups, FAQs, strategy tips, directories, and online casinos. The new frontier of internet gambling is especially controversial, since it is difficult to monitor and regulate cyberspace betting, and offshore-based gambling sites fall in a legal grey zone.

Nova Scotia Dept. of Health
www.gov.ns.ca/heal/gambling

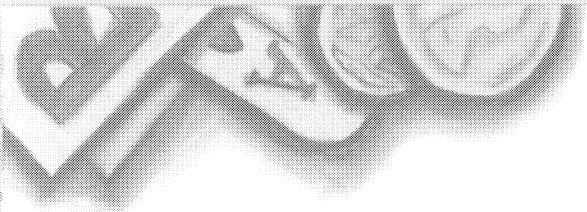
At this web site you will find updated information about provincial services and resources, the Problem Gambling Help Line, and the current issue of the province's newsletter, *Gambling Awareness*. You will also be able to contact the Department of Health directly, by e-mail.

Addiction Research Foundation
www.arf.org

The ARF is an agency of the Province of Ontario and a Collaborating Research and Training Centre with the World Health Organization. It develops and makes available knowledge and programs that can be used to reduce the problems caused by the abuse of alcohol and other drugs, particularly in Ontario. The ARF's World Wide Web site provides access to fact sheets, descriptions of prevention and treatment activities of the ARF, press releases and statements relating to current issues, links to related sites, and excerpts from the ARF newsletter, *The Journal*. Go to www.arf.org/isd/bib/gamble.htm for a bibliography on problem gambling.


Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse
www.ccsa.ca

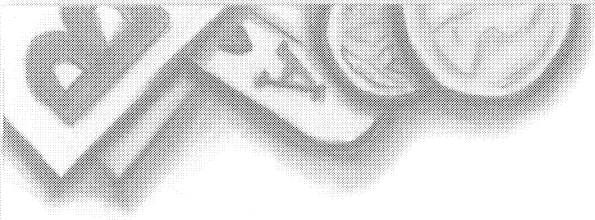
The CCSA is a non-profit organization working to minimize the harm associated with the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. Its newsletter, *Action News*, covers national and international developments in substance abuse treatment, prevention and research. The CCSA Web site is a focal point for



information on substance abuse and addiction, publications (including the current issue of *Action News*), and current statistics. Go to www.ccsa.ca/gambgen.htm for links to sites that provide information on problem gambling.

Glossary

- 
- action** The act of gambling; the stimulation and euphoria of gambling. Gamblers often talk about being "in action."
- bailout** Money given or loaned to a gambler in a financial crisis. A bailout can contribute to the denial of gambling addiction.
- bingo** A popular game of chance in which players cover numbers that are randomly selected. The winner is the first player to cover an entire row of numbers. Bingo is a form of gambling when cards are bought and cash prizes awarded to the winners. Computerized play buttons are now used in many high stakes bingo games. The Atlantic Lottery Corporation also sells scratch-and-win bingo cards.
- bookmaking** A type of gambling in which the bettor gambles against the bookmaker (or "bookie"), according to fixed odds. The bookie accepts bets on horse races, sports, etc. and handles payouts, for a fee. Private betting through a bookmaker is illegal in Canada.
- break-open** A lottery-type ticket that is broken or pulled open, to reveal whether the player has won a prize. A form of "instant lottery."
- chasing** Gambling with the motivation of winning back losses.
- compulsive gambling** Gambling behaviour that is no longer under control. This term has become a popular way of describing gambling addiction. However, many professionals in the field now avoid this term, because it implies a complete loss of choice and enjoyment. It is argued that many addicted gamblers do continue to enjoy being "in action," at least until the desperation and exhaustion stages are reached. See also *pathological gambling*.
- edge** The percentage by which the odds favour the house. Also called the *house advantage*. In all commercial gambling games, the house has an edge over the players.
- gambling** Although any activity involving risk could be considered a "gamble," a more specific definition is the wagering of money or other valuables on the outcome of an event that involves chance or risk.
- handicapping** Attempting to predict the probability of a particular outcome of a horse race or sports game. The handicapper tries to eliminate as much risk as possible by studying the performance record and present condition of a horse, jockey, or team.
- house** The business or establishment that sponsors a gambling activity and collects the profits. In the case of public lotteries, the government acts as the house.
- lottery** A gambling game in which players purchase pre-printed tickets. Winning numbers or symbols are revealed through a draw. Government-run lottery games are held in all provinces of Canada, in two-thirds of the United States, and in nearly one hundred other countries.
- odds** The likelihood, or chance, that a given event will occur (see also probability, payoff odds).
- pari-mutuel** A type of gambling in which the prize money is not fixed but depends on the total amount wagered.

