



## Let's Talk About Chess

By Alexandra Ponsica



CHESS is one of the oldest and most popular board games in the world. It is a game with two players and simulates a war between two kingdoms. Its earliest known PREDECESSOR (meaning previously occupied a position or office to which another has succeeded) was called CHATURANGA and originated in INDIA. In SANSKRIT (the classical language of India and of Hinduism), this translates into “four divisions (of the military)” which included INFANTRY, CAVALRY, ELEPHANTRY, and CHARIOTRY. The pieces in the game were used as ALLEGORY (a symbolic representation) and later evolved into modern day PAWN, KNIGHT, BISHOP, and ROOK.

Spell: GAME MILITARY MODERN

What board game are we talking about today? CHESS

In what country did the earliest form of Chess originate? INDIA

Question Type Key

KNOWN – SEMI-OPEN – PRIOR KNOWLEDGE – MATH – OPEN - VAKT

What word did I use that means a person or thing that previously occupied a position or office to which another has succeeded? PREDECESSOR

What was the name of the game that preceded Chess? CHATURANGA

What word that I used means a symbolic representation? ALLEGORY

Name one of the four divisions of the military represented by pieces included in Chaturanga.

INFANTRY, CAVALRY, ELEPHANTRY, CHARIOTRY

Name one of the four divisions of the military represented by pieces included in modern day chess.

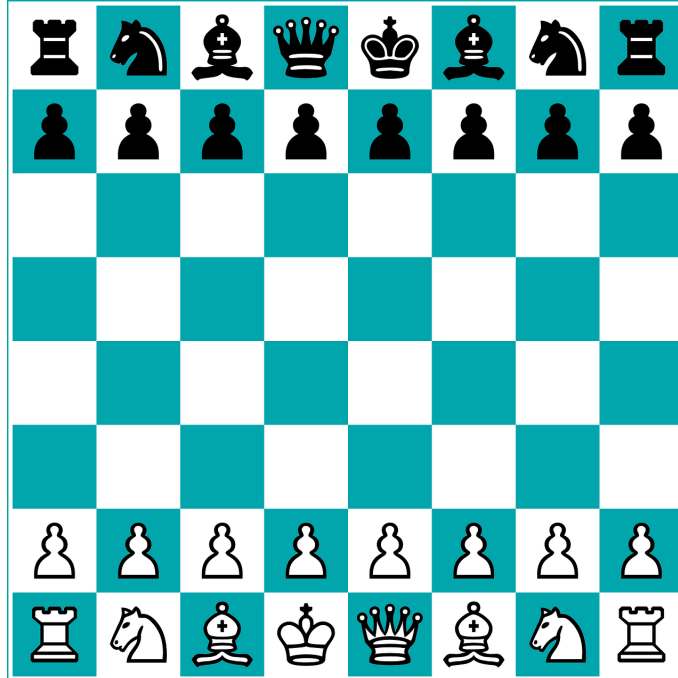
PAWN, KNIGHT, BISHOP, ROOK

What area has the military utilized the game of chess for? MILITARY STRATEGY

VAKT: Watch 5 minute video on the history of chess

<https://youtu.be/YeB-1F-UKO0>

A modern day chess set comes with a chessboard and two different ARMIES of pieces, each containing eight pawns, two knights, two bishops, two rooks, a QUEEN, and a KING. Players can DISTINGUISH (meaning perceive a difference in, identify) their armies based on their colors, which is traditionally light and dark. The chessboard is checkered with 64 total light and dark SQUARES, organized in an eight-by-eight grid.



Spell: PIECES IDENTIFY CHECKERED

A modern day chess set comes with a chessboard and two different \_\_\_\_\_ of pieces? ARMIES

What word did I use that means to perceive a difference in or identify? DISTINGUISH

Players distinguish their armies based on their what? COLORS

How many checkered light and dark squares make up the eight-by-eight grid chessboard? 64

If each player has eight pawns, two knights, two bishops, two rooks, a queen, and a king then how many pieces does each player have total?

$8+2+2+2+1+1= 16$  PIECES TOTAL

How many pieces total are included in a chess game (excluding the chessboard)?  $16+16=32$  PIECES TOTAL

Name one of the army pieces.

PAWN KNIGHT BISHOP ROOK QUEEN KING

VAKT: Set up a chessboard set together. Make sure the chessboard is laid out so that each player has the white (or light) color square in the bottom right-hand side. Demonstrate with your pieces and instruct your student on where to place their pieces on the board.

