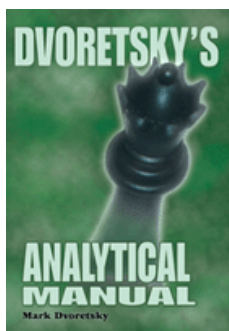




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The Instructor

Mark Dvoretsky



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"Tasty" Tactics

The twenty positions offered in this article are taken from my card-index of exercises. They are comparatively easy, but elegant, and I'm sure you'll have to like them. You don't have to calculate long, branching variations in them – it's enough to find the correct tactical idea. The only problem is that in most cases the solution is quite unusual and doesn't jump out at you. The purpose of the training is to develop combinational vision and inventiveness.

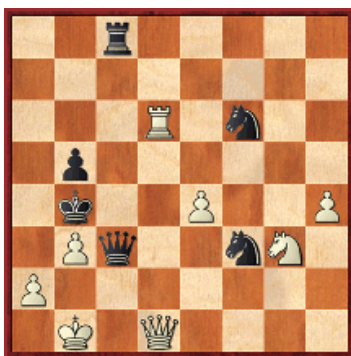
I have divided all the material into five short tests with four positions in each.

Test One

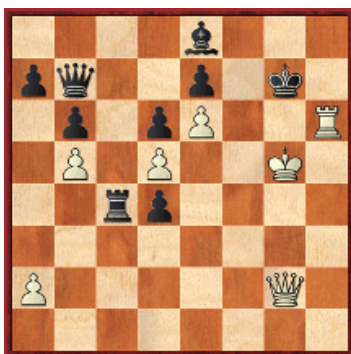
The first exercises are the simplest, for warming up. The solution, as a rule, consists of just one strong move.



B?

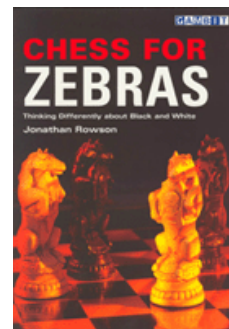


B?



W?

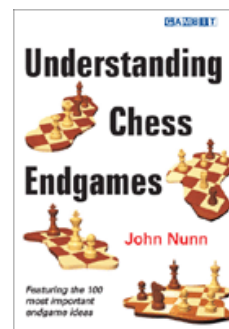
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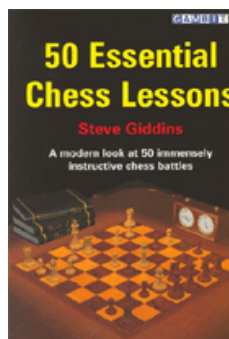
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B?

Test One Solutions

1. Piket-Ernst, Apeldoorn, 2003

19...Rd1+!!

A brilliant deflection of one of two white pieces. In the variation 20.Kxd1 Qxf1+ 21.Qe1 Rd8+ 22.Nd2 Rxd2+! 23.Kxd2 Qxg2+ 24.Kd1 Qg4+! with the subsequent 25...Qxh3 Black obtains many pawns for the material. But taking with the rook leads to a knight fork.

20.Rxd1 Nc2+ 21.Ke2 Nxe3

Black has a decisive advantage. I'll show you a few more moves.

22.Nd6+ (22.Nxe3 Qxa4) 22...Kc7 23.Rxe3

On 23.Rf3 follows 23...Qxf3+ 24.gf Nxd1 (stronger than 24...Nxf1?!, on which White replies not 25.Nxf7 Ng3+! 26.Kf2 Ne4+!, but 25.Ne4!, considerably complicating his opponent's task) 25.Nxf7 Rf8 26.Ng5 Rf6 27.Kxd1 h6 28.Ne4 Rxf3-+.

23...Qg4+! 24.Rf3 Rd8-+, and Black won.

2. Lahtinen-Palkovi, Hungary, 1990

Three black pieces: the queen, the rook and the f3 knight can't succeed without outside help. Another fighting unit must be included in the attack: the second knight or even the king.

