

2. Review of Pawns

Objectives:

1. State and apply rules of movement for pawns
2. Solve problems using pawns

The main objective of this lesson is to reinforce the rules of pawn movement, especially the *en passant* capture, and to provide students with practice applying the rules of movement for the pawns.

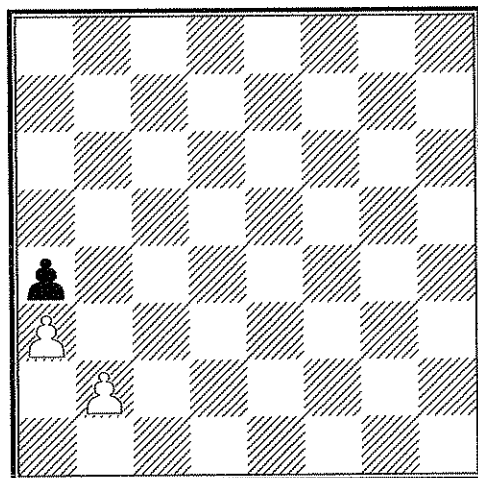
As with Lesson 1, students will play the pawn game to practice the rules of motion for the pawns. The objectives of the pawn game appear in this lesson in Part 2.

Outline of Lesson:

1. Review of pawn rules
2. Review of *en passant* and the pawn game
3. Capture/recapture
4. Playing the pawn game
5. Strategic concepts

PART 1: RE-VIEW OF PAWN RULES AND HOMEWORK

PART 2: REVIEW OF EN PASSANT AND THE PAWN GAME



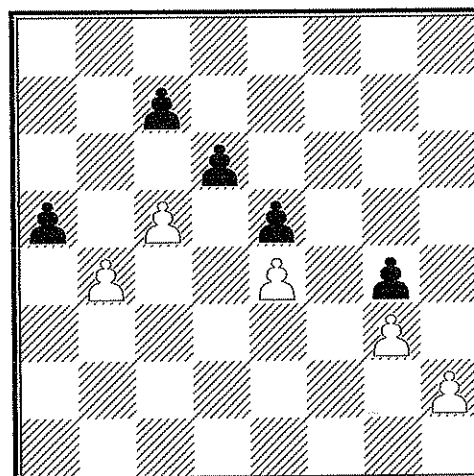
Thoroughly but quickly review rules of movement for the pawns by demonstration, questioning, and listing the rules on the board. Solicit illegal moves from students and demonstrate these. Check any problems assigned as homework from Lesson 1.

Demonstrate and review the *en passant* capture. *En*

passant is one of the rules that can be difficult for beginners to learn quickly.

Set up the position to the left and ask which side is winning.

If it is black's turn, the game is over and white has won, as black has no legal move and white still may move its b pawn. If it's white's turn to move black will win, as if white moves its b pawn to either b3 or b4, black's pawn will capture it (*en passant* if it moves to b4) and from there its only moves are to move to b2 and b1.



Review of rules and strategy

Set up the position on the right. Ask if there are any passed pawns in this position. There are none at the moment, but either side will create a passed pawn on the next move. (If it is white's turn, b4 x a5 creates a passed pawn, as would a5 x b4 if it is black's turn.)

Ask if any *en passant* capture is possible right now. (None is possible. Two regular captures are possible – the a5, b4 pair and the c5, d6 pair are attacking each other – but the pawns on e4 and e5 are blocking each other and may not be captured *en passant*.)

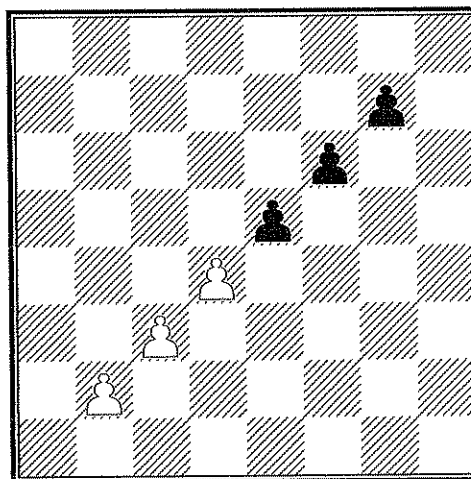
What move may white make that would allow black to use the *en passant* rule? (h2 – h4 allows for g4 x h3.)

review of pawn game

Review the rules of the pawn game. Point out that capturing all of the opponent's pawns is rare, and that the pawn game is usually won by advancing a pawn to the last rank. Also, emphasize that **how many pawns you have** is irrelevant. What matters is who gets to the end first.

