

# A PERSONAL VIEW

- Educational Benefits?
- Only mathematics?
- Correlation or causation?
- Fast or Slow?



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# EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT

- *"Since the Republic of Kalmykia, Russian Federation implemented chess in the curriculum of schools, children have shown a considerable improvement in their studies ..."*



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# RUSSIAN EDUCATION MINISTRY

- *“According to the Russian Ministry of Education, for the last two years we have been keeping 1st place in school results of children among 85 Russian regions. “*



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# CHESS IS THE KEY

- *“Andrey Fursenko, Russian Minister of Education became interested in our phenomenon and sent specialists to Kalmykia to find out the key to this success.”*
- *“They stated in the end, that it was the introduction of chess in schools that had brought such good results.”*



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# NOT JUST MATHEMATICS

- “chess training appears to have an extremely significant effect on children as far as their performance on verbal-related aptitude tests.”
- *How Training in Chess Affects Children's Scores on Academic Aptitude Tests: A Meta-Analysis, Chris Benson in Chess and Education.*



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# VERBAL SKILLS

- “Arguably the strongest finding was the extremely significant result chess training had on the verbal-related tests. This is perhaps counter-intuitive to the prevailing notion that chess playing is more associated with math-related than verbal-related skills.”
- Benson, op.cit.



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# BUILDING EVIDENCE

- “Many chess players have long suspected that playing chess can help develop a child's cognitive skills, which in turn could lead to improved academic performance.
- This study has provided tangible and rather substantial support for this hypothesis. “

Benson, op.cit.



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# MISSING LINK

- Association – chess and improvements in educational, behavioural and cognitive skills...
- BUT... causation?
- US\$1 million+ funded study announced by Dr Teresa Parr at Dallas 2011 conference:



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# USA STUDY

- Large mid-Atlantic school system
  - Pre-test
  - Control group
  - 3 years
- 
- Funded by Institute of Education Sciences,  
Department of Education



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# FAST OR SLOW?

- Fast food – no! Slow food – yes!
- The same for teaching chess to children?
- Many think so:
  - IM Cor van Wijgerden (*Steps*)
  - Richard James (*Chess for Kids*)
  - WIM Alexey Root (*Thinking with Chess*)
  - FST Kevin O’Connell (*Thinking with Chess*)



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