A few options:

- Use a traditional chessboard set
- Purchase/use a jumbo size chess mat]: <https://a.co/iLknVuu>
- Print out chessboard set provided in this lesson
  - Cut out individual pieces
  - Laminate board and pieces
  - Attach velcro to pieces and board
  - Keep pieces in ziplock bag for future students

Each piece has a DISTINCTIVE (marking as separate or different) movement. For example, the king is the most important piece but also the weakest. He can only move one space at a time but can move in any direction. The queen is the most powerful and can move in any one straight direction for any length. The game revolves around pieces being moved into positions where they can CAPTURE other pieces, DEFEND their own pieces, or CONTROL certain squares. Pieces cannot move through other pieces, though the knight can jump over other pieces. Instead, they can be moved to take the place of an OPPONENT'S piece which is then CAPTURED. It is considered CHECK when a king is attacked and CHECKMATE when the king has no legal moves to escape. When a player puts the opponent's king into checkmate, the game is over and the player who delivered the checkmate wins.

Spell: MOVEMENT          POSITIONS          ATTACKED

What word did I use that means marking as separate or different?

DISTINCTIVE

Which piece is considered the most important but also the weakest? THE KING

Which piece is considered the most powerful? THE QUEEN

The game is over when a player puts the opponent's king into what?

CHECKMATE

It is considered \_\_\_\_\_ when a king is attacked. CHECK

Checkmate is when \_\_\_\_\_. THE KING HAS NO LEGAL MOVES TO ESCAPE

Name of the reasons for pieces being moved throughout the game.  
CAPTURE OTHER PIECES, DEFEND THEIR OWN PIECES, CONTROL CERTAIN SQUARES

Organized chess arose in the 19th century and became well-known in 1834 when the LA BOURDONNAIS-MCDONNELL matches took place at the WESTMINSTER CHESS CLUB in LONDON. These matches were between a Frenchman (LaBourdonnais) and an Irishman (McDonnell), where, historically, the only word they ever spoke to each other was “check”. These matches were often thought of as the unofficial World Championship as La Bourdonnais was confirmed as the leading chess player in the world. The WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP was created in 1886 with WILHELM STEINITZ as the first champion and continues on annually to this day.

Spell: HISTORICALLY UNOFFICIAL CHAMPION

What century did organized chess arise? 19TH CENTURY

What country was La Bourdonnais from? FRANCE

What country was McDonnell from? IRELAND

What was the only word La Bourdonnais and McDonnell reportedly ever spoke to each other? CHECK

What year was the World Championship created? 1886

Who was the first world champion? WILHELM STEINITZ

Where did the La Bourdonnais-McDonnell matches take place?

WESTMINSTER CHESS CLUB, LONDON

What country is London located in? ENGLAND

Chess has long been more than just a board game. A BEGINNER player may think of chess as just a SPORT but once the player ACQUIRES knowledge, experience, and researching TECHNIQUE it becomes a SCIENCE. Players who are ENTHRALLED (meaning to hold spellbound) with chess view it as an ART. Many aspects of art are INCORPORATED in

the composition of chess, which has also influenced Western culture and art. Chess has connections with other fields as well such as MATHEMATICS, COMPUTER SCIENCE, and PSYCHOLOGY. Over the many years that chess has been around, CHESS THEORY has accumulated where the game is divided into three phases: the OPENING, MIDDLE GAME, and ENDGAME. Strategic and positional concepts and TACTICS are studied and utilized to win the game.



(Photo taken from <https://en.chessbase.com/post/for-art-enthusiasts-chess-in-art>)

Spell: BEGINNER ACQUIRES DIVIDED

What might a beginner player think of chess as? A SPORT

Once a player acquires knowledge, experience, and researches technique it becomes, what? A SCIENCE

What word did I use that means to hold spellbound? ENTHRALLED

Players who are enthralled with chess view it as a, what? AN ART

Name one of the three fields mentioned that chess has connections with. MATHEMATICS, COMPUTER SCIENCE, PSYCHOLOGY

Name one of the three phases chess is organized into in Chess Theory. OPENING, MIDDLE GAME, ENDGAME

Fun fact: In September 2011, the country of ARMENIA made chess a required subject for all children over the age of six! Interestingly enough, one study from 2012 found that chess was associated with greater “COGNITIVE abilities, coping and problem-solving CAPACITY, and even SOCIO-AFFECTIVE development of children.” Chess has a lot of lessons

Question Type Key

KNOWN – SEMI-OPEN – PRIOR KNOWLEDGE – MATH – OPEN - VAKT



to teach. It teaches us to have STRATEGY. It also teaches us to have a backup plan, an eye for the bigger picture, and to think like your opponent. In fact, the military has used chess for METAPHOR (a figure of speech in which a term or phrase is applied to something to which it is not literally applicable in order to suggest a resemblance) and military training. There are so many ways in which chess is more than just a board game. It's definitely one worth learning and playing!