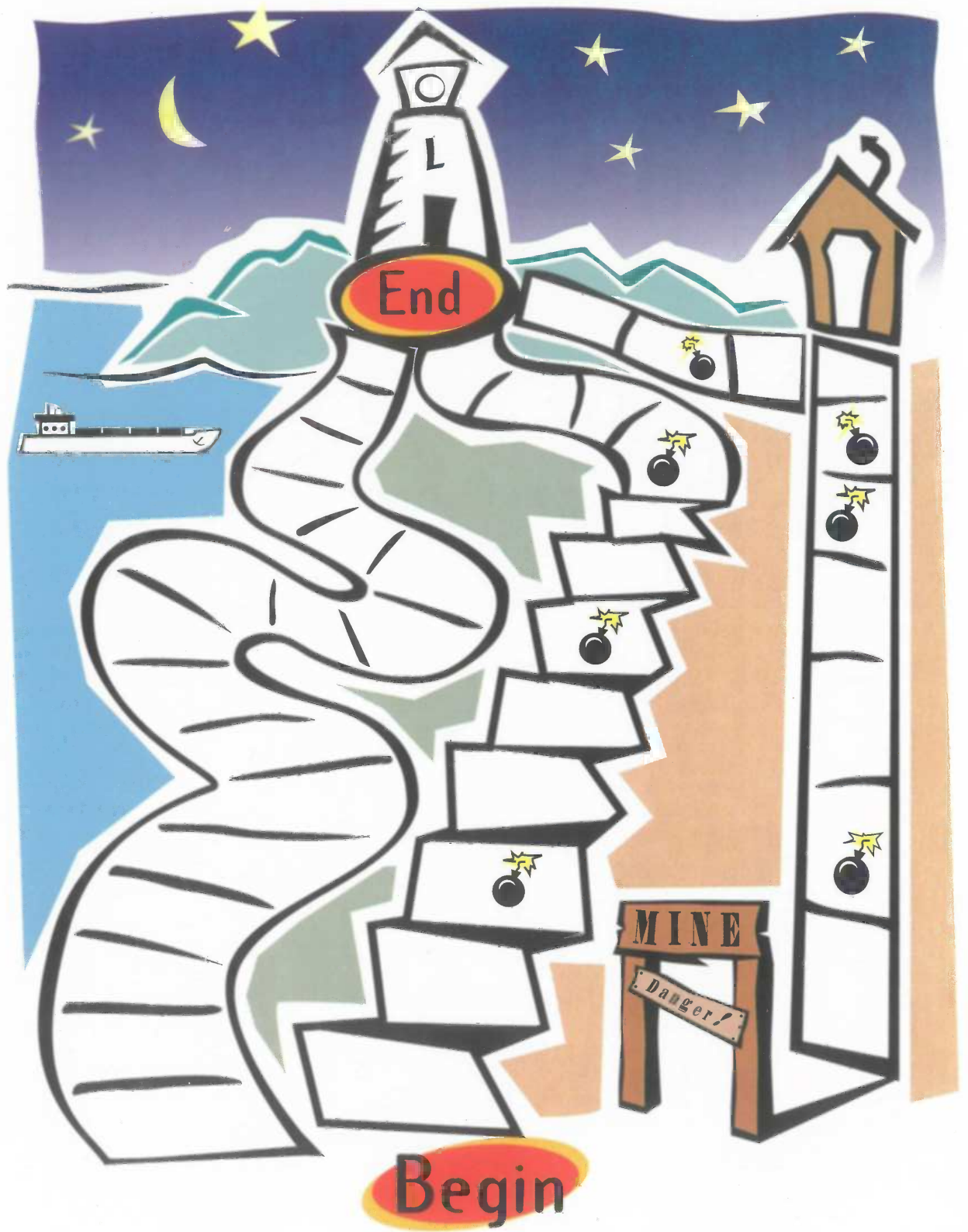


The money is pooled and then prizes are awarded to winners. If many players bet on the winner, the prizes are small; if only a few bettors select the winner, the prizes are much larger. The most common example is racetrack betting. Ticket lotteries are also a form of pari-mutuel betting.

