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Gambling as a cultural identity in Australia

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Lesson introduction

Quick summary

Students critically evaluate gambling's link with Australia's cultural identity through the lens of the traditional ANZAC day game of Two-up. Students will then propose alternatives to that aspect of the Australian cultural identity, encouraging their local community towards healthier choices around gambling and performances of the Australian cultural identity which are less involved with gambling.

Links to Victorian Curriculum 2.0

Years 9 and 10 Health and Physical Education

Content descriptions

- Critique health information, services and media messaging about relationships, lifestyle choices, health decisions and behaviours to evaluate their influence on their own, others and community's attitudes and actions (VC2HP10P09).
- Plan, justify and critique strategies to enhance their own, others and community's health, safety, relationships and wellbeing (VC2HP10P10).

Capabilities

- How to identify and adapt strategies for improving confidence, adaptability and perseverance in response to challenges in different contexts, considering personal and social enabler and barriers (VC2CP10S04).

Relevant parts of the Year 9 and 10 achievement standards

- Students synthesise health information from credible sources to propose and justify strategies that can enhance their own, others' and the community's health, safety, relationships and wellbeing.

Learning intentions

Students will:

- critically evaluate Australian cultural identity, specifically gambling's role in that identity.

Success criteria

Students can:

- explain the role of gambling within the Australian cultural identity.
- think creatively to propose alternative Australian cultural identities.

Topic

Gambling as a cultural identity in Australia

Unit of work

Level 9 and 10 Gambling

Time required

40 minutes

Level of teacher scaffolding

Medium – Facilitate class discussion, support students in independent work.

Resources required

- Art supplies – coloured pencils and paper
- Post it notes
- Writing materials

Keywords

ANZAC, Two-up, gambling, social, identity, pressure.

Teaching sequence

15 minutes - Part A: Cultural gambling identities

15 minutes - Part B: Think/pair/share

25 minutes - Part C: Changing the conversation

5 minutes - Reflection

Lesson management:

Reiterate to students regarding the importance of respectful sharing and personal boundaries to ensure emotional safety and a supportive learning environment.

Part A:

Cultural gambling identities (Two-up)

Work through this resource material in the following sequence:

Step 1

Ask your class if they are familiar with the game two-up? In what context?

[How to Play Two-Up: Guide to Australia's Anzac Day Tradition | Man of Many](#)

The colourful history of two-up
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cLYpqO7tgs>

Step 2

Explain how the game works. Two coins are flipped, and a bet is made on whether both coins land on heads, both on tails or a head and a tail. Explain that it is illegal to bet on a game of Two-up in every day circumstances because it is an unregulated form of gambling.

However, there is one exception to this law. Do any students know what it is?

Step 3

In 1991 the Gaming and Betting Amendment Act declared that playing two-up on Anzac Day was not illegal in Victoria. Two-up games can legally be conducted in VIC on Remembrance Day (November 11th) but only after midday.

Two-up may ONLY be played at Returned & Services League (RSL) clubs, sub-branches, or any venue used by the RSL for a commemorative event. The Victorian State Branch MUST approve all RSL club and sub-branch applications to play two-up. This includes two-up games on ANZAC Day itself and commemorative functions seven days prior to ANZAC Day.

Source:

[Gambling and gambling-related offences | Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission \(vgccc.vic.gov.au\)](#)

[Two-up: How to play and why it is illegal except on Anzac Day \(thenewdaily.com.au\)](#)

Step 4

Soldiers in WW1 were fond of the game, playing extensively in the trenches and on troopships, hence the game's affiliation with national days of recognising the military services.

However, how do students feel about this link? Facilitate a class discussion. Prompt student thinking by asking:

- Do you think two-up is a cultural icon for Australians? If you've never heard of it before, you might disagree, but if you had some passing knowledge, then maybe it is very Australian, along with pavlova and lamingtons.
- What do you think it says about Australians and Australian culture that we have a 'national' gambling game? To have a game which involves gambling that is recognised in only Australia would suggest that Australian culture has issues with gambling.
- How do you feel about gambling being intrinsically or especially linked with the proud Australian tradition of ANZAC and other remembrance days? It's another way to remember soldiers who fought in the war.

Further reading: yourlifechoices.com.au/lifestyle/two-up-and-gallipoli-why-illegal-gambling-is-part-of-anzac-day/

Part B:

Think/pair/share

Students have to think about the questions below, discuss with a partner, then share their opinion with the class. This broadens the conversation to Australia's relationship with gambling. Prompt student thinking by asking:

- Do you think gambling is an essential part of being an 'Aussie'? If so, how?

This is an excellent chance to explore students' perceptions of gambling and sports. Can you enjoy a sporting match without having a bet?

Is it 'un-Australian' not to have a bet on the Melbourne Cup? Is it socially acceptable, or even (peer) pressured, to bet on sports?

- How deep do students see this link between gambling and Australian identity?
- Have students ever heard gambling and Australian identity grouped together in conversation, perhaps amongst their family, people in the community, community leaders, or on television or radio?

Part C:

Changing the conversation

Step 1

In pairs, students try to change the conversation around Australian-ness and gambling.

This conversation could take the form of an advertising campaign/slogan, a discussion amongst friends, a letter to the local newspaper editor, podcast, or any other medium a student thinks might suit.

For example:

- An advertisement, perhaps as text in a magazine or filmed and used on TV:
“Rugby League. We might have a state of origin, but we’re all Australian. It’s something for us all to enjoy together. And we can enjoy the game without anything else. (Well, maybe a pie). It’s not about sitting on the couch glued to your phone. It’s about getting out and having a run-around, big hits and even bigger tries. How much of the game will you miss if you’re only watching the odds? ‘Sometimes’ is okay, but not every match and every try.”
- Here’s a script for a conversation to have with someone around gambling:
“Hey (Mum/Dad/Sis). I really enjoy watching the game with you. I’m just not super keen on the gambling side of things. I disagree; I don’t think there’s anything Aussie about that. I reckon it’s more about watching the game with your mates. So, do you reckon we could just watch one game without having a bet?”

Step 2

Students might be willing to share their messages with the class.

Teacher reflection

Take this opportunity to reflect on your own teaching:

What did you learn about your teaching today?

What worked well?

What didn’t work so well?

What would you share?

Where to next?

How are you going to get there?

Reflection

Using a post-it note, students write one thing they have learnt from the lesson and stick to the whiteboard or hand to the teacher when exiting the class.

Differentiated learning

Throughout the lesson there is opportunity here for the teacher to consider organising specific groups or pairs that can ensure students that might require additional support are encouraged by their friends and peers. Additionally, the script examples are excellent prompts to help facilitate student understanding of the task and how to formulate scripts relevant to the topic.

Extension – Ask students to consider the complex implications that culture can have on people’s behaviour and whether they are able to elaborate on how they believe Australia can work towards creating a culture that is free from gambling harm. Ask students to reflect on the following statement and provide justifications for their thinking:

- What steps can the Australian government take to help young people understand and avoid the negative consequences of gambling?

This can be written out in simple dot points and students can provide brief sentences on how they would like the government to help support the current and future generation of Australia.