



1. Ask students what, if anything, they know about Charles Barkley. Then distribute copies of the [Charles Barkley handout](#) and give them time to read it (or have one student read it aloud).

Gambling literacy

Big ideas

- ✓ Gambling can be a fun recreational activity but can also lead to significant harm
- ✓ As humans, both individually and as communities, we need to learn how to manage gambling in our midst
- ✓ We can learn how to control gambling by examining the different ways people have thought about it, engaging in critical self-reflection and listening to each other

Competencies

- ✓ Assess the complex ways in which gambling is linked to human culture and impacts the health and wellbeing of individuals, families, communities and societies
- ✓ Explore and appreciate the diverse cognitive, social, emotional and physical factors that impact gambling behaviour
- ✓ Develop personal and social skills to reflect on and manage personal behaviour and choices related to gambling

For a complete look at the gambling literacy competencies, as defined by the Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research, see <https://www.uvic.ca/research/centres/cisur/assets/docs/iminds/hs-gambling-curriculum.pdf>

Links to Curriculum



Charles Barkley is mostly known for basketball. He played power forward for the Philadelphia 76ers, Phoenix Suns and Houston Rockets, averaging 22.1 points and 11.7 rebounds per game over a 16-year career spanning the 80's and 90's.

Though shorter and heavier than most other high-ranking players, Alabama-born Barkley outplayed taller and faster opponents, earning himself a long list of career honours and awards, including five-time All-NBA First Team selection, 11-time All-Star, and shortest player in NBA history to lead the league in rebounding. He won two gold medals as part of the US "Dream Team" at the 1992 and 1996 Olympic Games, and is one of only four players ever to have compiled at least 20,000 points, 10,000 rebounds and 4,000 assists. Barkley NBA MVP in 1993, has been named one of the 50 greatest players in NBA history.

Currently a popular sports analyst on Inside the NBA, the ever-entertaining and outspoken retired basketball star has written several books, including *I May Be Wrong but I Doubt It*, and has appeared several times in films and TV shows. He considered running for governor of Alabama (as a Republican), wanting to bring focus back to poverty and education instead of hot-button issues. But he also supports gay rights, pro-choice and other Democrat-like ideas.

As expected from a larger-than-life character, Barkley has been involved in his fair share of controversies, usually involving aggressive or reckless behaviour and speaking his mind. For example, in the 1990's he was part of a controversial national advertising campaign that rejected pro-athletes as role models, saying that the job of role model was for parents and that it was wrong to tell kids that they can grow up to be sports stars because, for the vast majority, it's impossible. Barkley has always been honest and open about his ideas and lifestyle, including his love of high-stakes gambling. More than once he's won a million dollars in single night, and many more times than that he's lost a million trying to "break the casino" playing black jack he once lost \$2.5 million in about six hours. But to Barkley his excessive spending on gambling isn't really a problem because he can afford to lose millions. He doesn't enjoy losing money of course—quite the opposite—but he thinks losing money when gambling isn't like messing your life up with alcohol or other drugs. In 2007 he claimed:

"It's not a problem. If you're a drug addict or an alcoholic, those are problems. I gamble for too much money. As long as I can continue to do it I don't think it's a problem. Do I think it's a bad habit? Yes, I think it's a bad habit. Am I going to continue to do it? Yes, I'm going to continue to do it."

While Barkley has no plans to give up the rush and excitement of gambling, he says he's currently taking a more moderate approach and has dialed back his ideas about both winning and losing, thanks to advice from his gambling buddies. He says he no longer tries to "break the casino" because it's impossible, and puts limits on his wins and losses to keep it fun.