

# B

# TEACHERS

## SECTION B

# Gambling as a social activity

### Aims and overview

This unit aims to build understanding of responsible gambling strategies in social contexts. It focuses on two major types of gambling, horse racing and poker, as a means of developing these strategies.

### Learning outcomes

At the end of this unit, students should be able to:

- identify and explain responsible gambling strategies
- explain why judging a horse's chances of winning is an opinion, rather than an objective mathematical judgment
- explain some of the traps in claims made about betting systems
- critically evaluate strategies that claim to be responsible gambling strategies

### Using the DVD - *Beat the game*

Viewing the first clip on the DVD, *Stay in control*, will help to introduce work in this chapter. It is an energetic and engaging music/dance clip that stresses the key responsible gambling messages for young people. The clip, *Murphy's Law*, provides specific visual reinforcement for the exercises on pg 54. The clip, *Get Get Scam Smart*, provides specific visual reinforcement for the exercises on pg 63.

### Annotations to exercises in this chapter

Teachers may wish to collect material to assist with the Melbourne Cup collage from print and on-line sources or allow time for students to do this.

#### B1.

Exercise 1 – The video at <http://australianetwork.com/nexus/stories/s1857962.htm> has an on-line transcript as well as video and audio.

Exercise 2 – The collage could be done on a larger scale using a classroom wall. Students could be divided into groups to select words and images on different aspects of the Cup, for example the race itself, fashions on the field, watching the race etc.

Exercise 3 – This could be completed as class discussion instead of small group discussion. The full transcript can be found at <http://fulltext.ausport.gov.au/fulltext/1997/sportsf/sf971031.htm>

Exercise 4 - The poem runs for about 2.5 minutes. A good sound system may be needed if playing it to the whole class.

#### B2.

Exercise 3 - The source of the Melbourne Cup trivia is [http://www.progroupacing.com.au/Melbourne\\_Cup\\_Trivia.htm](http://www.progroupacing.com.au/Melbourne_Cup_Trivia.htm) This site is a betting selection service and is not recommended for access by students.

#### B3

Exercise 1 - The source for the article extract is [http://www.horseracingsystems.com.au/horse\\_racing\\_betting\\_systems.html](http://www.horseracingsystems.com.au/horse_racing_betting_systems.html). This site provides access to advertisements for betting systems and is not recommended for access by students.



## B

## TEACHERS

## SECTION B

## Gambling as a social activity

Exercise 2 – the answers to the True or False table are as follows

1. T
2. T
3. T (the longer you gamble the more likely you are to lose)
4. T
5. T
6. F (the longer you gamble, the more likely you are to lose)
7. T
8. T
9. F
10. F
11. F (it is not likely that a win will happen next time just because you leave when ahead, but it is good to leave while ahead)
12. T
13. T
14. T
15. T
16. T

**B4.**

The answers to Exercise 2 a) are:

Royal Flush, 4 of a Kind, Full House, Flush, Straight, 3 of a Kind, 2 Pair, 1 Pair, 5 cards

The answers to Exercise 2 b) are:

48 cards,  $2/48$ ,  $46/48$ ,  $6/48$ ,  $42/48$ ,  $2/44$ ,  $6/44$

Extension

If a celebration of the Melbourne Cup is organized in the school, include as part of the activity a discussion on how this celebration can model having fun at the Melbourne Cup in a responsible way. This could be reflected in the planning of activities as well as the conduct of the activities.

**Assessment strategies**

As students work through the table in B3 Exercise 2 and then the answers, they can refine their understanding of responsible gambling strategies.

**Support activities from other Consumer Stuff booklets****A1. Wanna bet? Why do people gamble?**

English – F3

English – B13 Analysing advertisements as media texts

English – F5 Responsible gambling in the media



Maths – F4



# B1

# Worksheet

## The Melbourne Cup

### Exercise 1 – The race that stops a nation!

Watch the video on the Melbourne Cup at  
<http://australiannetwork.com/nexus/stories/s1857962.htm>

Small group discussion

- a) Why is the Melbourne Cup unique?