The impressive blow **35...Nd5!!**-+ combines in itself the ideas of covering the d-file (36.ed Nd2+) and deflecting the rook from the sixth rank (36.Rxd5 allows the lethal 36...Ka3!). On 36.Nf1 the answer can be either 36...Nf4 with the idea of Ne1-d3, or an immediate 36...Ne1 37.Qd2 Nd3.

The game ended like this: 36.a3+ Kxa3 37.Ra6+ Kb4 38.Ra2 (38.ed Nd2+ 39.Ka2 Qd3) 38...Ne3 39.Qd6+ Rc5 40.Re2 Qc1+ 41.Ka2 Nd1 White resigned.

3. Aagaard-Kempinski, Groningen, 1998

Black's major pieces are stuck on the queenside and apparently unable to help the king. But the situation turns out not to be that simple: the carefree 50.Qe4? is refuted by means of 50...Qxd5+! 51.Qxd5 Rc5 52.Qxc5 dc (or 52...bc) 53.a4 d3, and Black wins. Having calculated this variation, Jacob Aagaard decided to force perpetual check by means of 50.Kf5+?! Kxh6 51.Qg5+ Kh7 52.Qh4+ Kg7 Draw.

But meanwhile a win (and with it the achievement of a grandmaster norm) was close at hand.

50.Rh8!!

The bishop is under attack, so useless is 50...Qxd5+ 51.Qxd5 Rc5 52.Qxc5 dc

53.Rxe8+-, and otherwise the mate can't be defended: 50...Kxh8 51.Kh6; 50...Bg6 51.Rg8+ Kxg8 52.Kh6 (or 52.Kxg6); 50...Rc2 51.Qh1! Bh5 52.Rxh5.

4. Najer-Nepomniachtchi, Moscow, 2006

There followed 31...Qb5? 32.Rd4 Rxd4 33.Bxd4 Nd5 34.Qb3+-. Evgeny Najer won this game, and subsequently the whole tournament.

The outcome of the contest could have been different if Ian Nepomniachtchi had noticed an impressive combination.

31...g4! 32.Qg3 Qf1+!!

Any capture leads to mate: 33.Kxf1 Rh1 or 33.Rxf1 Ne2.

Probably many readers were reminded of the episode that has already become a classic from the duel between two top British grandmasters, which looks very similar.

Short-Miles

British Championship, Brighton, 1984



Nigel Short chose the restrained 22.a3?!, preserving his solid advantage, which he subsequently made the best of.

The grandmaster turned down the provocative **22.Nb6!**, foreseeing the dangerous counter-blow **22...Ne2!** (23.Nxd7? Rc1+ 24.Rxc1 Rxc1; 23.Bxe2? Qxd1+ 24.Bxd1 Rc1). What he didn't see was an impressive refutation: **23.Qf8 +!! Rxf8** (23...Kxf8 24.Nxd7+) **24.Nxd7+-**.

Test Two

The exercises offered in this test are about the same as in the first one, only the path to the goal will be slightly longer. Which, then again, will complicate your task just a little.



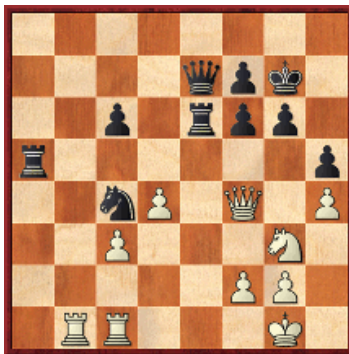
B?



B?



B?



W?

Test Two Solutions

5. Tolush-Flohr, Kiev, 1944 (variation from the game)

23...Ne3!! 24.Nxc6

In the event of 24.f3 good are either 24...Nxf3!, or 24...Qxf3! 25.Nxf3 Nxf3.

24...Nf3! with the unavoidable 25...Rh2. A rare picture: a rook and two knights have invaded the opponent's camp, and with a full board White's pieces are unable to save themselves from a very simple mate.

