

Checkmate

Julia switched on the computer and went to the Forever Chess website. She had time for one quick game before dinner. She logged into her account, QueenJules, and looked to see if CakeMate was online. Nope.

That was too bad. Julia loved playing her best friend on Forever Chess as much as she liked playing with her in real life. They were perfectly matched in chess and as friends. Julia was the one who took risks and tried new things. Charlotte was more cautious. They balanced each other out. And on the chess board they were even, each winning about half the time.

Oh well. If CakeMate wasn't available, Julia would pick someone else to play with. She looked at her friend's game history and saw the last person she had played. CakeMate vs. KnightTime. The website showed that KnightTime had won. A challenge.

Julia clicked on KnightTime and sent a play request. She didn't know them in real life. But KnightTime's rating was pretty close to her own, so she figured it would be a good match up. Maybe she could get revenge for Charlotte, too.

KnightTime accepted. Julia moved her white pawn forward two spaces. KnightTime countered with their own move. They typed in the chat, "good luck." Julia typed back, "you too." Let the game begin.

Julia and KnightTime traded moves. It was pretty even. Then, suddenly, KnightTime took Julia's rook. How had that happened? She hadn't seen it coming. She wasn't even sure how it was possible. She'd have to study the move in the game review later.

Julia was considering what move to make next when the cursor in the game chat started blinking. KnightTime was writing. "Got your castle," they typed.

Well, that was rude. Julie thought about what to type back. But before she could figure out what to say, the cursor was blinking again. "Got your friend, too."

What? Julia felt her skin grown cold. "What do you mean?" she typed. She watched the cursor blink and waited for the reply. Somewhere in the house, the phone rang.

"Your friend, CakeMate," the screen said.

"I know you beat her," typed Julia. "But how do you know she's my friend?"

KnightTime was typing again. "She told me. When she got sucked through."

"What are you talking about?" Julia wrote furiously.

"Sucked though. She's here with me now. In the computer," the screen said.

“That’s ridiculous,” typed Julia. But just then her mother came in, cradling the phone receiver.

“Have you seen Charlotte?” Julia’s mother asked. “Her father’s on the phone. He can’t find her.”

“No,” gulped Julia. She returned to the game. “How do I get her back?” she typed.

“It’s easy,” came the words through the chat. “You just have to win.”

KnightTime slid his bishop across the board. “Game on.”



This page has been intentionally left blank.

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. What is Charlotte's screen name on Forever Chess?
 - a. KnightTime
 - b. QueenJules
 - c. CakeMate
 - d. PawnPassion

2. Which chess piece was moved to start the game?
 - a. Pawn
 - b. Rook
 - c. Bishop
 - d. Queen

3. Which emotion do you think Julia is LEAST likely to be feeling at the end of the story?
 - a. Scared
 - b. Determined
 - c. Upset
 - d. Bored

4. Do you think KnightTime will play fairly? If not, what is your clue?
 - a. KnightTime types "got your rook" after they capture the piece
 - b. Julia doesn't know how the move to capture her rook was possible
 - c. KnightTime knows that CakeMate is Julia's friend
 - d. Julia and KnightTime have similar chess ratings

Instructions for teachers:

These questions can be used to assess understanding of the reading passage.

The item in bold is the correct answer for each question.

1. What is Charlotte's screen name on Forever Chess?
 - a. KnightTime
 - b. QueenJules
 - c. CakeMate**
 - d. PawnPassion
2. Which chess piece was moved to start the game?
 - a. Pawn**
 - b. Rook
 - c. Bishop
 - d. Queen
3. Which emotion do you think Julia is LEAST likely to be feeling at the end of the story?
 - a. Scared
 - b. Determined
 - c. Upset
 - d. Bored**
4. Do you think KnightTime will play fairly? If not, what is your clue?
 - a. KnightTime types "got your rook" after they capture the piece
 - b. Julia doesn't know how the move to capture her rook was possible**
 - c. KnightTime knows that CakeMate is Julia's friend
 - d. Julia and KnightTime have similar chess ratings