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- b) Lillian Frank talks about the spirit of the Cup. What would you say is the spirit of the Cup? Use not only the words of the video but also the images to inspire your thinking.

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- c) Why do you think the Melbourne Cup is so popular?

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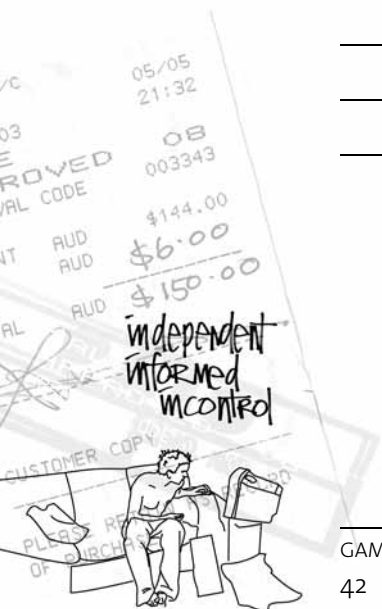
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# B1

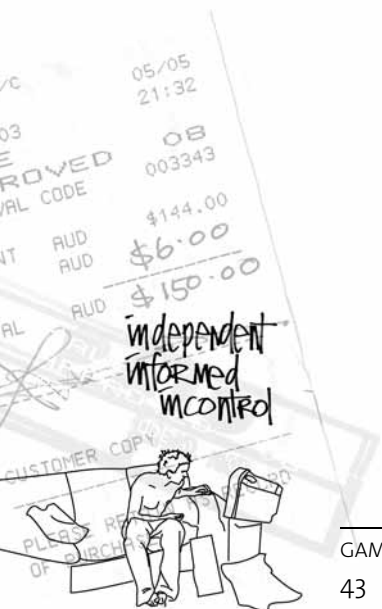
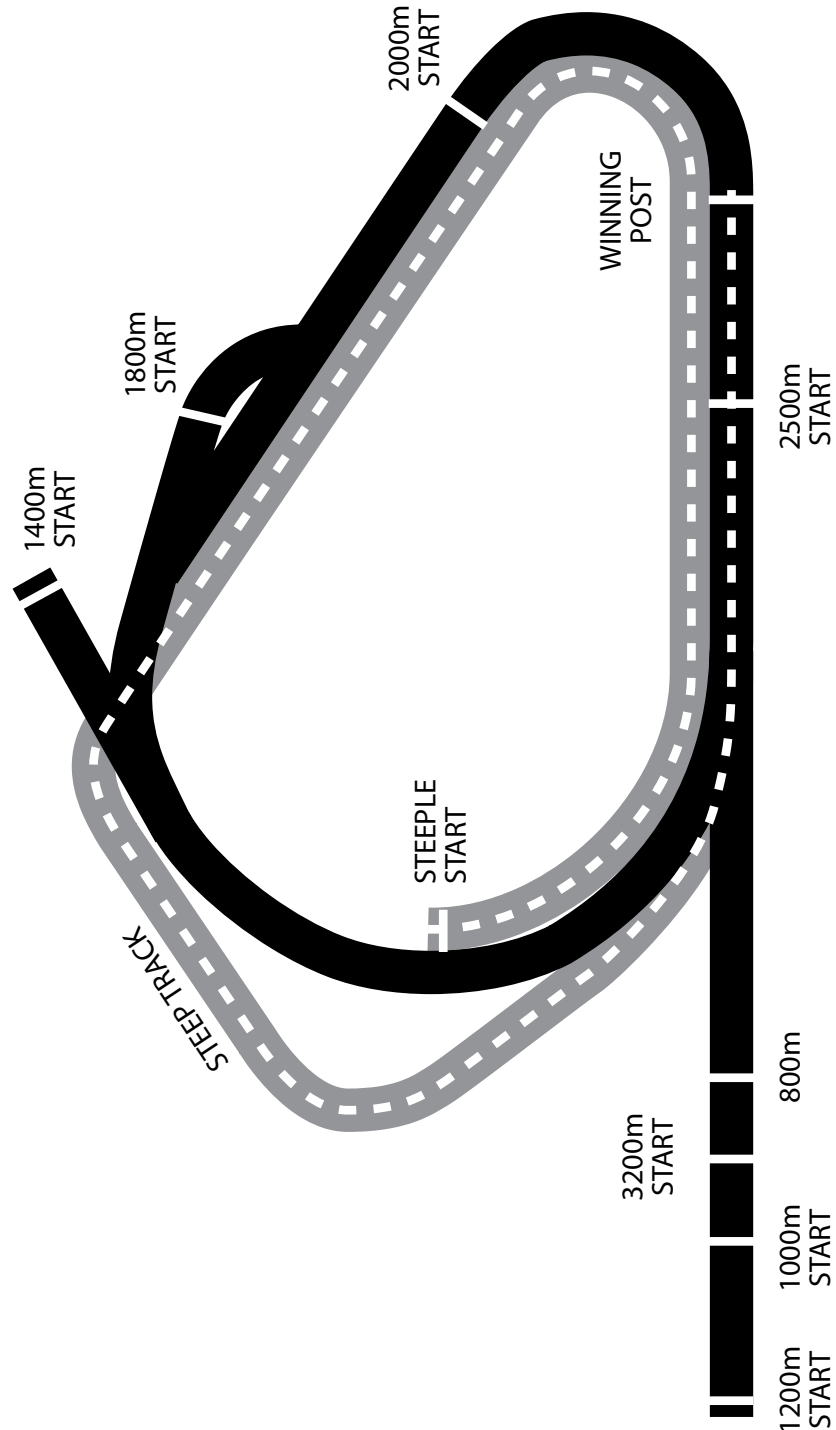
# Worksheet

