

7. Pawn Promotion and the Rule of Stalemate

Objectives:

1. Review of check and checkmate
2. State and apply rules of pawn promotion
3. State and apply rules of stalemate
4. Recognize and apply the definition of stalemate to elementary positions

The primary purpose of this lesson is to reinforce the student's understanding of check and to teach pawn promotion and stalemate. Stalemate is also introduced in this lesson, and comes again the lesson on drawn games

It is critical that students distinguish between checkmate and stalemate as soon as possible. The best way to avoid confusion is to stress the simple fact that for checkmate, **the king must be in check**. (Checkmate is a compound word, combining "check" and "mate.") "Check" means that the king is in danger. "Mate" means "disabled" or that there is NO WAY OUT. In a stalemate, the king is not in danger, not in check.

Outline for Board:

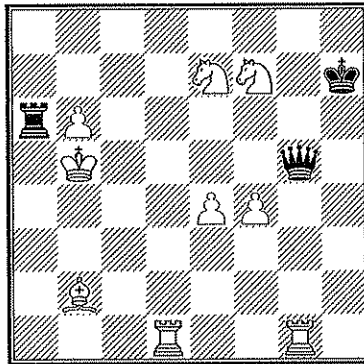
1. Review of king rules- check homework
2. Checkmate and stalemate
3. Finding checkmate

Review: Rules for king:

1. One square any direction
2. CHECK - King under attack
 - MOVE to get out of check
 - BLOCK
 - CAPTURE
3. ILLEGAL MOVE - Can't put your own king into check

**PART 1:
REVIEW OF
KING RULES**

**review of the
ways out of check**

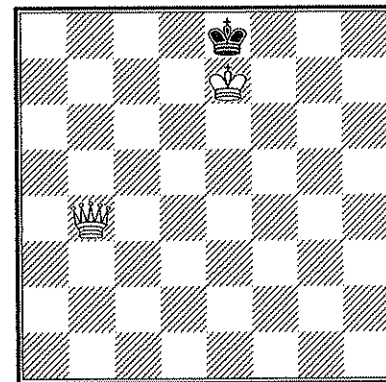


Set up the position on the left and ask which side is in check. (White is in check.) Ask which piece is putting the king in check. (The queen is putting the king in check.)

Ask for a way for white to get out of check. There are 14 correct answers. Have the students try to find all of them.

**king may not be
in check at the
end of the turn**

The position to the right is impossible. The kings may never be adjacent to each other because the king may never end its turn on a square controlled by the opponent. White may not move its king next to black's king because black controls the squares around it. This is true whether or not the king is protected on the square on which it is in danger.



**PART 2: PAWN
PROMOTION**

In The Pawn Game, one way to win was to get a pawn to the last rank. Now, the way to win is to checkmate the opponent. So what happens when a pawn reaches the eighth rank?

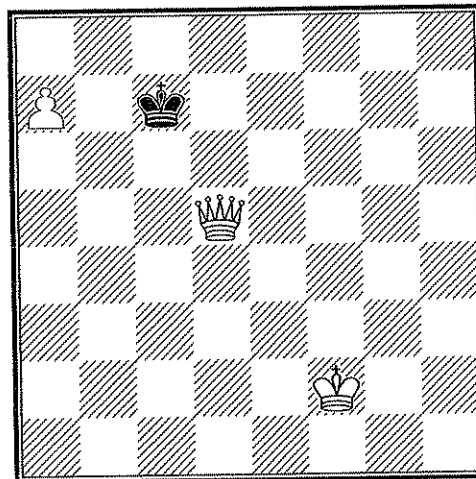
The pawn becomes a piece. The pawn reaching the eighth, on that same turn, becomes a queen, rook, bishop or knight. The player with the pawn reaching the other end of the board decides which piece the pawn becomes. The pawn leaves the board (the same as if it had been captured) and the piece replaces it on the square along the eighth rank it had just reached.

At that point, the turn is over and the other player may make any legal move, including capturing that newly created piece, if that player already had a piece controlling that square.

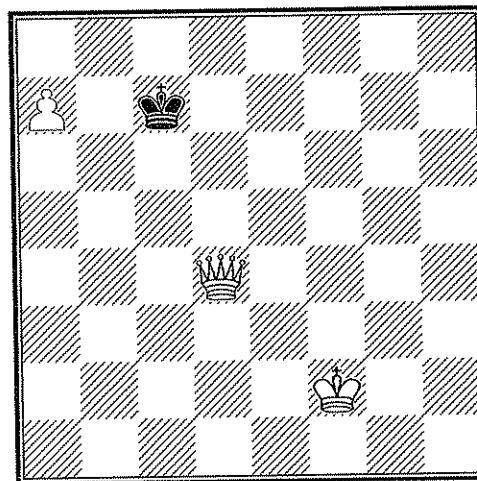
A player does not need to substitute a piece that already had been captured.

strategy

Set up the position to the right. What is white's best move here? (Nearly always, the best option is to get an extra queen. Here, the best move is a8=Q. Black's only move then is to play Kb6 and white may then move Qd5-c6#. Two queens are very powerful and should results in a checkmate very quickly.)