- pathological gambling** A mental illness defined as "a chronic and progressive failure to resist impulses to gamble, and gambling behavior that compromises, disrupts, or damages personal, family, or vocational pursuits." This term entered the mainstream psychiatric vocabulary in 1980, when it first appeared in the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders III* (DSM-III). In this and the revised DSM-IV (1994), pathological gambling is classified as an "impulse control disorder." In *Drawing the Line*, the term problem gambling has been preferred, because it places the focus on a continuum of gambling behaviour, rather than on extreme cases.
- payoff odds** The amount won on a successful bet. For example, three to one odds means that if the player bets one dollar and wins, he or she gets back three dollars plus the original dollar bet. payout percentage. The percentage of money played that is returned to players as prizes. For example, if the payout percentage is 80, players will win back an average of 80 percent of the total amount wagered, over time.
- point spread** The relative advantage of one sports team over another, based on a system of handicapping that takes into account previous performance, condition of the teams, weather, etc. Each team is assigned a number of points, and this determines the bettor's odds. For example, if one team is a "four point underdog," those betting on the other team won't win their bet unless their team wins by more than four points.
- poker** A popular card game involving strategy, in which players bet on the best hand.
- probability** A mathematical model, or formula, used to describe the relative likelihood of an outcome, often expressed as a ratio of the number of actual occurrences to the number of possible occurrences.
- problem gambling** A range of gambling behaviours that includes losing more than one can afford, continuing to gamble in spite of harmful consequences to oneself and others, and addiction.
- raffle** A type of lottery in which numbered tickets are sold and then a winning ticket is drawn randomly. Popular as a form of charity gambling.
- roulette** A casino game played with a horizontal wheel with numbered slots around the circumference. The wheel is spun and a ball dropped onto it. Players bet on the colour and number of the slot where the ball will come to rest.
- scratch-and-win** A lottery-type ticket with a latex area that is scratched away, to reveal whether the player has won a prize. Also called "instant lottery."
- slot machine** A computerized video gambling machine usually restricted to casinos. Some display spinning wheels with symbols that stop randomly; others offer traditional card games, such as poker. If the player wins, coins are discharged into a metal tray.

