

Second Koltanowski International Conference on Chess and Education

November 18, 2011

4-5:30 p.m. Chess for Identifying and Instructing Gifted and Talented Students (Plenary Session)

TAGT clock hours: 1.5 hours for Identification and Assessment

Presenters are Joseph Eberhard, Ed.D. and Alexey Root, Ph.D.

For Dr. Root's presentation, please refer to this excerpt from her forthcoming book *Thinking with Chess: Teaching Children Ages 5-14* (Mongoose Press, 2012)

Questions? Contact aroot@utdallas.edu

Benefits of Chess

Kindergarten (age 5)

Some school districts test kindergartners for gifted and talented placement. One commonly-used assessment is classifying by categories. In academics, classifying is important. Classifying chessmen can be compared to differentiating animals (Kangas, 1988). Teach this skill with chapter 2's ***Classify*** challenge.

Finishing a pattern is another gifted and talented assessment. A child may be shown a white square, then a black square, then a white square, then a black square. The child draws what should logically come next. Child chess players often succeed, as they are familiar with the board's alternating white and black squares. Chapter 2's ***Pattern Recognition*** challenge uses the moves of the chessmen to practice pattern recognition.

Grades 1-3 (ages 6-8)

Chapter 3's first challenge, ***Lines***, asks children to place chessmen into files, ranks, and diagonals. A chess version of tic-tac-toe, ***Lines*** combines naming the chessmen and squares with

strategic use of vertical, horizontal, and diagonal lines. The *Lines* challenge raises geometric awareness. Chapter 3's second challenge, *Decode*, has children using chessmen to capture letters placed on a chess board. Children form words from the captured letters. Unscrambling letters into words is a common drill in Language Arts.

Grades 4-5 (ages 9-10)

Following rules, understanding that actions have consequences, and dealing with adverse situations are important goals for children. Counselors help children make better decisions. With the *Choices* challenge in chapter 4, children persevere after chance determines their promotion pieces.

Grade 6-7 (ages 11-12)

Studying how goals are achieved through conflict or cooperation is part of social studies. Nations have thwarted each other (wars) but also cooperated (trade). In chapter 4's *Game Theory* challenge, children decide whether one's best strategy for achieving castling is to aim for it directly or to disrupt the opponent's plans first.

Grades 8-9 (ages 13-14)

Creativity within specified rules occurs in games, the arts, and academia. Gifted and talented programs emphasize creativity. In chapter 5's *Create* challenge, children cooperatively create a 10-move chess game that includes three en passant captures.

Predicting is important in many academic subjects. In science, one hypothesizes then experiments. In chapter 5's *Predict* challenge, children predict what will happen after various moves. Then they play out the moves and see if their predictions were correct.