



Chess For Children: How to play the world's most popular board game

Author: Murray Chandler/Helen Milligan
Genre: Chess for Children
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'Did you know...When a knight moves, it always ends up on a square of the opposite colour?' I'd never thought about it until I read it here. Nor did I realise alligators could talk!

Chess is a bit like the Measles: if we don't get it as child, we probably never will. Shame really. Though I'm lucky enough to be in the former category, I've known several people (including immediate relatives) that lived their entire lives without summoning up the courage to learn the game. So, if a person has the Chess abilities of a child, regardless of their actual age, reading a book aimed at an absolute novice would be a very good way to remedy the problem. And this would be a good one to choose.

Joyfully illustrated by Cindy McCluskey, *Chess For Children* sees co-authors Murray Chandler and Helen Milligan explain the basic rules of the game, the best-known openings, what everything is called and even offers an in-depth commentary on a full game as a culmination. This climax is reached via a narrative that sees Kirsty the alligator teach the game of Chess to her friend George, a little boy who has no previous experience of the game. The instructions begin with a set of lessons titled 'How the ___ moves', and, as with most lessons anywhere, each one ends in a little quiz. As one might expect, as the lessons increase in complexity the tests get a little harder, and, although I freely acknowledge that I probably thought these easier than would a real novice, I found the gradual increase in difficulty fun and honestly think that children would too. In addition, the fact that Chandler and Milligan hold Grand Master and Master ranking respectively place them in a perfect position to write such a book.

'One straight, one diagonal' I remember my Mum saying during a childhood chess lesson about knights many years ago. It really is hard to find anything bad to say about this book. As a man in his thirties I can say I learned and enjoyed it specifically because, as the title suggests, it's aimed at children, and therefore not a hard read for anybody else. I'll buy a copy for my Mum as revision I think. Seriously, though, I can't think of a 'teach yourself' type book I've enjoyed reading more than this one. I didn't know an alligator could sit in a chair neither.

10 sausages out of 10

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