

2016 ECU Prize Submission

“Knights Tour Snooker”

The purposes of this game or exercise are to:

- Learn and/or reinforce the learning of the knights move
- Develop planning skills / visualise 2-3 moves ahead
- Develop empathy through having to understand team-mates plans

Basic version / outline of the game / exercise:

- Place one of each type of Black piece (pawn, knight, bishop, rook, queen and king) in on various squares of a chessboard and a White knight on b1
- The layout of those Black pieces can be:
 - Randomly spread around the board
 - Designed to be relatively easy to capture or
 - Designed to be relatively difficult to capture !
- The team (typically 5/6 pupils at one cluster of desks) now take turns to capture the Black pieces with the White knight
- As in the game of snooker, however, the pieces must be captured in ascending order of their value !
- Pawn = 1, Knight = 3, Bishop = 3, Rook =5, Queen = 9. The knight and bishop (being equal) may be captured in either order
- The King is never captured but after capturing the queen the tour ends when White places the Black king in check
- The Black pieces do not move. Only the White knight moves and all the players in the team are ‘on the same side’ cooperating to complete a successful knights tour
- In the example below for instance, Child 1 moves Nb1-c3, Child 2 plays Nc3xd5, Child 3 plays Nd5xb6 etc. Each child will be called upon to make at least 2 (usually more !) moves per game the best results will only come when they ‘pick up the thread’ of the previous move and/or prepare for a future capture by a team-mate.



Notes and Variations – to add interest, difficulty, roles and (if desired) competition:

The teacher should introduce the game by putting some random but relatively easy position (such as the one above) up on a demo board and invite the whole class to suggest moves until this Tour is complete. They can then break into groups and either:

- The teacher places another position on the board for them all to copy on a set on their own table or
- One player on each team selects a 'layout' for the other children to solve. This element contains additional learning potential as the more able children will enjoy working out how to place the Black pieces so as to make the Tour more difficult !



- Time Challenge. It's possible to time each team's effort with a stopwatch and produce a winner
- Recording your Tour. One child on each team can be designated to write down the moves of the Tour 1.Nb1-c3 2.Nc3xd5 etc
- Minefield (!). Instead of the six different pieces, use 8 Black pawns as targets these still do not move but the knight must not step on a square on which any pawn could capture it

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