

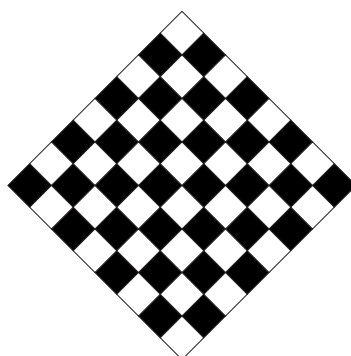
— LEARN TO —

# Read & Write Chess

by Jeanne Cairns Sinquefield

You can play chess without knowing how to read or write chess. I learned how to play on the back porch with my grandfather. Neither he nor I knew there were chess books, or that you needed to write down your moves. We just played. Recently I decided I needed to become literate. I didn't like any material available on learning to read and write chess. It was too complex, and was all reading based. Mine merges reading, talking, writing and physically moving pieces. And it breaks up necessary knowledge into simple blocks a) piece names b) locations c) written move types and d) combining a-c to merge playing with reading and writing. If I can become literate at my age (past 70) anyone can.

**Jeanne Cairns Sinquefield**  
Cofounder of the Saint Louis Chess Club



## Acknowledgments

This project had help from many people including the staff at the Saint Louis Chess Club and the World Chess Hall of Fame, and chess players from grandmasters to beginners. Special thanks to my grandson Logan who taught me about chess board locations, and my husband Rex who thinks everyone should play chess.

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Version 10.

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# Many chess players cannot read or write chess.

It is a barrier to getting better at chess. But it is not hard to learn. The four steps to learn are a) Chess Piece Letters b) Chess Board Locations c) Special Types of Chess Moves and d) Combining a-c to Write and Read Game Moves.

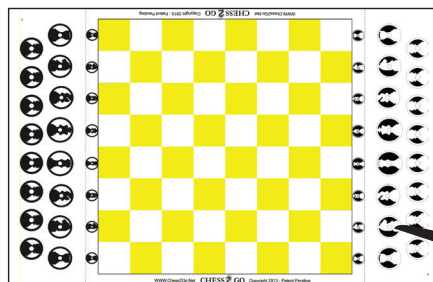
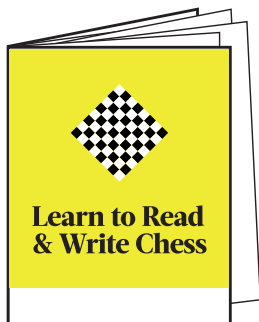
## # TASKS FOR YOU TO DO!!!!

### Chess Pieces have Names and Letters

Figure 1.



