

Tips for Keeping Classroom Activities Gambling Free

Classrooms work best when students feel comfortable, focused, and ready to learn. Some games and reward systems can seem like gambling because they rely on luck, such as drawings, chance-based prizes, or “betting” on outcomes. When activities depend on chance, students may be confused about what they are supposed to learn.

Educators can keep activities clear by using rewards based on effort, teamwork, and participation. This helps students understand how their actions lead to positive results and builds strong decision-making skills.

Below are some ideas you may find helpful. We know it can be challenging to find meaningful ways to reward students and support equity within the classroom, so please feel free to simply consider these options as you plan your classroom activities.

Simple, safe, alternatives that build skills and confidence

- Rewards based on effort, improvement, teamwork, or meeting goals.
- Competitions using knowledge and problem-solving, like trivia or puzzles
- Privileges earned by completing work or showing positive behavior
- Progress charts where students earn rewards by reaching milestones
- Student-led choices, like voting on classroom rewards or activities
- Class goals where everyone works together to earn a shared reward
- Rotating schedules so everyone gets a turn at special tasks or privileges
- Class-wide celebrations, like extra break time or a fun themed day, when goals are met

Activities that may look like gambling:

- Games involving chance with prizes, like drawing names, spinning wheels, or rolling dice
- Prediction or “betting-style” games where students guess outcomes to earn extra credit or prizes
- Raffles or lottery-style drawings
- Token or point systems where rewards come from chance, like mystery boxes or random card pulls
- Card or dice games where winning a reward depends on luck
- Classroom auction using points or classroom “money” to try for uncertain rewards
- Digital games with chance-based prizes, like spinning wheels or loot-box-style rewards

By choosing activities that highlight effort, teamwork, and learning, educators help students build healthy habits that can protect them from gambling-related problems later on. These small choices add up, and they show students that success comes from what they do, not from chance. Thank you for the thoughtful ways you support students everyday – your work makes a lasting difference.

If you or someone you care about wants to make a change to their gambling, call the Helpline at [1-877-695-4648](tel:1-877-695-4648) or visit www.OPGR.org. All information shared is confidential and this service is FREE to Oregon residents.

If you want more information or educational materials on problem gambling, visit www.Oregoncpg.org.



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