**PART 3:
STALEMATE**



Set up the position on the left. Ask what white's best move is.

This position is very similar to the previous position, but if white makes the same move as before (a8=Q) the result is very different.

If a student suggests promoting the pawn to become a queen, ask what move black should make.

Look at all eight squares adjacent to the king and ask whether the king may move to each, having the students point out which of white's pieces is controlling each square.

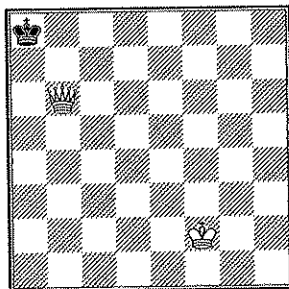
definition

If the king is not in check and the player who should now move has no legal move, the game is a stalemate.

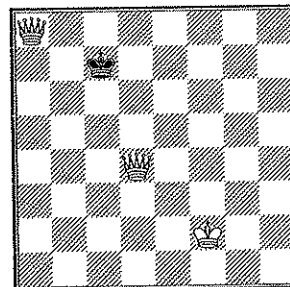
A stalemate ends the game in a draw.

In the position above, black has achieved the best possible result, as with only a king black had no chance to win the game. White, however, should be disappointed with that result. With an extra queen, white should have been able to win.

examples



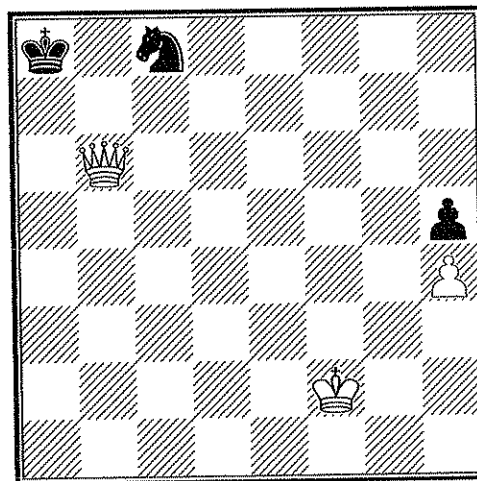
If white has just moved in either of these positions, the game is over. These positions are examples of stalemates.



common difficulties

Start with the position above. Ask the students what the position is called. (Stalemate.) Now add a black pawn at h5. Is it still a stalemate? (No, the pawn may move.) Add a white pawn at h4. Is it a stalemate now? (Yes, the pawn is blocked and may not move, so even with the pawn the game is over because black has no legal move.)

Add a black knight at c8. (Diagram at right.) What would black do now? (The best move is to capture the queen on b6.)



pinned piece

Add a white rook on f8. Is this a stalemate now? (Yes, the knight may not move because it is pinned to the king and it is never legal to make a move that causes the king to be left in anger.)

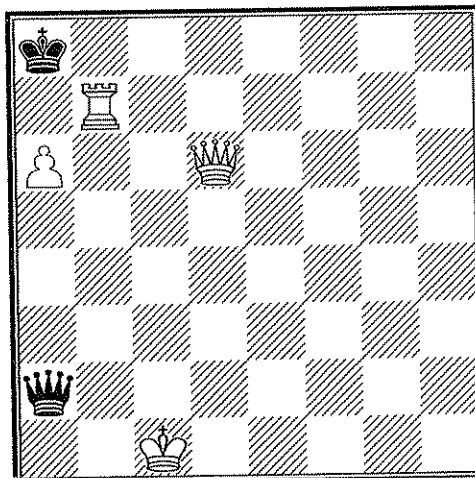
The teacher may continue with this position, adding a black rook at d5 followed by a white bishop on b2, then a black bishop at a5 but a white rook on a2, demonstrating the pins and creating more examples of stalemates.

forcing a stalemate

It usually is very difficult to force a stalemate. The side with extra material is trying to avoid ending the game as a draw. However, sometimes an opportunity arises.

Set up the position on the right.

Ask what white would do if it were his turn. (There are three checkmate moves: Qb8#, Qd8# and Qf8#. Other moves are not as good.) Say that it is black's move. What should black do to get out of trouble?



Students most often suggest moves such as Qa1+ or Qc4+ as they place the white king in danger, giving black another move to try to escape. However, white may wiggle out of danger by heading towards the eighth rank and blocking the checks.

Black's best move is Qc2+ forcing Kxc2. Black has no legal move but is not in check. The game is over and black has escaped.