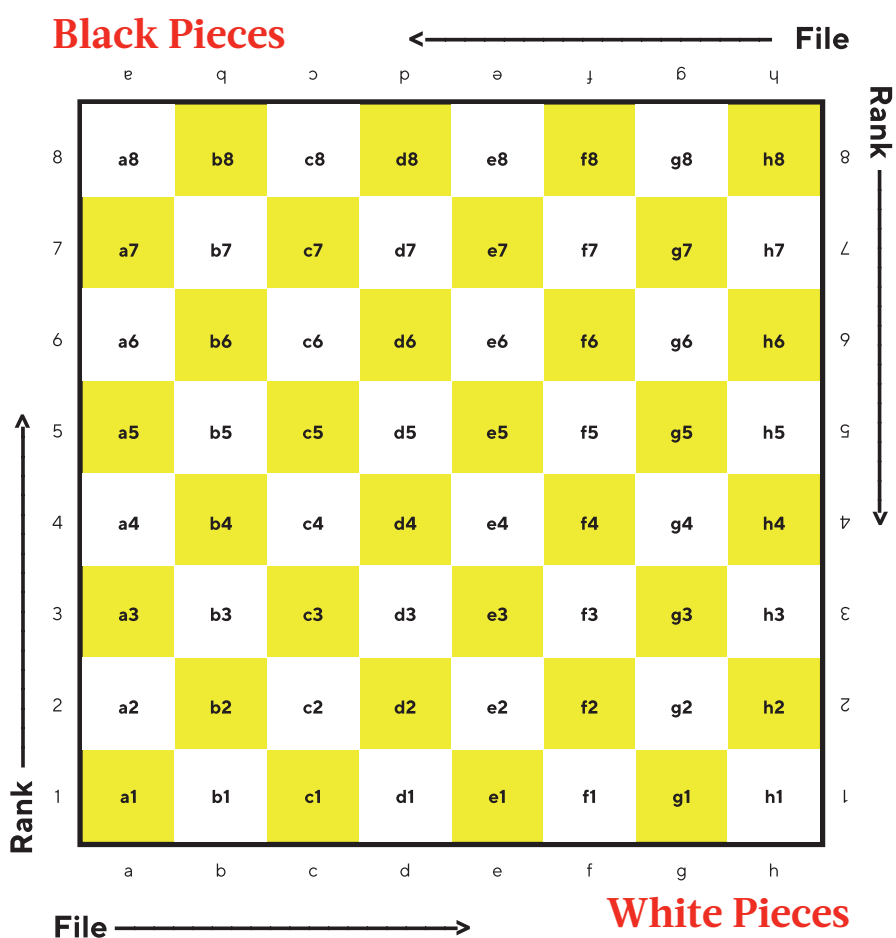
- (1) **WRITE** the Name and Letter of each piece. (No Pawn Letter)
- (2) **PULL OUT** Paper Chess Board (in center).
- (3) **WRITE** the letter (K, Q, B, N, or R) on each major chess piece.
- (4) **CUT OUT** individual chess pieces. May be glued to bottle caps, etc.



# Chess Boards have Files, Ranks and Locations

Chess Boards have Files (a,b,c,d,e,f,g,h) and Ranks (1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8). There are 8 Files and 8 Ranks with 64 locations. Location is the File letter and Rank number, e.g. a1 or h7.

Figure 2. Picture of board with File, Rank, and Location names.



**(5) WRITE** File letters and Rank numbers on paper chess board.

File – a,b,c,d,e,f,g,h Rank – 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8 Check with Figure 2.

**(6) WRITE** every Location on paper chess board (all 64).

e.g. a1, a2, to h8. Check with Figure 2.

**(7) POINT** to every square and **SAY** its Location. e.g. f6

**(8) PLACE** five pieces on board. **SAY** Letter and Location. e.g. Ra1

## (9) SET UP Positions on the Chessboard.

Positions have Piece Letter (except Pawns) and Location, except pawns only have Location. For example King on e6 is Ke6. Pawn on g2 is g2.

### 9a SET UP and SAY Positions on paper Chess Board then WRITE positions.

White Ra1,Nb1,Bc1,Qd1,Ke1,Bf1,Ng1,Rh1

**WRITE** \_\_\_\_\_

White Pawns a2,b2,c2,d2,e2,f2,g2,h2

**WRITE** \_\_\_\_\_

Black Ra8,Nb8,Bc8,Kd8,Qe8,Bf8,Ng8,Rh8

**WRITE** \_\_\_\_\_

Black Pawns a7,b7,c7,d7,e7,f7,g7,h7

**WRITE** \_\_\_\_\_

Check with Figure 3a.

### 9b SET UP and SAY Positions on paper Chess Board then WRITE positions.

White Ra1, Nc3, Qd2, Ke1,Bf1, Ng1, Rh1

**WRITE** \_\_\_\_\_

White Pawns a2,b2,c2,d4,e5,f2,g2,h2

**WRITE** \_\_\_\_\_

Black Ra8, Nb8, Bc8, Qe7, Ke8, Nd7, Rh8

**WRITE** \_\_\_\_\_

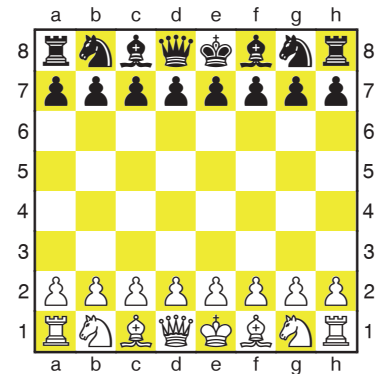
Black Pawns a7, b7, c7, d5, e6, f7, g7, h7

**WRITE** \_\_\_\_\_

Check with Figure 3b.