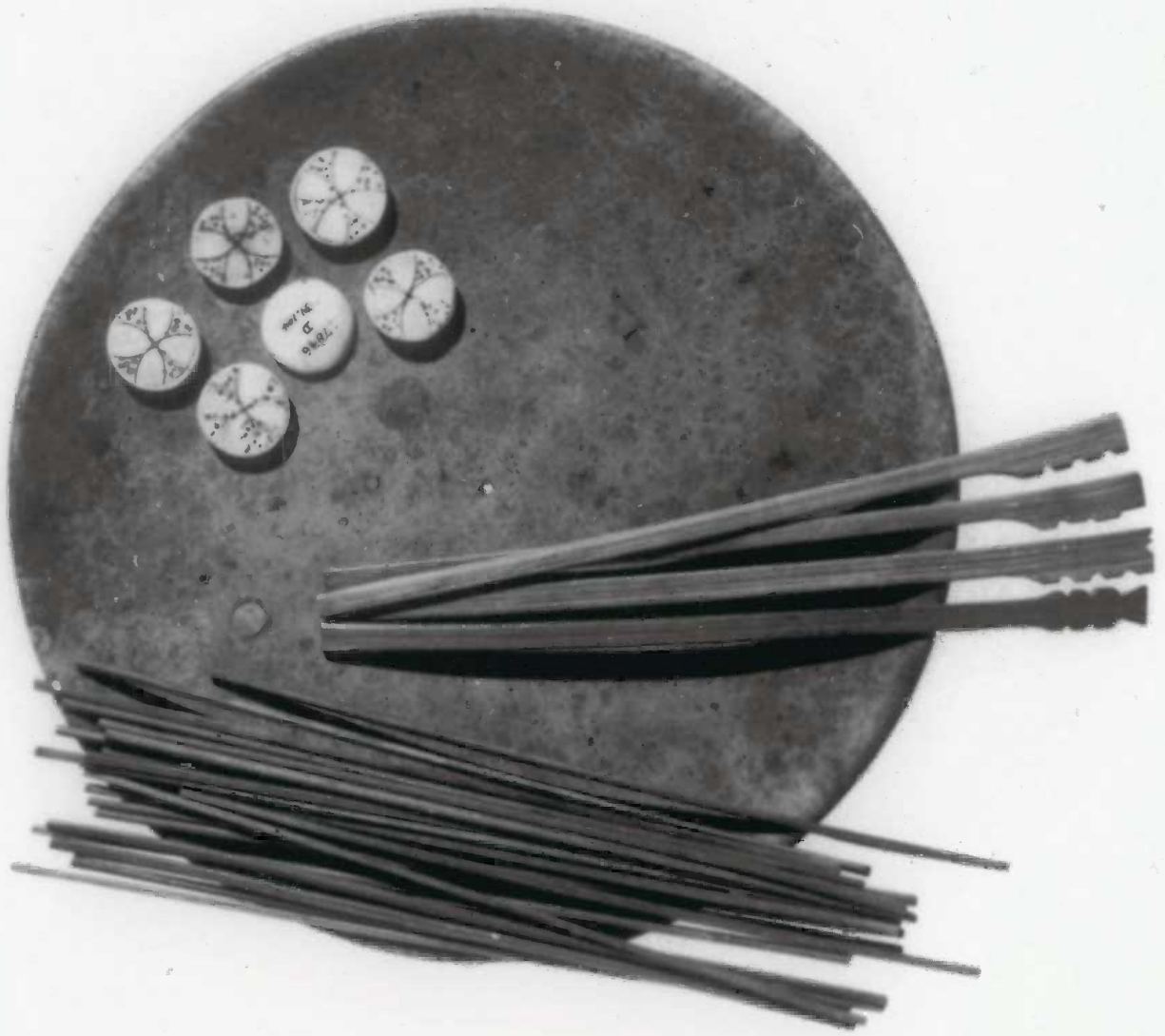


- social gambling** Gambling as a form of entertainment, in distinction to problem gambling.
- stakes** The amount of money risked or wagered.
- video lottery terminal** A computerized gambling machine similar to the slot machine, except that winnings are recorded on a voucher, which is then taken to the operator of the bar or restaurant and exchanged for cash.





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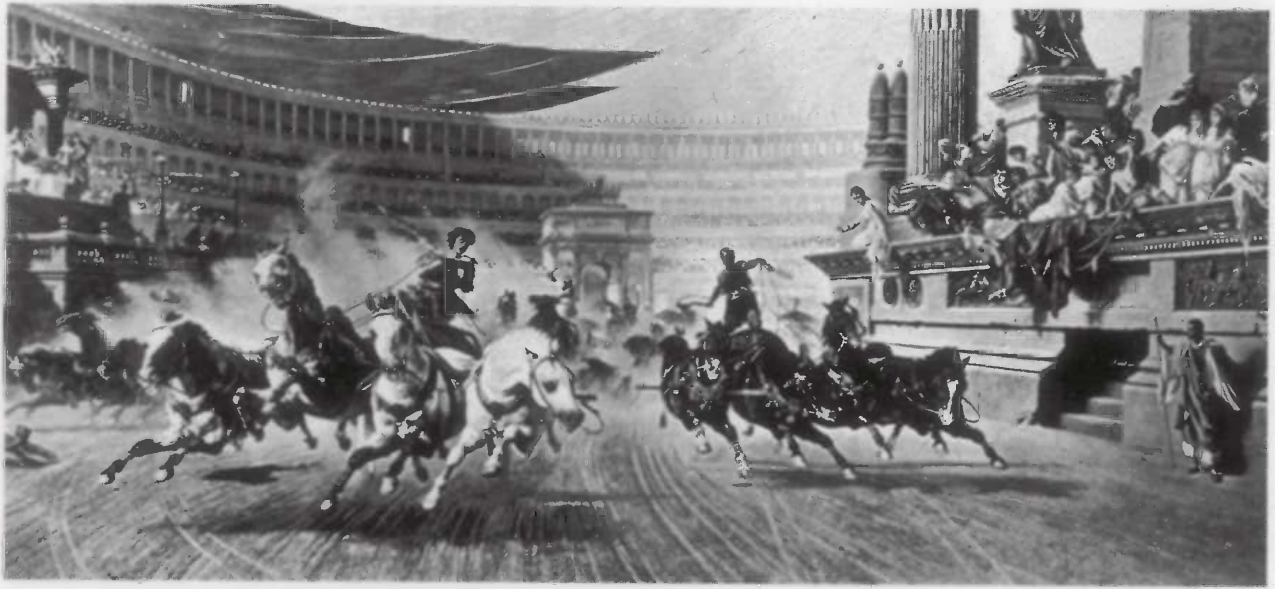


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Drawing the Line: 8.1 Transparency Masters