**PART 3:
CAPTURE/
RECAPTURE**

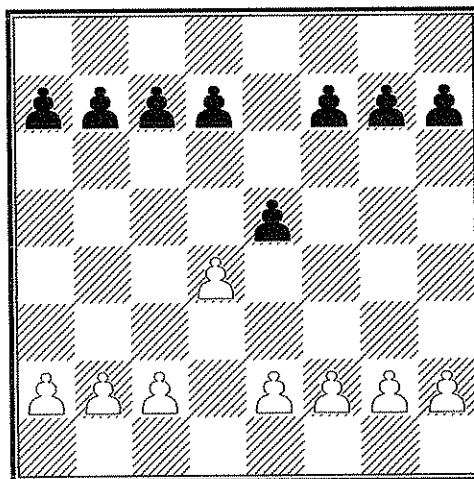
One of the biggest mistakes beginners make is allowing an opponent to capture a pawn without the beginner's being able to recapture. To help the students avoid this, set up a pawn *chain* (pawns aligned along a diagonal) and demonstrate the capture/recapture nature of the pawn chain.



Pawn chains

EXAMPLE: Put white pawns on b2, c3 and d4, and black pawns on e5, f6 and g7. If white is to move, white's d-pawn can capture black's e-pawn, and black's f-pawn will **recapture** because it was **chained** with its e-pawn. Likewise if black is to move.

Don't "throw away" pawns strategy



Emphasize that students should try to avoid "throwing away" pawns.

EXAMPLE: If white's first move is Pawn d2-d4, then a **bad move** for black is Pawn e7-e5 because the white pawn will capture the black pawn without black's recapturing.

It is often good strategy to control a square to which one of your pawns will soon be moving. For example, as black, it might be a good idea to put a pawn on f6 before moving a pawn to e5. If white has a pawn on d4, playing the pawn to f6 first will protect the pawn as it moves to e5.

**PART 4:
PLAYING THE
PAWN GAME**

Have students practice the rules of pawn movement by playing the pawn game. Emphasize that getting to the opponent's last rank depends on *time* and not on how many pawns you have.

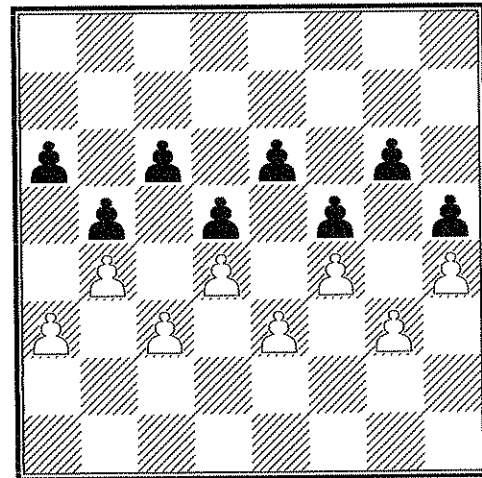
Some teachers like to have a pawn game tournament at this point and give ribbons or certificates for participants and winners. This is particularly valuable for elementary school players.

The **procedures** for conducting this tournament, and all other tournaments, are described in *Appendix 2: Procedures for Conducting a Chess Tournament*.

**PART 5:
STRATEGIC
CONCEPTS**

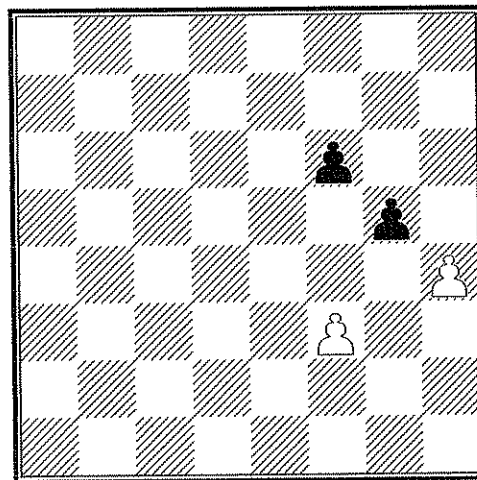
**More advanced
strategy**

Set up the position on the right and ask, "Who is winning this position?" Answers such as "White," "Black," "Neither" or "Both" are all incorrect. In a sense, this is a trick question, as you have not provided the students with enough information to answer it correctly. On the other hand, it is not a trick question, as there is a correct answer. The right answer is, "The side that has just moved," or "The side whose turn it is not."



Whichever side must move now should lose, as any pawn that moves will be captured, and the pawn that has done the capturing cannot be stopped from reaching its goal at the end of the board.

**Capturing is not
always the best
strategy**



Set up the position on the left, with white pawns on f3 and h4, black pawns on f6 and g5. Explain that it is white's turn to move and ask what white's best strategy is.