Figure 3a.

Starting Position

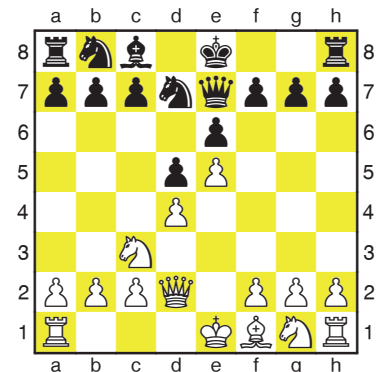


#### HELPFUL HINTS

Queen on own color.

Rook on right, always on white square.

Figure 3b.



# Special Types of Chess Moves

Chess Moves (Notation) have a fixed order, see Figure 4. Chess moves use Piece Letters (Figure 1), Locations (Figure 2), Special Symbols and Notation (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Order of Notation for Chess Moves

SYMBOL	NAME OF MOVE	NOTES
	Piece Letter	Required for K, Q, R, B, or N. (not pawn)
	Start Location	If same pieces can go to End Location, e.g. Ngf2, R1a3, cxd4
x	Capture	e.g. Nxa5, Knight captures on location a5, dxe7 (Pawn)
	End Location	Required, e.g. d5 (pawn) or Rf5, End Location is Rook on f5
ep	En passant	e.g. gxf6ep, Pawn on rank g
=	Pawn Promotion	e.g. e8=Q, Pawn moves to e8, swaps for Queen
+	Check	e.g. Bh3+, Bishop moves to h3, puts King in Check
# or ++	Checkmate	e.g. Qe7#, Queen moves to e7, King in Checkmate
SPECIAL MOVES		See Figure 9.
0-0	Castle (kingside)	White: Kg1, Rh1f1 Black: Kg8, Rh8f8
0-0-0	Castle (queenside)	White: Kc1, Ra1d1 Black: Kc8, Ra8d8