Spell: REQUIRED ABILITIES PICTURE

Which country made chess a required subject for all children over the age of six? ARMENIA

One study found that chess was associated with greater "COGNITIVE abilities, coping and problem-solving CAPACITY, and even \_\_\_\_\_ development of children." SOCIO-AFFECTIVE

Chess teaches us to have \_\_\_\_\_. STRATEGY

What is a word I used for a figure of speech in which a term or phrase is applied to something to which it is not literally applicable in order to suggest a resemblance? METAPHOR

Chess also teaches us to have, what? Name one of the three.

backup plan, an eye for the bigger picture, and to think like your opponent.

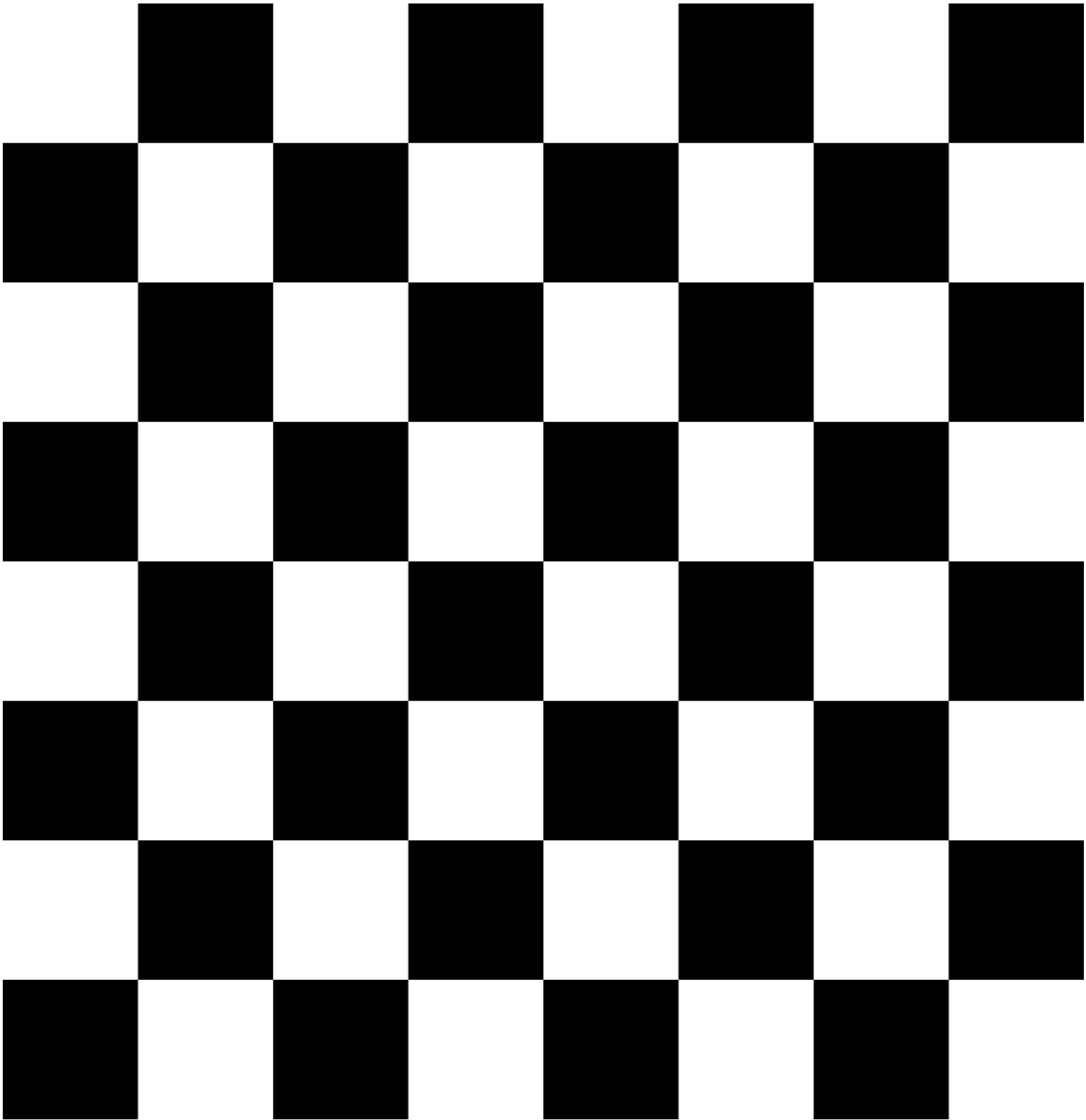
A BACK UP PLAN, AN EYE FOR THE BIGGER PICTURE, TO THINK LIKE YOUR OPPONENT

What is a metaphor you can think of for how chess relates to something in your life?