6. Stern-Sanakoev, correspondence 1994-99

1...Ra1!!

A beautiful deflection of the queen, preparing a mating attack.

2.Qxa1 Qxh2+! 3.Rxh2 Ng3+ 4.Kg1 Bb6+ 5.Re3 Bxe3

No help was 2.Qe4 – the same combination led to a rook endgame with two extra pawns for Black: 2...Qxh2+ 3.Rxh2 Ng3+ 4.Kg1 Bb6+ 5.Qd4 Bxd4+ 6.cd Rxe1+ 7.Kf2 Nf1 (7...Re3!?) 8.Rh1 Rd1 9.Rxf1 Rxd4+-. But ending the game more quickly was 2...Qf4! (threatens 3...Qxe4 or 3...Qf1+) 3.Qe8+ Kg7 4.Rxa1 Qxh2+! 5.Rxh2 Ng3+ 6.Kg1 Bb6+.

7. Omar Ibrahim-Ibarra, Cuba, 2003

1...Nxd4! 2.Kxg3

In the event of 2.Qxd4 Rxa3 3.Rd1 Qh4 White is left a piece down. And now an impressive queen sacrifice by Black lures the enemy king into his camp, where a warm welcome has been prepared for him.

2...Qh4+!! 3.Kxh4 Nf5+ 4.Kg5 Nf8! with the unavoidable 5...Nh7, so White resigned.

8. Schmidt-Bronstein, USSR 1970

In the game nothing interesting happened: 27.Rd1? Rd5 28.Qf3 Rd8 29.Qd3 Ne5 30.Qd2 Nc4 Draw. But happiness was so possible...

27.d5!!

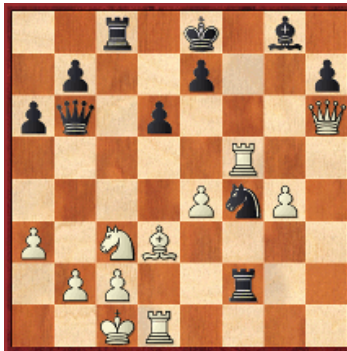
Forces him to cover the fifth rank, as the rook and the c4 knight are under fire.

27...cd 28.Nf5+! gf 29.Qg3+ Kh7 30.Rb8

Black is saved from mate only by sacrificing material: 30...Re1+ 31.Kh2! Qe5 32.Rxe1 Qxg3+ 33.Kxg3 (there's no time for 33...Ra3 because of the threat of 34.Ree8) or the queen: 30...Qe8 31.Rxe8 Rxe8 32.Qc7 Kg7 33.Rb1 (33.Rd1). In both cases Black isn't to be envied.

Test Three

The "spirit" of the exercises in this test is the circumstance that their solutions are associated with non-standard quiet moves.



B?



B?



B?



B?

Test Three Solutions

9. Kobese-Van Tonder, South Africa, 2002

In the game followed the provocative, but unsound combination: 26...Rxc3? 27.bc Ba2. It was refuted by the route 28.Bb5+! ab 29.Kb2. After 29...Bf7 30.Qg7! (worse is 30.Rxf4 Qe3) 30...Bg6 31.Qf8+ Kd7 32.Rxf4 the additional material guarantees White an advantage, but the battle continued. Attempting to defend the knight with the move 29...Qe3? hastened the denouementx 30.Rf8+ Kd7 31.Rxd6+! ed (31...Kc7 32.Rc8+!) 32.Qg7+ Kc6 33.Rc8+, and Black resigned

The outcome of the duel would have been the reverse if the one playing Black had found an amazing quiet move.

26...Ba2!!-+

The bishop is unassailable: 27.Nxa2 Nxd3+ 28.Rxd3 Rfxc2+. The threats 27...Qe3+ and 27...Rxc3 can be parried only by giving up the queen: 27.Qf8+ Kd7 28.Qxc8+ Kxc8 29.Nxa2, which is completely hopeless, of course.