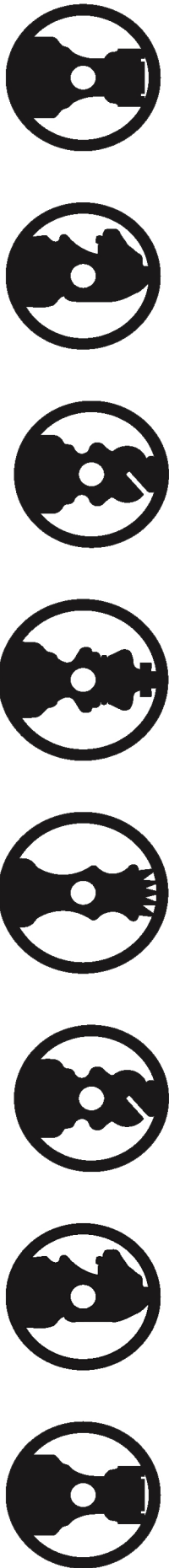
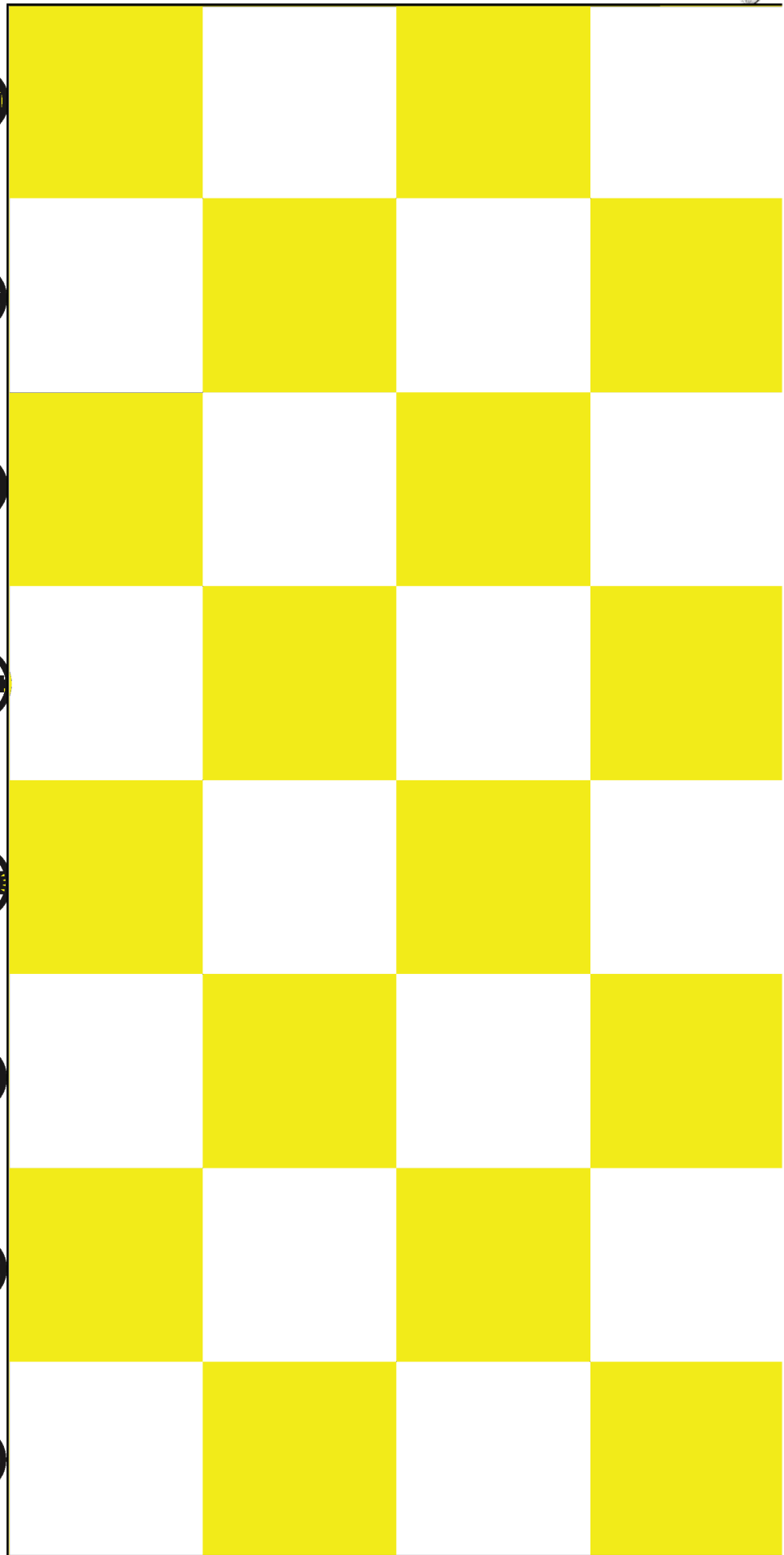
## (10) START and PLAY MOVES on paper Chessboard.