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Wit Sport Wiser

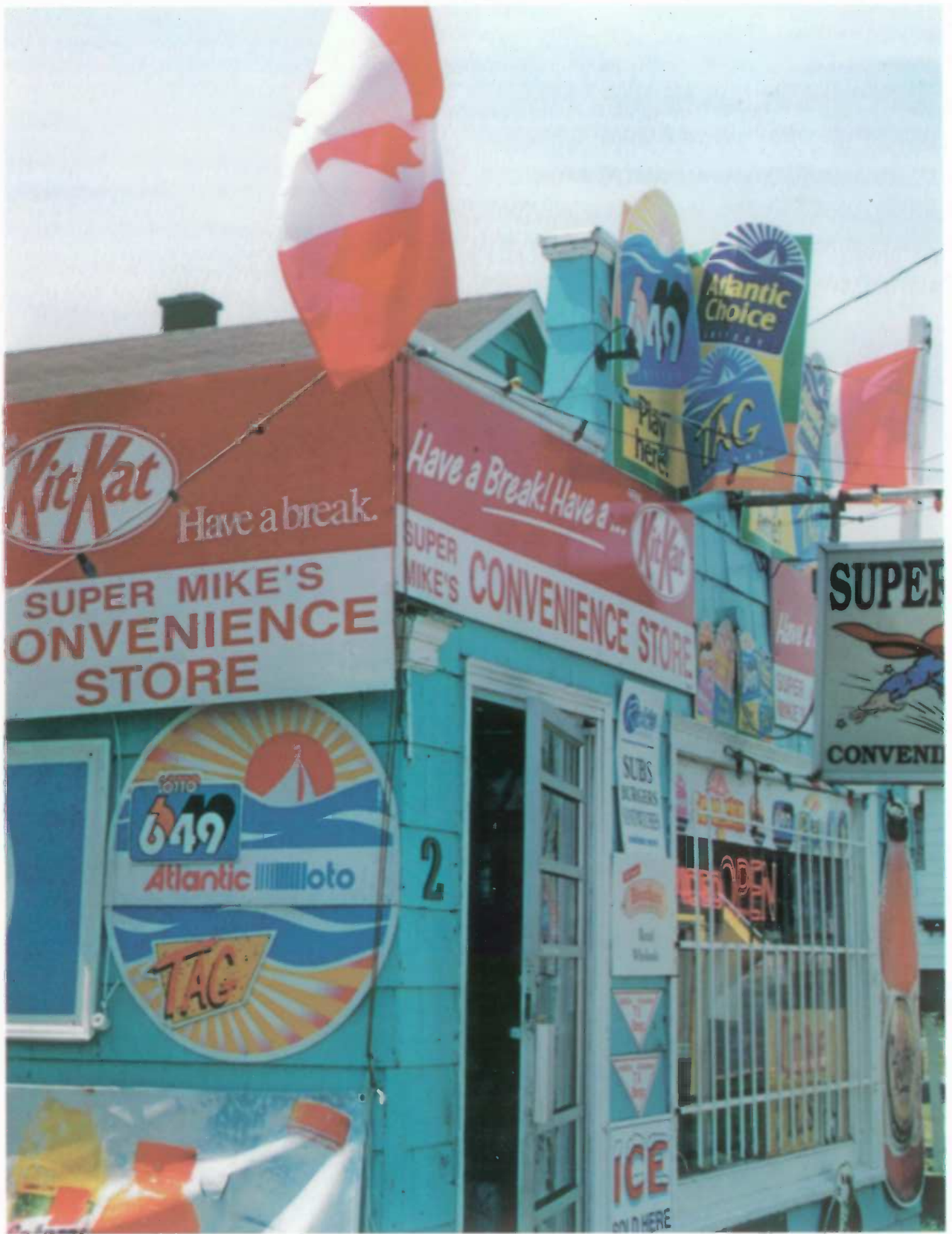
THE COCK-PIT

*Published according to Act of Parliament
Nov. 5th 1759*

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Drawing the Line: 8.1 Transparency Masters