10. Domnitz-Pachman, Netanya, 1973

Playing 24...Kg8!? 25.Rad1 (25.gh? g6-+) 25...hg 26.h3 Re8, Black preserved his obvious advantage. However, Ludek Pachman found a way to end the game immediately.

24...Rh8!!

White resigned, as he has no defence to the threat of 25...g6 26.Qxh6+ Kg8.

Such rook moves, apparently "to nowhere", to a closed file, Nimzowitsch called "mysterious". In his examples (and also in mine – see *School of Chess Excellence 3 – Strategy*), the chapter "Mysterious Rook Moves") the motive was purely prophylactic: the need to prevent an important pawn advance by the opponent, even by such an unusual method. But in this case the solution can be found in concrete, tactical ideas.

11. Gomes-Neto, Rio de Janeiro, 1942

The pin of the f3 knight seriously compromises White's position, as no way to quickly get rid of it is apparent. The question is only how best to exploit this circumstance. Black found the best path to his goal.

1...Rg8!!-+

Another "mysterious rook move"! The threat of 2...Nh4+! 3.gh g5 is unpreventable. For example, 2.Nb1 Nh4+! 3.gh g5 4.Nbd2 g4!-+.

The game ended like this: 2.c3 Nh4+! 3.gh g5 4.Rg1 Bxf3+ (sufficient is also 4...gh+ 5.Kf1 Rxcg1+ 6.Kxcg1 Bxf3-+) 5.Qxf3 gh+ White resigned.

Black could have changed the move order: 1...Nh4+!! 2.gh Rg8! with the subsequent 3...g5-+. Less precise is 2...g5?! 3.hg Rg8 4.h4 h6 5.Nb1! hg 6. Nbd2 gh+ 7.Kh1.

12. Shofman-Ilivitsky, Sverdlovsk, 1945

The pin on the f6 knight apparently prevents the exploitation of the obvious weakness of the e4 point. Georgy Ilivitsky solves the problem by using a combination.

28...Bxe4! 29.Rxe4 Ra8!!-+

The cold-blooded transfer of the rook from one open line to another creates a multitude of threats: 30...Qxe4; 30...Nxe4; 30...Ra1+. If 30.Bxf6, then 30...Ra1+ 31.Re1 (31.Ne1 Rxe1+) 31...Qxf3 32.Rxa1 gf, and Black's material advantage is enough for victory.

Further followed: 30.h4 Qxe4 31.Qxe4 Nxe4 32.Be3 Ra2 33.g5 Rxb2. White resigned.

Test Four

In all the previous exercises you had to find a win. But brilliant moves are sometimes made not only in the attack, but also in defense. It's no less important to foresee and defuse the impressive surprises that your opponent has prepared in advance.



W?



B?

Is it possible to take on c2?



B?



W?

Test Four Solutions

13. I. Zaitsev – from the game Ermolin-Petryaev, 1971

In the event of 1.Qf1? Qe5-/+ White has to look for salvation in a difficult queen endgame a pawn down. But meanwhile a drawing outcome can be forced immediately.

1.Qf2!! Qxf2 (1...ef – stalemate) **2.g3+** with unavoidable stalemate.

14. Thipsay-Ivell, Edinburgh, 1985

An unclear position arose with 23...Rc6!? or 23...h6!?. And here any pawn capture is forcibly refuted.

A) In the event of **23...Qxc2?** the answer is **24.Re4!! Qxe4 25.Qh6+-**.

B) The situation is slightly more complicated with the move chosen in the game **23...Rxc2?**. Then came the immediate blow **24.Re4!**, but Black had counted on **24...Rec8**, and wasn't afraid of 25.Qh6? Qxf6!.

He hadn't taken into account another impressive blow, **25.Rc4!!**, from which it's already impossible to defend.

25...Qxf6 (25...R2xc4 26.Qxb2) 26.Rxc8+ Black resigned.

15. Pheling-Rutshi, Biel, 1984

1...Kh6!!