**SAY** examples. Simple Rule: Order of Notation same as spoken words.

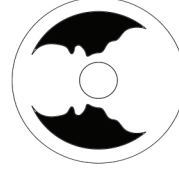
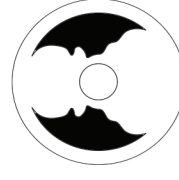
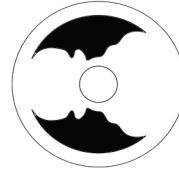
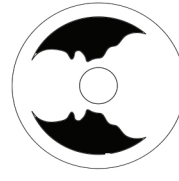
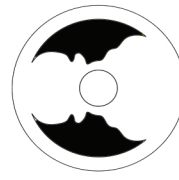
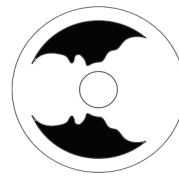
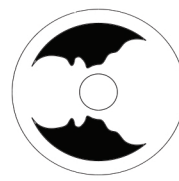
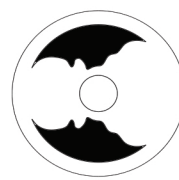
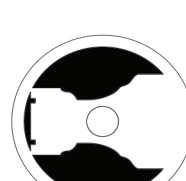
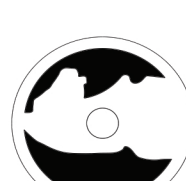
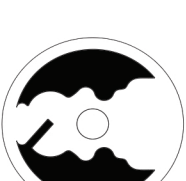
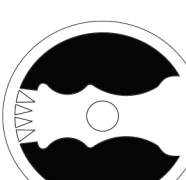
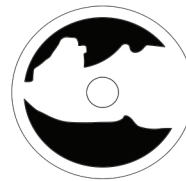
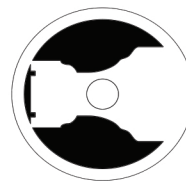
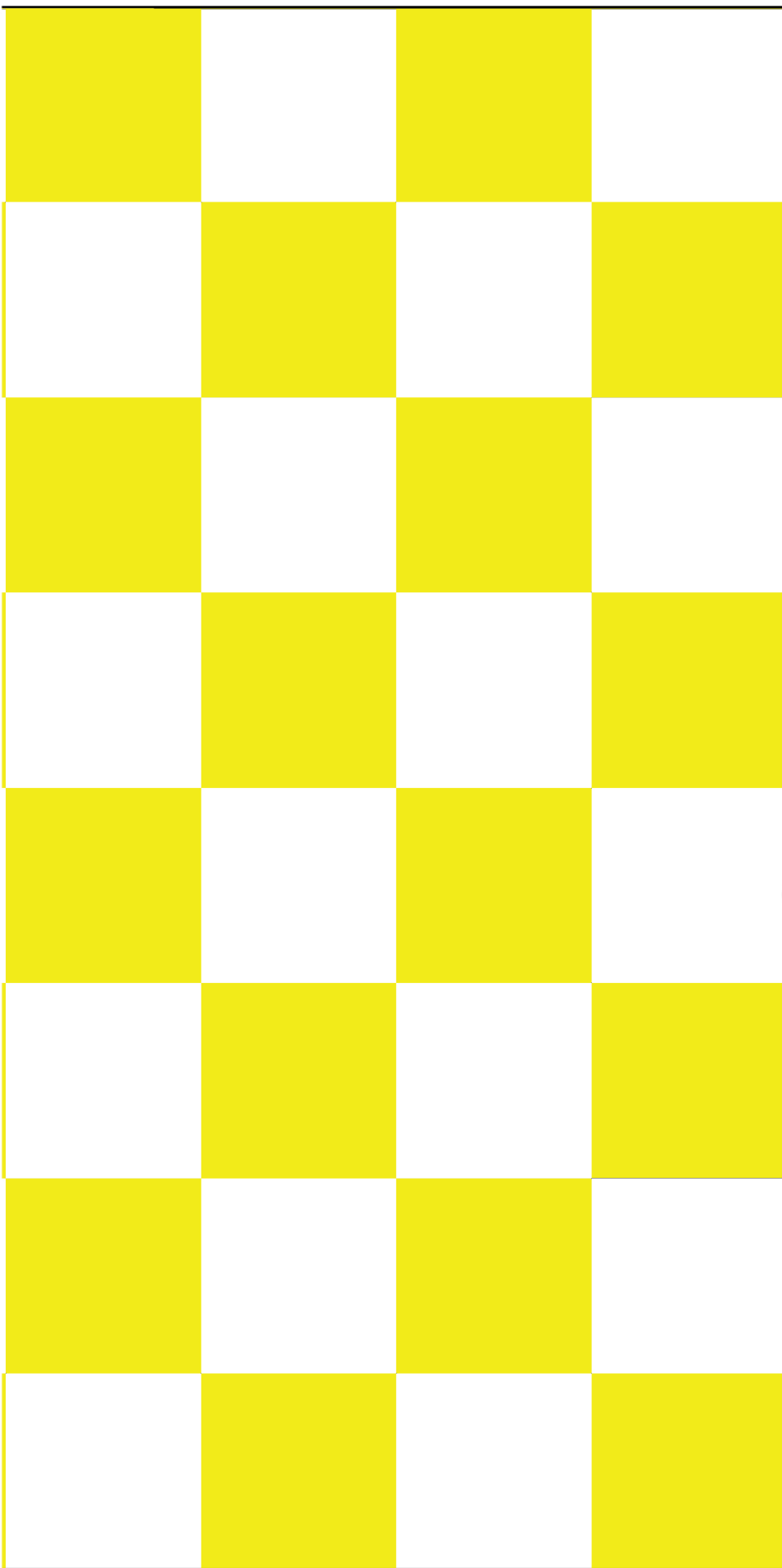
Possible Start Locations are given in parentheses ().