Drawing the Line: 8.1 Transparency Masters

SPORTSPLEX

SUPER BINGO NIGHTLY

SUN MON TUES WED

MON BOYS & GIRLS CLUB

TUES TRIP GAME

WED AMERICAN \$ NIGHT



Courtesy of The Chronicle-Herald and The Mail-Star



Picture Collection, The Branch Libraries, The New York Public Library



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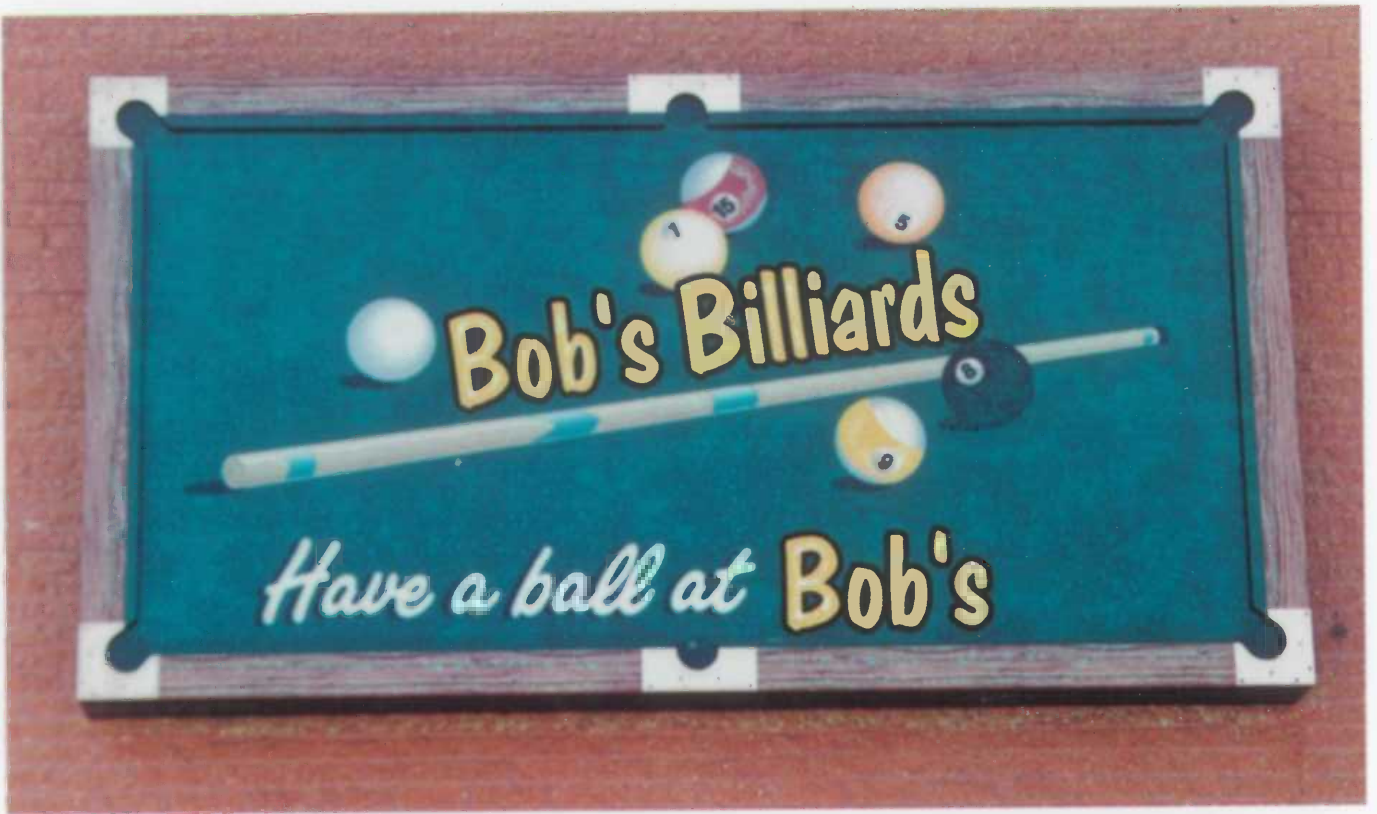
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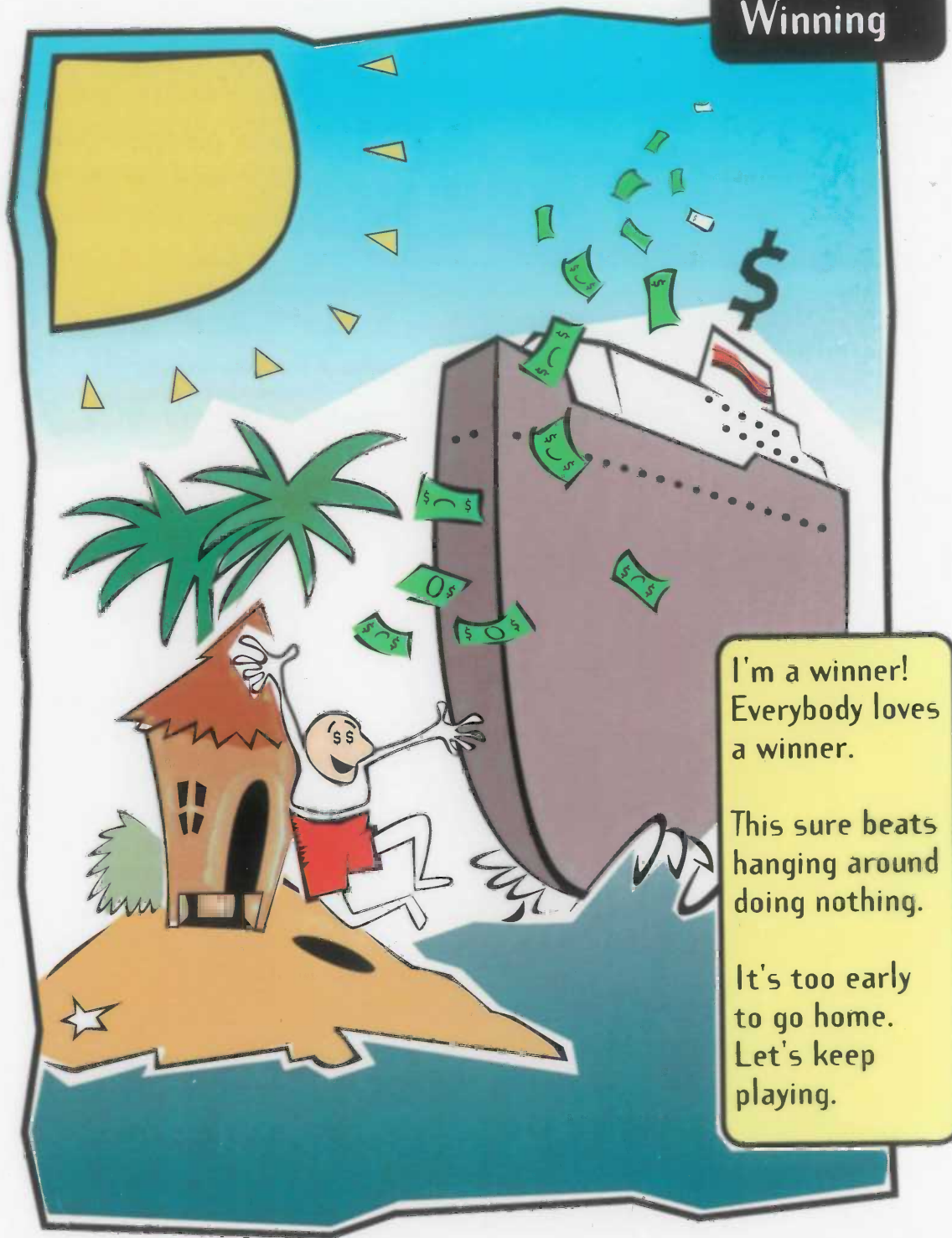


