

# 10 Timely Ideas for Opening a Game of Chess

## Teacher's Page

The theme of this lesson is **timely development**.

This short student game continues the “ **10 Timely Ideas...**” theme. Students are asked to infer an opponent's thinking (Example: key moves **5... d6, 6 h3**)

(**Expanded Lesson Topics: Tempo and Initiative, Creating open files for Rooks with Pawn captures, & Doubled Pawns**)

Pass out and introduce the “**10 Timely Ideas...**” handout. This could have been introduced previously, but students should have a hard copy in hand for this lesson. Students are encouraged to recognize which moves in the game illustrate which timely idea (marked in **red**). The additional **green** comments are provided to expand the lesson to other ideas.

**Set the scene** at the Weibel Quads and introduce the players. **Peter** is a fourth grader from San Jose, **Alex** is a third-grader from Palo Alto. Continually refer to the players by name, especially when posing questions such as “*Why is Peter playing h3?*” This will assist students in attributing motives for the moves. Students not only identify with the players, they quickly become engaged in studying the moves. This really works.

Neither player plays perfectly but **Alex** (Black) quickly gains tempi after **Peter** (White) tries to open with a Center-Counter Game. Alex uses a pair of **pins** to create a pretty mating net. Meanwhile **Peter's** attempt to foil an anticipated pin instead results in lost time and a target for **Alex's** sharp-shooting bishop. The full game actually lasted more than forty moves, but the first thirteen moves illustrate a complete “game”. The comments are obviously only meant to be **starting** points for discussions, as appropriate to the class level.

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**White:** Peter

**Event:** Success Chess Quads

**Date:** (2004.10.23)

**Black:** Alex

**Site:** Weibel School

**Result:** Black won

1. e4<sup>1</sup> e5<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **Open with a center Pawn.**

2. d4<sup>2</sup> exd4

<sup>2</sup> **2 d4** begins the Center Counter Game. Is Peter effectively **playing to control the center**? He can recapture the material, but at the cost of a **tempo**.

**Pawn captures open up files for Rooks**, and indeed, on move **8...Re8** Alex will further develop his castled Rook with a threat.

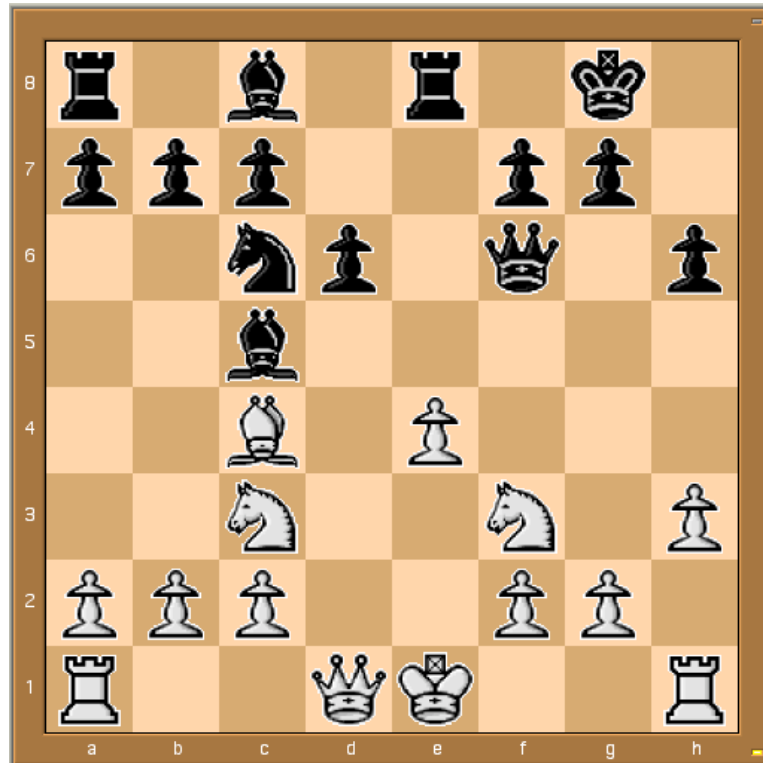
## 10 Timely Ideas for Opening a Game of Chess

3. Qxd4<sup>3</sup> ... <sup>3</sup> **Don't bring out your queen too early.** Peter runs the risk of his Queen becoming a target when he advances her too soon.
- 3 ... Nc6<sup>4</sup> <sup>4</sup> **Develop with threats and Knights before Bishops.**
4. Qd1<sup>5</sup> ... <sup>5</sup> **Don't move the same piece twice.** This weak move is a natural result of bringing the Queen out too early. Peter gives up the advantage of being White, the **initiative**.
4. Qc4 is better, but Peter's Queen is still left exposed in the center. Furthermore Qc4 deprives Peter's white-square Bishop of its natural attacking diagonal that targets Black's **Achilles Square (f7)**.
- 4 ... Bc5<sup>6</sup> <sup>6</sup> Play to **control the center**. Plus, Alex takes aim at **f2**, White's **Achilles Square**. Later, this Bishop firmly pins Peter's **f2** Pawn after Peter castles.
5. Nf3 d6<sup>7</sup> <sup>7</sup> Alex prepares to develop his other Bishop. Where might Alex wish to post it? Peter is already a piece behind in development. What are his choices?
6. h3<sup>8</sup> ... <sup>8</sup> **Don't move too many Pawns in the opening.** Peter fears the possible pin of his Knight after **6...Bg4** and decides to defend with **6. h3**. And so Peter falls further behind in his development.
- 6 ... Nf6<sup>9</sup> <sup>9</sup> Alex continues to **develop with threats**. Since his white-square Bishop already has a possible target on **h3**, Alex he wakes up his other Knight. What will probably be Alex's next move?
7. Bg5<sup>10</sup> ... <sup>10</sup> Peter tries a pin of his own. Finally, he has a real threat on the board. (Remember, his first "threat", **2. d5**, was a paper tiger.)



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**Doubled Pawns:** Why is Alex better off **not** using his **g**-Pawn to recapture?



**11. 0-0 Qg6**<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Alex has targeted Peter's precarious King-side Pawns. Peter should be asking himself, "*Why did Alex move his Queen again?*"

**12. Re1 Bxh3**<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Alex has Peter's Pawn shield pinned up from two directions. Peter's next move misses the point.

**13. g3**<sup>17</sup> ...

<sup>17</sup> Afterwards, Alex confessed to fearing **13 Nh4**. But his attack was formidable and it rattled Peter.

**13. ... Qxg3**<sup>+18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Mate follows via **Qg2**. (In the actual game Alex instead withdrew Queen to **d8**, missing mate.)

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### Summary:

Alex quickly developed his pieces to useful squares. Peter wasted time with Pawn moves and failed to develop his pieces.