VAKT: Watch 20 minute video on How to Play Chess

[https://youtu.be/ej\\_fnsdksA](https://youtu.be/ej_fnsdksA)

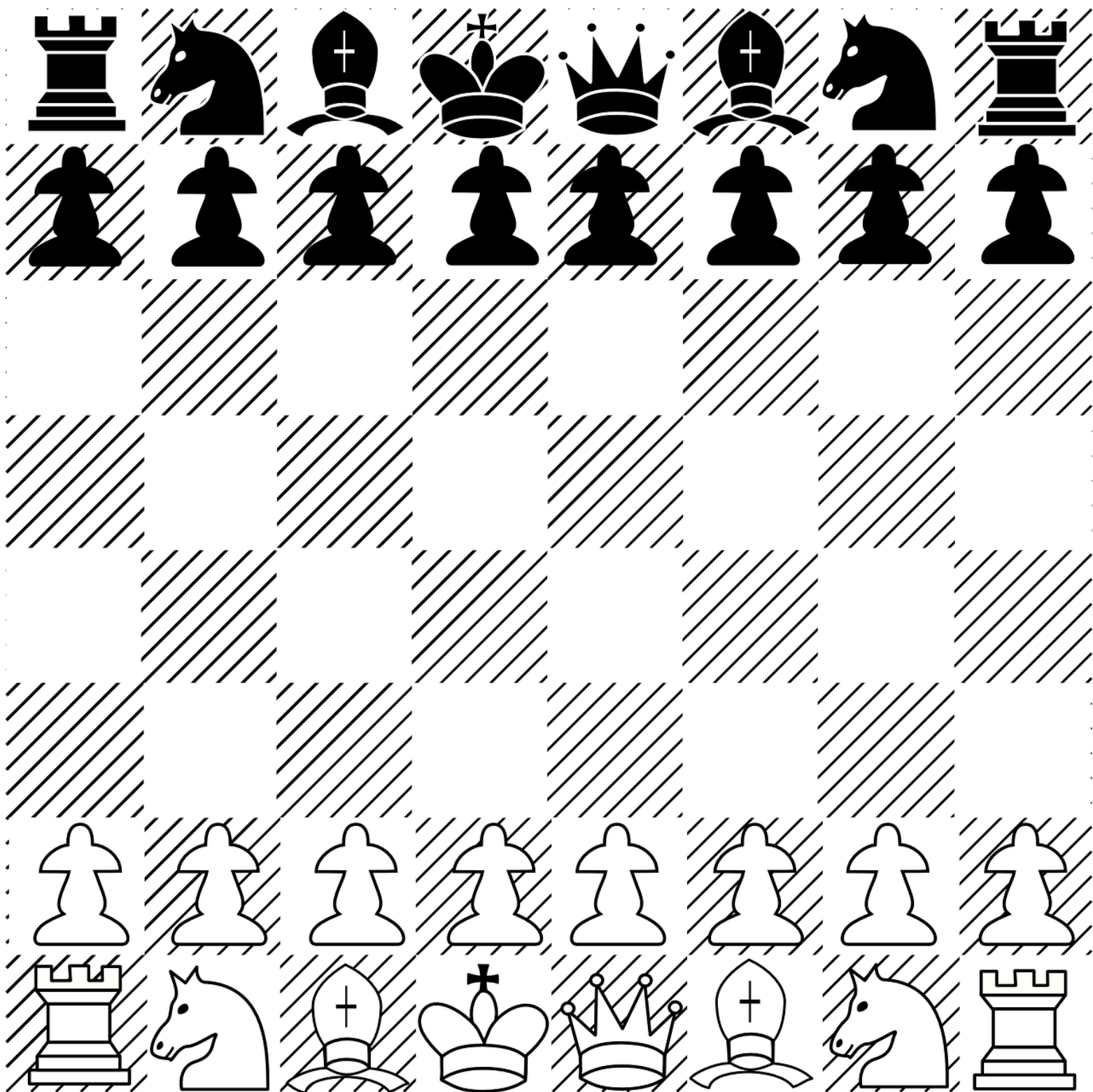
VAKT: Play chess!



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## References

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Alexandra Ponsica is the owner and founder of See Me Speak and a Certified S2C Practitioner. She is a mother to twin boys, Caleb and Noah, who are nonspeakers and spellers. Alexandra is very passionate about giving a voice back to nonspeakers through spelling and supporting individuals with sensory motor differences.