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Winning



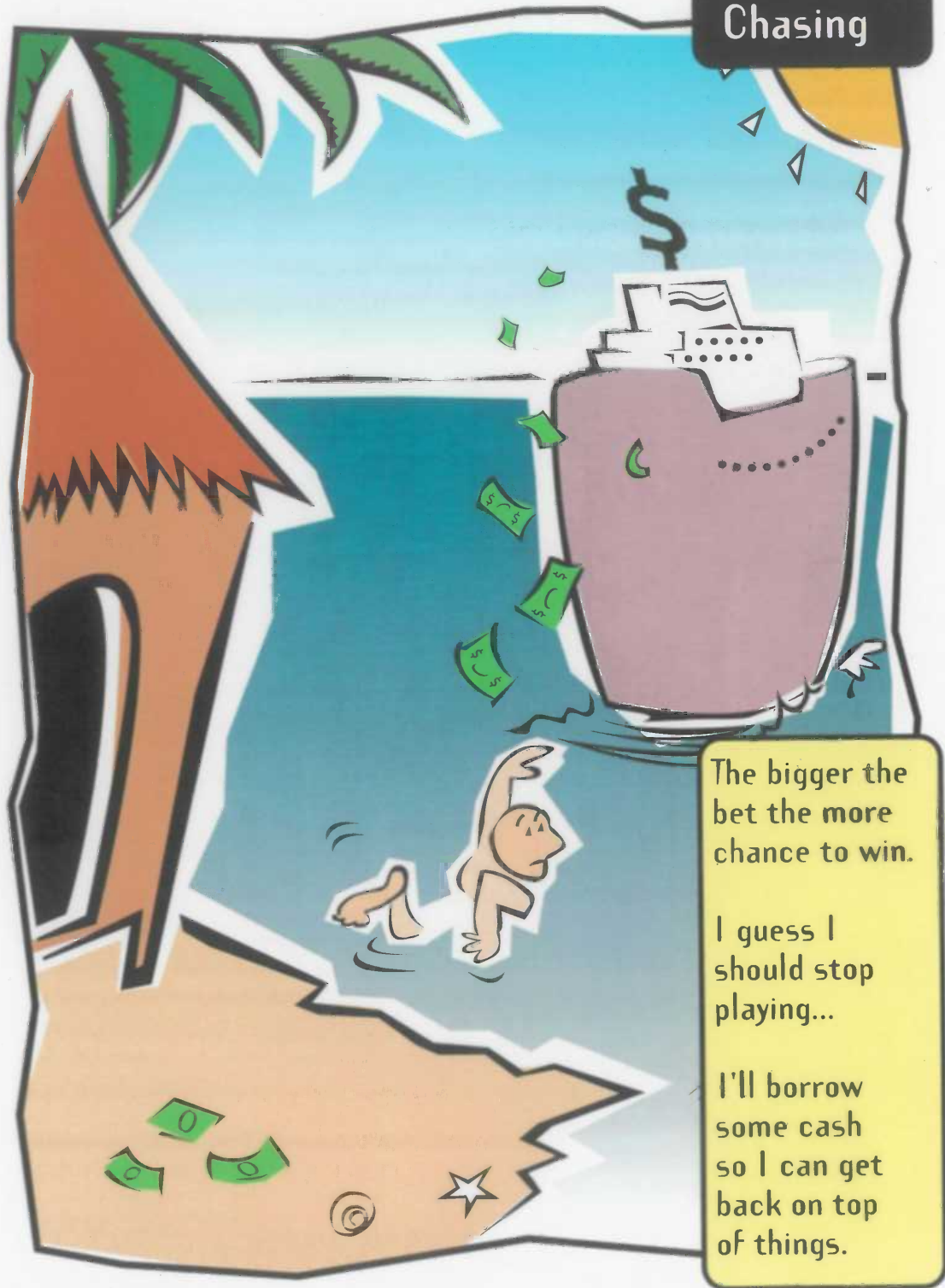
I'm a winner!
Everybody loves
a winner.

