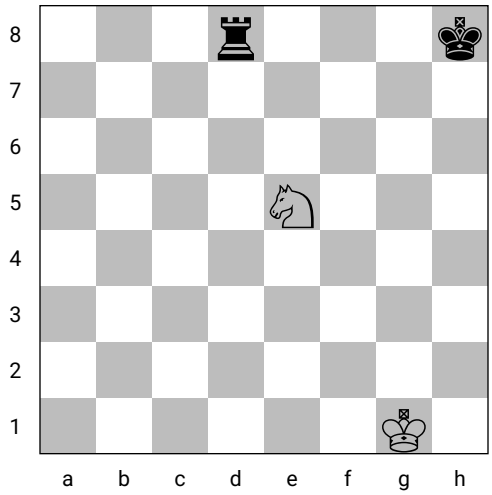
The Knight Fork

One knight. Two attacks. A useful tactical tool.



Demonstration position
White: King g1, knight e5.
Black: King h8, rook d8.
White to move; all other squares empty.

Ask: "Can the knight attack both black pieces at once?"

Solution: 1.Nf7+! attacks h8 and d8. After 1...Kg8, White plays 2.Nxd8, winning the rook.

0-3 MIN

Introduce the fork

Say: "A fork attacks two pieces at the same time." Review the knight's L-shaped move and ability to jump. Ask why a fork that checks the king is powerful: the opponent must answer the check.

3-7 MIN

Show the double attack

Use the diagram above. Invite a student to play Nf7+. Have the group name both attacked squares. Ask: "Could Black move the rook away?" No: that would leave the king in check. Demonstrate the full sequence.

7-11 MIN

Partner challenge

Set up White: king g1, knight d5. Black: king e8, queen a8. White to move; all other squares empty. Find a king-and-queen fork. Answer: 1.Nc7+! After 1...Kd7, White plays 2.Nxa8. Partners explain both knight attacks.

11-14 MIN

Test the idea

Move Black's king from e8 to h8 in the partner position. Ask: "Does Nc7 still give check?" No. It attacks the queen on a8, but Black can now move her away. Check the actual squares rather than assuming a fork works.

14-15 MIN

Take it into a game

Ask each student to describe a fork in their own words. Playing challenge: Look for a knight that could attack two important pieces on its next move. Check your opponent's knights, too.