

You Don't Need to Know Chess to Teach It



Background

This case study shows how ChessKid's Classroom Planner helped a teacher and her students learn to play chess.

Overview

Stats: 18 kids

Age of kids: Kindergarten (5-6 years old)

Location: Rainbow Elementary School, Madison, Alabama

"Watching kids who are just learning how to read be successful in chess is like watching a light bulb turn on." Ms. Adams, the classroom teacher

Teacher: Ms. Adams began her teaching career in 2015. She taught first grade initially and has taught kindergarten since 2019.

Challenges

- A kindergarten teacher who did not know how to play chess.
- 5-year-olds with short attention spans.

Goals

- Limit lessons to 30 minutes every week dedicated just for chess.
- Show videos to demonstrate chess skills.
- Get kids confident to play over the board.

Solutions

- Each chess lesson began with a ChessKid video from the free Classroom Planner.
- After watching the video, students were paired across a chessboard to apply the skill covered in the video or work independently on ChessKid Lessons using Chromebooks.
- The Classroom Planner took the mystery out of teaching chess because it offers a step-by-step lesson plan with videos, workouts, and suggested activities. The teacher taught her class first how the pieces move and then to understand basic principles and checkmating strategies.

Results

- By December, the students were playing in their first practice tournament, and Ms. Adams learned how to play chess with her students.
- The kids' favorite activity was solving chess puzzles on ChessKid.

Feedback

"I would recommend ChessKid to everyone who would like to learn chess, organize a club, or someone who just wants to have fun playing the game! As a kindergarten teacher, I have seen my students use this program independently and it is very easy to navigate. The students are motivated by having the option to 'level up' and ask me daily to get on ChessKid."

Your Turn

The Classroom Planner was created for ChessKid by the 2019 Chess Educator of the Year, WFM Elizabeth Spiegel, a chess coach and teacher at New York City's Intermediate School 318. She was featured in the movie Brooklyn Castle, which is free to show your class on YouTube.

Would you like to learn more about how you can use ChessKid's Classroom Planner with your class? Contact Michelle Martinez, Coach Liaison at ChessKid at michelle@chesskid.com, or visit our website to read more about the Planner in the article "How to Use the ChessKid Classroom Planner."