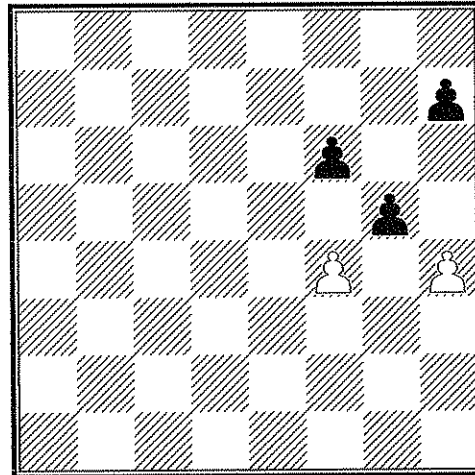
The best move is moving

Creating a passed pawn is usually the best strategy in the Pawn Game

from h4 to h5, creating a passed pawn which can now be “pushed” three more times to secure a victory.

If white captures h4 x g5, black’s best response would be to recapture f6 x g5. White’s only move would then be to move from f3 to f4 and black either would win immediately by capturing g5 x f4 or would move the g pawn and get to the eighth rank before white does.

Every move counts



This position, while appearing similar to the previous position, is much more complicated.

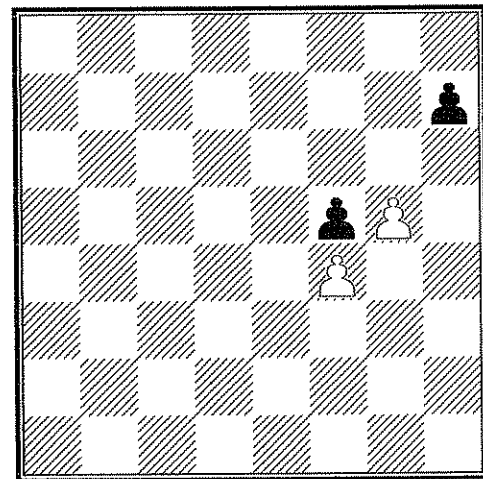
In the position on the left, it is white’s turn to move. What would white’s best strategy be?

The students should notice that white has two pawns attacking (controlling) the g5 square while black has only

one pawn protecting (controlling) it. Because white has more force on that square than has black, white may win the extra pawn.

Does it make a difference which pawn captures g5?

Yes! If white plays h4 x g5, then if black recaptures with f6 x g5 then white wins either by moving f4 – f5 and pushing the pawn until it gets to the eighth rank or by capturing f4 x g5. Black’s only choices are then to move the h pawn to h6 or h5.



If black moves to h6, white can win by capturing it (g5 x h6) or by pushing past it. If black moves to h5, white wins by capturing *en passant* (g5 x h6) or by pushing past it.

But, if black does not capture f6 x g5 but instead moves the pawn from f6 to f5, as shown below, then black wins.

From this position, white has only one choice, moving the pawn g5 – g6, which then can be captured by the h7 pawn, ending the game, as white is without moves while black may still move.

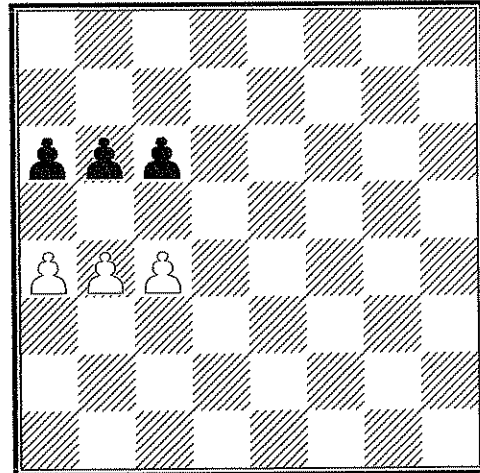
If on the first turn, white had captured f4 x g5, then white wins.

This demonstrates the importance of every move.

Very difficult exercise and homework

A more difficult problem, strategically, is at the right. In this problem, it is white's turn to move. The question posed to the students may be asked as either "Should this be a win, a loss, or a draw for white?" or "How can white win this game?"

White wins through the following sequence: 1. b5. If 1...axb5 2.c5 bxc5 3.a5 and wins. Or if 1...cxb5 2.a5 bxa5 3.c5 and wins.



Play through these sequences until you understand them before giving the problems to the students. Emphasize that although black ends up with three pawns to white's one, white wins because his pawn gets to the goal first.

Sacrifice

This is a good opportunity to introduce the concept of **sacrifice** to the students.

A sacrifice is giving up material for a better position. Position always is more important than material, although frequently having extra material improves a player's position.

It is position, not material, that wins games.