

Name _____

Imbalances in the Opening (1)

In chess, an **Imbalance** occurs when one side has more (or less) of something than the other side. There are eight major imbalances we will study:

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Space | Development |
| King Safety | Pawn Structure |
| Material | Initiative |
| Superior Minor Pieces | Key Rank, File, or Diagonal |

The opening we will use for today's lesson is the French Defense – Advance Variation. Although each of the imbalances might be important down the line, there are two big differences between White and Black's position right out of this opening.

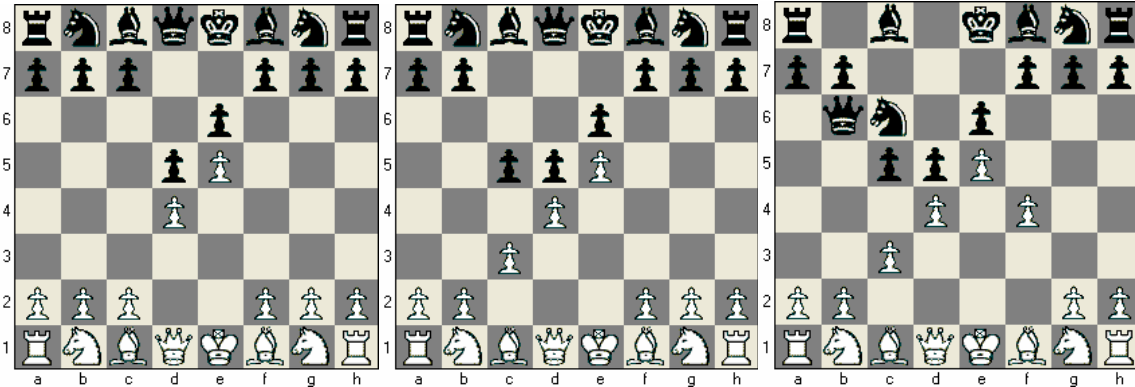


Diagram 1

The game begins **1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. e5**. White has pushed the e-Pawn onto Black's side of the board in order to **cramp** the Black position. How will Black respond to this? _____ (3. ...c5 or 3. ...a6?)

Diagram 2

Black counterattacks White's center with **3. ...c5** and White reinforces it with **4. c3**. White still has control of **d4**, so Black needs to put more pressure on that square in order to create counterplay.

Diagram 3

The game continues **4. ...Nc6 5. f4 Qb6**. Looking at the position in Diagram 3, answer these questions:

1. (Yes or No) Is there a **material** imbalance? _____
2. (Yes or No) Does either side have a **Pawn structure** problem? _____
3. (Yes or No) Is there a **key rank, file, or diagonal** in the position? _____
4. Since move 1, what have both sides been fighting for? _____ (**The Center** or **The Side**?)
5. Right now, which imbalance favors White? _____ (**Space** or **Development**?)
Black? _____ (**Space** or **Development**?)