## The Melbourne Cup

### Exercise 2 – The place of the Cup

- a) Design a collage to reflect the nature of the Melbourne Cup and its place in Australian culture.

Use the graphic below to assist.



## The Melbourne Cup

### Exercise 3 – Tom's story

Form a small group. Take turns to read aloud the dialogue from the characters.

Read the following extract from a transcript of *The Sports Factor* on ABC's Radio National (31/10/97)

**Amanda Smith:** And now to the first children's book that's been written about the Melbourne Cup. Nine-year-old Tom Bartholomew was the inspiration for the story, and here he is reading from it.

**Tom Bartholomew:** My name is Tom, always has been. Not hard to remember, and not hard to say backwards. That mop of hair you see escaping at the bottom of the page is my sister, Vanessa. She just said, 'Quick, hide!' and bolted. I think maybe she heard Dad coming. He calls her 'Noosh'. That's okay with her. She's hiding because there's a fair chance if Dad saw us up this tree, he might take the opportunity to lean against the trunk and tell us a horse story. Actually, a racehorse story. Well really, a horseracing story, about one particular horserace, the Melbourne Cup. Have you ever heard of it? We hadn't until we were born. You see, Dad reckons he's been to every one of them. I believed him until I was five-and-a-quarter. What a goose! Slight problem, Dad, the Melbourne Cup was first run in 1861. It's the world's greatest handicap. After Dad.

**Amanda Smith:** And 'The World's Greatest Handicap. (After Dad)' is the title of this children's book, written by Tom's father, Mick Bartholomew, and illustrated by his mother, Lindy Allen. But why a kid's book about the Melbourne Cup?

**Mick Bartholomew:** I think it was a fatherly thing. My son's quite keen on sport, and a couple of years ago I went looking for a book, a children's book on the Melbourne Cup, because it was a big part of my childhood. Couldn't find one, and in conjunction with one of the local teachers, the librarian, I started to look up a few references and whatever, and just started writing a book, which I road tested on Mallecoota children for a while.

**Amanda Smith:** And it's obviously also come out of your own passion for horseracing. In fact that's really what the story's about, isn't it? Your obsession as seen through the eyes of Tom, your son, and the narrator of the story?