COMMON EXAMPLES OF CHESS MOVES:			
a4	Pawn moves to location a4 (e.g. starts a2)	Ngf2	Knight moves from g4 to f2
g6	Pawn moves to g6 (e.g. starts g5)	or N4f2	(Add g file or 4 rank if Start Location is needed)
Bd2	Bishop moves to location d2 (e.g. starts c1)	gxf5	Pawn on g file captures on f5, see Figure 5.
Ne3	Knight moves to e3 (e.g. starts g2)		(Use file name for Pawn captures)
Nxf2	Knight captures on location f2 (e.g. starts g4)	e8=Q	White pawn promotion on e8, swaps for Queen (e.g. starts e7), see Figure 7.
dxe7	Pawn on file d captures on e7 (e.g. starts d6)	Bh3+	Bishop moves to h3, check
		Qc2#	Queen moves to c2, checkmate, see Figure 8b.

PULL OUT PAPER CHESSBOARD







— PULL OUT PAPER CHESSEBOARD —

# (11) SET UP, SAY, and MOVE on paper Chess Board.

Play each example of chess move(s) on chess board.

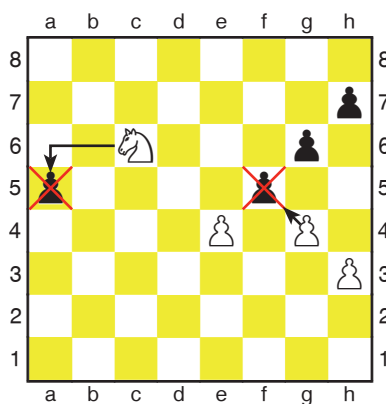
# (12) WRITE chess notation on line below Figures 5-9.

Figures 5-9. Examples of special types of moves on a board.

## 5. Capture x Pawn x

Nxa5

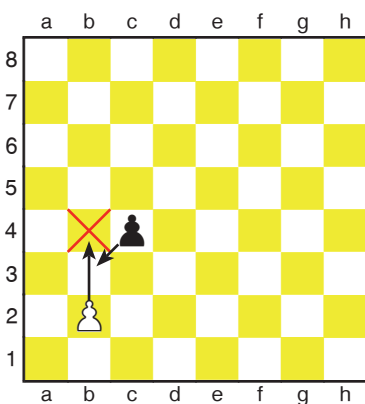
gxf5 (note 2 pawns can move)



