

XIV Where does chess come from?



1. Chess pieces and chess boards.

❖ Answer the following questions

1. Do you know what chess means in your language? _____
2. And chessboard? _____
3. Do you know where chess comes from? _____
4. Can you name some of the pieces in this game? _____
5. What material are the chess pieces made of?¹ _____
6. What colours are the pieces? _____
7. What colours is a chessboard? _____

Chess History

Games have always been popular throughout history; not only children but also adults spent their free time playing. Some games have also been used for **gambling**; so in some cultures such as the Roman and the Islamic cultures, some of these games were partially or totally forbidden.

An interesting new game that came from the Islamic Empire was chess. The Arabs learned to play chess from the **Sassanians** (Persians) when they conquered them, and probably the Sassanians learned from people in **India**, where the game was also known. Indian people themselves seem to have learned at least some version of chess from people in China. In this country board games trained generals and warriors about war strategies.

When the Arabs took over Spain in 711 AD, they brought chess with them, and it began to spread from there to the rest of Europe. The people returning from the Crusades also brought back chess sets with them to the North of Europe.

¹ Students can search information in Internet.

1. Make the questions for the following answers

- _____ It's a board game.
- _____ It comes from the Islamic world.
- _____ They learned chess from the Sassanids.
- _____ They took over Spain in 711.
- _____ They spread it to Europe.

Did you know?

During the reign of King Alfonso X, chess got the **medieval spirit** that is still there today.

Until the end of the 12th century the **board** was only one colour. In the 13th century the two colours were settled.

The Medieval Church **forbade** chess in some countries such as Spain and France.

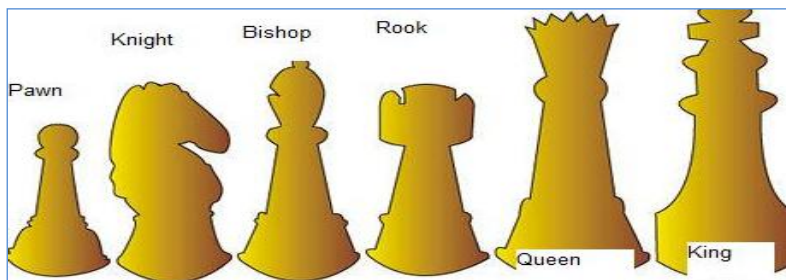
King Alfonso X the Wise wrote *The Book of chess* and it was published in Seville in 1283. This is one of the **oldest** books about games.

2. Answer the questions.

- How many years are there in a century? _____
- Give two examples of a year in the 12th century and two years in the 13th century.
12th _____
13th _____
- In what millennium are all these dates? _____
- What is chess? _____
- Who was Alfonso the Wise? _____
- Why do you think some games were forbidden? _____
- Where were games forbidden? _____
- In what era were they forbidden? _____
- Who wrote a book about chess? _____
- Where was his book published? _____
- Where is this city? _____
- Where was Alfonso X from? _____
- How do you know this? _____
- When did chequered boards first appear? _____
- When did chess get the medieval spirit? _____
- Do you know the names of other games in English? _____

3. Internet search: Who was King Alfonso the Wise? Write about 100 words.

4. Chess pieces matching



1. **Pawns** ___ a) he represents the Church. The Church was very powerful in the medieval times. There are 4. In Spain they are called Alfil.
2. **Castle or rook** ___ b) represents the professional soldier of medieval times. Pieces in the game). In Spain he rides a horse.
3. **Knight** ___ c) he is the tallest piece on the chess board, and is as well guarded on the board as in medieval life. There are two pieces.
4. **Bishop** ___ d) they represent the soldiers. Each side has 8 of them.
5. **Queen** ___ e) it is home or the refuge. There are two for each player.
6. **King** ___ f) she is the only piece on the board that represents a woman, and she is also the most powerful piece of the

4. Write the chess pieces in your language.

Piece name	<i>Pawns</i>					
Translation	<i>peons</i>					
Number of pieces	<i>16</i>					

5. CHESS. Fill in the blanks with the words in the word bank.

player	chess	rules	board	pieces	checkmate
two	King	chequered	white		

_____ (1) is one of the oldest and most popular _____ (2) games, played by _____ (3) opponents on a _____ (4) board with specially designed _____ (5) of contrasting colours, commonly _____ (6) and black. White moves first, after which the players alternate turns in accordance with fixed _____ (7), each _____ (8) attempting to force the opponent's principal piece, the _____ (9), into _____ (10) —a position where it is unable to avoid being captured.