**Mick Bartholomew:** Yes, a little bit. It's also about - I think the last line of the book probably carries it a fair way - 'I hate serious stuff' - and these days it's all about stakes that horses have won and how much a race is worth. But the beauty of the Melbourne Cup is that it is fun. I mean I think it's the one sporting event that is a whole lot of fun.

**Amanda Smith:** Lindy, what about accusations that you're inculcating children into the ways of gambling?

**Lindy Allen:** Well it's been a very interesting process marketing the book. A lot of secondary school teachers have been very pleased to finally have something to engage Year 7, 8, 9 boys, who perhaps haven't been that interested in reading. So my response to that is to say simply that we're not encouraging them to gamble, we're encouraging them to read.

- A bit of maths for you! How many Melbourne Cups have been run? \_\_\_\_\_
- According to Mick Bartholomew, what is the main attraction or beauty of the Melbourne Cup? Do you agree?



## B1

## Worksheet

## The Melbourne Cup

Back to our reading

**Lindy Allen:** Well when I first read the story, it was very hard to think of how do you actually capture a family obsession with horseracing and the magic of the Melbourne Cup on the track. I decided fairly early on that I wanted to anchor it in the backyard. And make the family a family who was obsessed with dressing up in racing garb and kids who were racing round with broomstick horses, having horse races in the backyard, a father who with the hedge clippers shapes a wattle tree into the Melbourne Cup. So it really tries to capture family life, and how a family obsession about horseracing - because most people who listen to the Melbourne Cup don't in fact go to the races, they listen in the backyard and they listen on the radio, and they talk about it for weeks leading up to it. So it's very much something that's anchored in the kitchen and the backyard.

**Amanda Smith:** Mick, you and the family live in Mallacoota, a little town on the Victorian coast just near the New South Wales border. Is there a difference in the way the Melbourne Cup is regarded or enjoyed outside of the city?

**Tom Bartholomew:** I don't think there is, no. Well for three years we've been up there, it's been fairly full-on, it's not a public holiday of course, but you wouldn't know that when you go down to the local pub-TAB. And this year the school is really taking it on as well, and they've got a full Cup day, with Fashions on the Field, and the rose bushes, and the whole bit. No, the fever's certainly there, and you can't get much further from Melbourne in Victoria than Mallacoota, we're 500 kilometres away.

**Amanda Smith:** Tom, I understand that you'll be running the Melbourne Cup sweep at your school this year.

**Tom Bartholomew:** Yes, for my grade I will be. I'll bring in a sweep and ask the teacher if we can do one, and usually other grades do them too.

**Amanda Smith:** Mick, what can knowing about horseracing, and this particular race, the Melbourne Cup, teach kids?

**Mick Bartholomew:** I think that they learn through something which they see happening each year. It makes history very alive to them, and it takes you through all the other subjects, all the racing and the distances and the time and the odds and everything.

**Amanda Smith:** I sometimes think though, that using a sports metaphor as some sort of life lesson is just all about winning through effort, and luck, and dividing the world into winners and losers. Mick, is that what the book's about?

**Mick Bartholomew:** Firstly, I don't think the Melbourne Cup is about winning. I remember a few years ago there was a horse called Sunshine Sally and the hoopla that surrounded it. And I think with the Melbourne Cup, it was set up by R.C. Bagot, to enable the battler to have a runner in a handicap race with some prestige. And I think just participating in the Melbourne Cup. And I don't think, having been to the Cup a number of times, and having been in a lot of towns, and a lot of parties, people don't care if they back the winner or the loser or whatever. It really is just fun, it's not like a football Grand Final, it's participating.

- c) Why was the book set in the backyard?

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# B1

# Worksheet

## The Melbourne Cup

d) What similarities and differences are there between Tom's and Mick's attitude to the Cup?

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e) What do you like about the Melbourne Cup? Is there anything you don't like? Is the Melbourne Cup more than just about winning money?