WRITE \_\_\_\_\_

## 6. En passant ep

White to b4. Black captures b4,  
moves to b3: cxb3ep

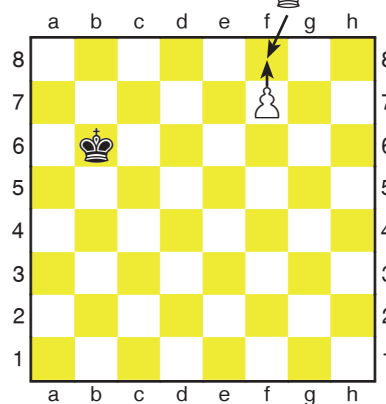


WRITE \_\_\_\_\_

## 7. Pawn promotion =

Pawn moves to f8, swaps for Queen:

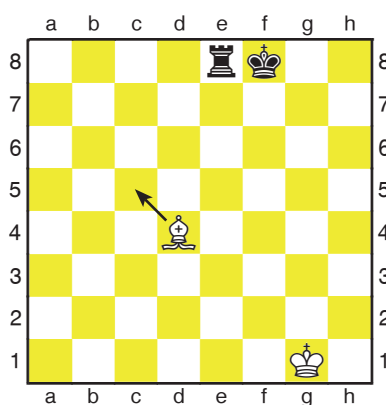
f8=Q



WRITE \_\_\_\_\_

## 8a. Check +

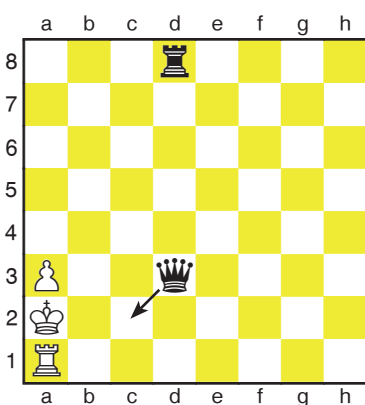
Bc5+



WRITE \_\_\_\_\_

## 8b. Checkmate #

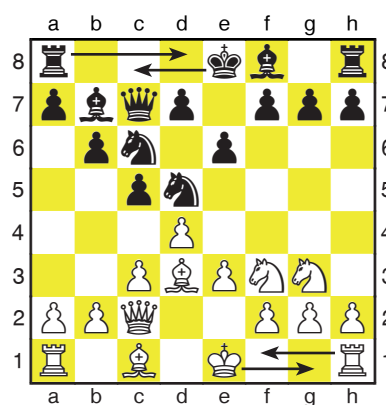
Qc2#



WRITE \_\_\_\_\_

## 9. Castling

Queenside: 0-0-0 Kingside: 0-0



WRITE \_\_\_\_\_

# Writing and Reading Chess Moves

Time to play a game using written notation (moves).

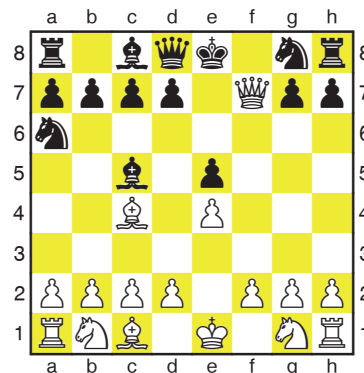
- (13) PLAY** the following game on your paper chess board.  
**USE** Starting Position, Figure 3a. Check ending position with Figure 11.

Figure 10.

## Scholar's Mate

	WHITE	BLACK
1.	e4	e5
2.	Bc4	Bc5
3.	Qh5	Na6
4.	Qxf7#	1-0

Figure 11.



- (14) PLAY** a chess game with partner.

Write down the moves on score sheet. See next page for example of score sheet. After 4 moves check if partner's score sheet is same as yours. Finish game.

- (15) REPLAY** your game using your score sheet.

Can you replay it?

- (16) PLAY** six more games using score sheets.


Play as white and black. Check score every 4 moves. Can you replay it?


- (17) PLAY** moves using book format. **USE** Starting Position.  
Book format is number, white move, black move.


