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Understanding the Game of Chess

A Review of *Chess 101* by Dave Schloss

..... Dr. Greg Strayer



Chess 101 is for the completely uninitiated, but as the book progresses, there are many helpful suggestions for improving one's game once the basics have been learned. Chapter one gives a picture of the board and explains how to identify the pawns and other pieces, and where they are placed on the board. Next, Schloss carefully explains how pawns are played, and how all the pieces are moved. Illustrations help the reader to visualize these moves.

Have you ever watched a movie in which to show the sophistication of a character, the person walks by a chess game in progress and immediately recognizes white should move his knight to d5? The book teaches how to recognize this move by explaining chess notation in easy to understand language, with an illustration. Although recording each move using notation is required in tournaments, Schloss recommends recording the moves even when playing for fun, which is good practical advice.

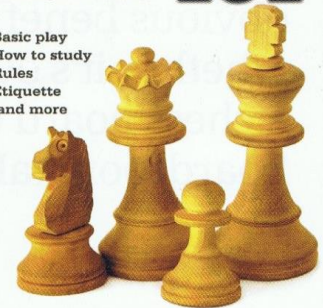
Chapter four generalizes about the three phases of the game, which are opening, middle and end, but does not provide detailed strategies for each phase, which would be inappropriate for an introductory overview. The reader is advised to obtain books, videos, and go to chess websites for strategies.

The book continues with a fine explanation of the chess clock and its various applications. Anyone who has seen a film with two intense players glaring at each other and pounding the chess clock will be relieved to know how and why it is used. Since a chess clock is required for tournament play, it is appropriate for remaining chapters to focus on preparing for a tournament. No need to worry, because tournaments are organized according to established ratings, much like handicapping for golf tournaments. Anyone serious about improving should consider tournament participation. Part of the preparation ought to include Schloss' chapter on rules and etiquette. Finally, tips for playing better chess and a few puzzles complete the manual.

Chess 101

Everything a new chess player needs to know!

- ♦ Basic play
- ♦ How to study
- ♦ Rules
- ♦ Etiquette
- ... and more



By Dave Schloss

The author feels that chess is a good homeschool activity, and I agree. It teaches thinking skills, and if your child is required to read and study on his own, it can be considered an exercise in reading comprehension for language arts, and as an elective during high school.

Chess 101 is easy to follow, and although its purpose is to give a basic introduction, guidance is provided for further advancement in the game. I recommend this book for anyone who wants to get started. I might add that amateurs who play for fun could also benefit by learning things that possibly eluded them in a random, unstructured process.

Greg Strayer received his doctorate from Florida State University and went on to teach English composition and a variety of humanities and literature courses. Recently retired from Trinity College of Florida, he hopes to continue the work of his late wife, Debbie, alongside his daughter Ashley, her husband, Alex, and others. In addition to Alex and Ashley, he is encouraged and lifted up by his son, Nathan, daughter-in-law Amber, and grandchild Heidi. The Lord has confirmed through a number of people that this former pastor is to return to the ministry. He looks forward to moving on with the Lord.