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f) Does the Melbourne Cup "stop" your friends and family? Do you celebrate the Cup in any way?

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g) Do you think that celebrating the Melbourne Cup in such a big way in our culture encourages young people to gamble? Why?

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### Exercise 4 - The race that stuffs the nation!

Small group activity

Listen to the poem The Race that Stuffs the Nation at

<http://www.abc.net.au/local/audio/2008/11/04/2410079.htm?site=perth>

It goes for about 2½ minutes.

a) Identify the concerns that the poet, Wayne Pantall, has about the Melbourne Cup. Do you agree?

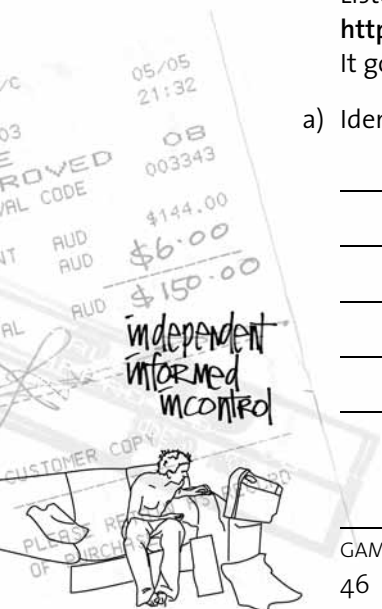
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# B1

# Worksheet

## The Melbourne Cup

- b) Is it true that drinking and gambling often go together? What effects could drinking too much have on someone's gambling behavior?

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- c) Write a short poem (say ten lines) or a short paragraph about how you view the place of the Melbourne Cup in today's world.

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 **Exercise 5 – Murphy's Law**  
Betting on the races

The chance of a tossed coin landing heads is 50/50 or 50%. In other words there is an even chance of the coin landing heads or tails, or a just as much chance of losing as winning if you make a bet on which side is going to land.

There are other events where it is possible to calculate the chance of an outcome with some certainty, for example in the throwing of dice. For other events it is not possible to calculate the probability with any certainty. Sometimes a particular outcome may seem a certainty. However, as the saying goes 'There is no such thing as a sure thing!' Murphy's Law illustrates this.

Watch the video clip, *Murphy's Law*, and consider the following article.

### Take a tip from Murphy

by Belinda Levez

*Murphy's law states 'If anything can go wrong it will go wrong'. It's creator, U.S. Air Force Captain Ed Murphy, could easily have been talking about horse racing. You spend hours studying the form, sorting out the best jockey and assessing the weights. You pick out the most promising horse. Confident in your selection, you place your bet. Since it can't fail to lose, you bet a pot of money on it. Then you sit back and wait for it to pass the winning post. Suddenly just when you least expect it up pops Murphy's Law.*

*There's a long list of things that can and do go wrong in horseracing. Horses can be temperamental creatures. Just getting a reluctant horse into the starting stalls can sometimes be a problem. The handlers do their best but are no match for a four legged equivalent of the karate kid. Once safely installed the danger isn't over. The horses can thrash around injuring either themselves or the jockey. On occasion they dig their feet in and simply refuse to race. When I was a betting shop manager in the 80's, Vodkatini was a horse that was notorious for refusing to race. There was always a last minute rush of bets if the horse decided to co-operate and run.*

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Source: <http://www.horseracingtips.co.uk/articles/Murphy.htm>





# B1

# Worksheet

## The Melbourne Cup

a) Which of the examples of Murphy's Law in the video did you find most amusing? Why?

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b) Briefly describe an event in your life when you experienced Murphy's Law.

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c) Murphy's Law, whether you use that name or terms like weird coincidence or just bad luck, does seem to occur. How would the knowledge of Murphy's Law affect planning decisions you may make?

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d) Think of some other sports besides racing that people like to bet on. Choose one of these sports and describe how Murphy's Law can influence the result.

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e) How would the knowledge of Murphy's Law affect gambling decisions a person may make?

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f) How could Murphy's Law influence the outcome of the Melbourne Cup?

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