1. e4 e5    2. Nf3 Nc6    3. Bb5 a6    4. Ba4 b5    5. Bb3 Nf6


- (18) TEACH** someone else to Read and Write Chess.

**Congrats. You can read and write chess. To get better play and notate more games. Also play the games from books.**

		SAINTLOUISCHESSCLUB.ORG (314) 361-CHESS (2437)				
EVENT		BOARD		SECTION	DATE	
ROUND	BOARD	SECTION		TIME CONTROL		
WHITE		BLACK				
	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK		
1			31			
2			32			
3			33			
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6			36			
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8			38			
9			39			
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25			55			
26			56			
27			57			
28			58			
29			59			
30			60			
RESULT:		WHITE WON		DRAW	BLACK WON	
SIGNATURE		SIGNATURE		SIGNATURE		

		SAINTLOUISCHESSCLUB.ORG (314) 361-CHESS (2437)				
EVENT		BOARD		SECTION	DATE	
ROUND	BOARD	SECTION		TIME CONTROL		
WHITE		BLACK				
	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK
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RESULT:		WHITE WON		DRAW	BLACK WON	
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RESULT:		WHITE WON		DRAW	BLACK WON	
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		SAINTLOUISCHESSCLUB.ORG (314) 361-CHESS (2437)				
EVENT		BOARD		SECTION	DATE	
ROUND	BOARD	SECTION		TIME CONTROL		
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30					60	
RESULT:		WHITE WON		DRAW	BLACK WON	
SIGNATURE		SIGNATURE		SIGNATURE		

# Games for Chess Coaches

## Jeanne's Games for Learning Chess Notation

1. **Piece Name – Letters K,Q,B,N,R and P.**
  - a. Show Piece, kids yell out Letter
  - b. Say letter name of piece, kids pick up correct piece.
  - c. Show Piece, kids write down Letter. Winner(s) with most correct.
2. **Location Names – a,b,c,d,e,f,g,h; 1-8**
  - a. Show location on board, kids yell out location, eg. d3
  - b. Show location on board, kids write down location, eg. a4, Winner(s) with most correct.
  - c. Say location name, kids place piece on board
  - d. Say location name, kids say if white or black.
  - e. Show list of written locations for black and white pieces, kids place all pieces on board. Use to set up a position. Winner(s) is fastest with correct locations.
3. **Move Name – capture(x), castle(0-0,0-0-0), en passant, check(+), checkmate(++)**
  - a. Show list of names of moves, kids write down notation. Winner(s) is fastest and correct.
  - b. Play one move, kids yell out move notation.
  - c. Play several moves, kids write down move notation. Winner(s) has all correct.
4. **Game moves – piece, location, move, and location notation.**
  - a. Play one move, individual kid yells out (piece, location, move, location) notation.
  - b. Play several moves or game, kids write out complete notation, winner all right.
  - c. Show list of game moves, kids play moves on board. Winner has correct final position in least time.

Teacher preparation lists are needed for 1c,2b,2e,3a,3c,4b,4c to check winners results. Young children may be slow in writing notation, and reading notation quickly. So may limit to 1a,1b,2a,2c,2d,3b,4a.

**“This book will help any chess player learn to read and write chess. This is also a great resource for parents and coaches. I wish I had learned at a younger age.”**

–Tony Rich, Executive Director, Saint Louis Chess Club

**“Chess has a reputation for being hard and difficult to learn. Not true! When you learn to read and write chess, it becomes so much easier. I learned to read at age 4.”**

–Grandmaster Yasser Seirawan, Four-time U.S. Chess Champion

**“This booklet can be used in a classroom to help kids:**

- a) Learn to read, write, and follow directions.**
- b) Increase spatial awareness to recognize patterns.**
- c) Develop memorization skills and strategies for problem solving.”**

–Karen Wulff, retired second grade teacher



**Saint Louis Chess Campus**

[saintlouischessclub.org](http://saintlouischessclub.org) | [worldchesshof.org](http://worldchesshof.org)