This sure beats
hanging around
doing nothing.

It's too early
to go home.
Let's keep
playing.

- Winning gives you a "high" – you keep going back for more.
- You tend to ignore losses or explain them away.
- Gambling can be a way to avoid painful feelings or a difficult home life.

Chasing



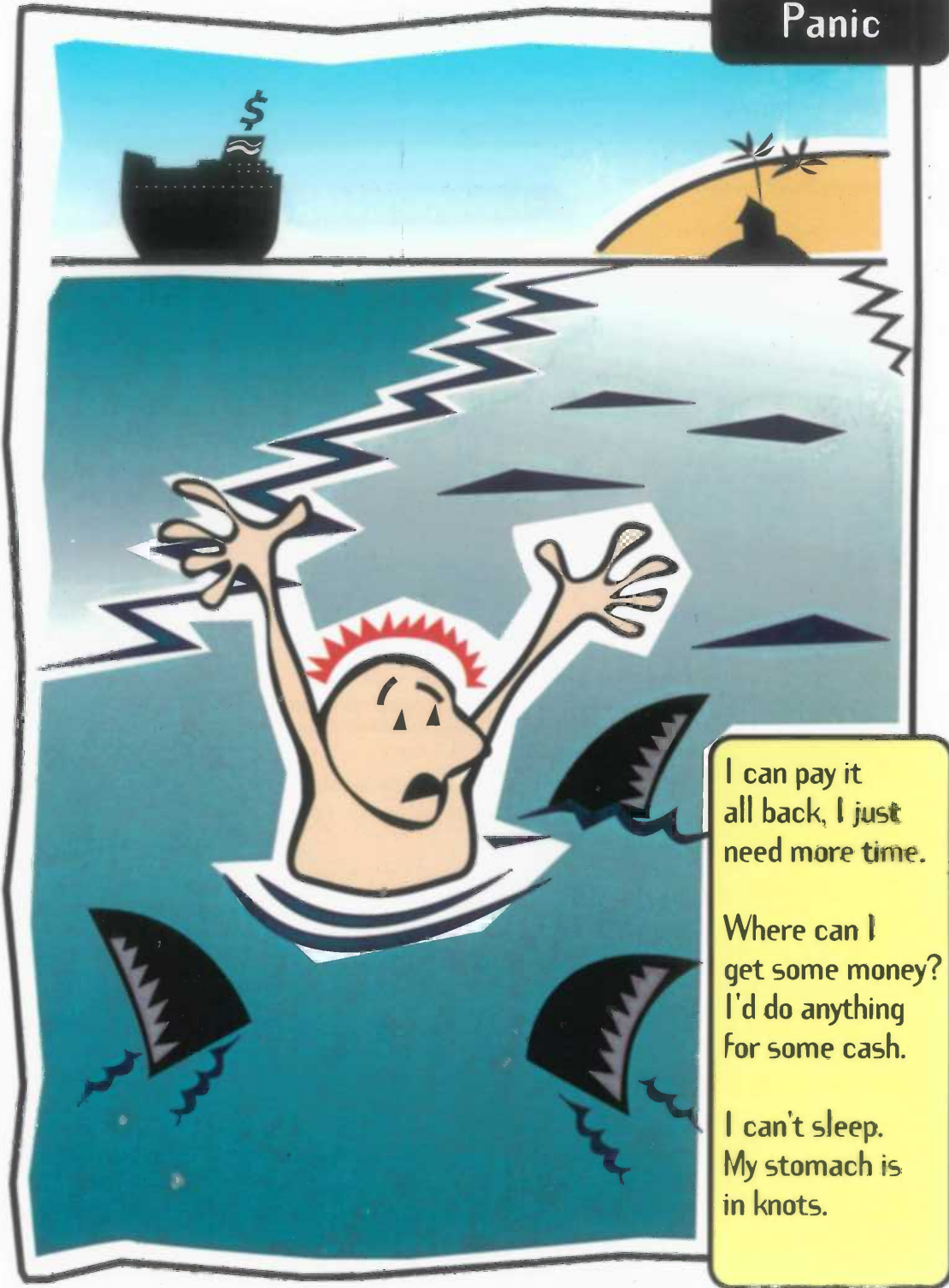
The bigger the bet the more chance to win.

I guess I should stop playing...

I'll borrow some cash so I can get back on top of things.

- You start to feel guilty about money lost.
- You try to make up for losses by gambling more, or with larger bets.
- You keep thinking you will win again – next time.

Panic



- You are out of control – you can't stop.
- When you're not gambling, you feel worried, anxious, moody.
- You are over your head with debts, broken promises, and lies.