It becomes clear that White is powerless to prevent a stalemating combination.

2.Qd3 d1Q! 3.Qxd1

Nothing is changed by 3.Qxg3 Qxg1+!! 4.Kxg1 Rxg2+!!.

3...Qxh3+! 4.gh Rh2+! 5.Kxh2 – stalemate.

16. Lucarelli-Carra, Bologna, 1932

White is a rook up, but it isn't clear how he can defend from the threatened mate. On 1.d4? the answer is 1...Qe2. No help is 1.Qxc7+? Bxc7 2.h7 Be5+.

1.Rd2!! Rxd2 2.d4 Qe2?!

White also preserved his large advantage with other replies: 2...Bd6 3.Qf5+- or 2...Rg2!? 3.Ka1 Qe2 4.Rb1 Bd6 5.Qf5+-.

3.Bc1 Black resigned. The idea of the rook sacrifice has become clear: his opponent's pieces are positioned on the second rank in the wrong order (the queen is behind the rook), and as a result the attack has run into a dead end.

Test Five

The last test is probably the most complicated one. Here you have to calculate variations, although they don't branch off too much – but the point is still to find a beautiful idea.



W?



W?



B?



W?

Test Five Solutions

17. Miseses-Janowski, Paris, 1900

The g6-pawn seems to be poisoned, and still Jacques Miseses boldly eats it.

23.Qxg6!! Rdg8 24.Qg7!

It becomes clear that taking the queen is bad: 24...Rxc7 25.hg Rg8 26.Rxc7 Qd8 27.Nh5+-. But otherwise White obtains a decisive advantage, invading on f5 with his knight.

24...Bc8 25.Nf5 Bxf5

And here no joy comes from 25...Rxc7 26.hg Rg8 27.Rxc7 Qc7 28.Rh8+-.

26.Rxf5 Bb4 27.Kb1

The queen could have been pulled out from under the attack: 27.Qf7 Rf8 28.Qh5.

27...Bxc3

Beautiful is 27...Rxc7 28.hg Rg8 29.Rxc7 Qg1+ 30.Nd1!!+-.

28.bc Nf8

Or 28...Rxc7 29.hg Rg8 30.Rf7! Qd8 31.Rxc7 Qe8 32.Rf6+-.

29.Rhf1! Ng6 30.Qd7 Rd8 31.Qe6 Nf4 32.Bxf4 ef 33.R5xf4 Qc5 34.Rf7 Qg5 35.Rf8! Qc5 36.Qe7 Black resigned.

18. R. Liberzon-Belov, Moscow, 1957 (variation from the game).

1.Qe1!!

A deflecting queen sacrifice that must be accepted (1...Rxa2 is refuted by 2.Rxc7+! Nxc7 3.Qe8+ or 2...Kxc7 3.Nxf6+), making it possible to develop a mating attack on the king with just two rooks.

1...Bxe1 2.Nxf6 gf (2...h6 3.Rxc6+!) **3.Rgh1 Kg8 4.Rxc7** (threatens 5.Rh8+ Kg7 6.R1h7) **4...Kf8** (4...Bh4 5.R7xc4!) **5.Rh8+ Ke7 6.Rxe1+ Kd7 7.Rhe8!** with an unavoidable mate.

19. Gauglitz-Horvath, Debrecen, 1987

Check on c2 is useless for now – first he has to deflect the enemy queen.

43...e5!! 44.Qxe5

Very bad is 44.Qxd5 Qxf4+. The retreat 44.Qd2 makes it possible to escape a combinational rout, but after 44...ef Black obtained a decisive advantage. For example, 45.Rxc7 Qxc7 (45...Qe5!?) 46.Rh8+ Kg7 47.Qc3+ (47.Qd4+ f6-+)

47...f6 48.Rxa7+ Kxh8 49.Qh3+ Qh5-+.

44...Qc2+ 45.Kg3 Rg1+ 46.Kh3 Be6+! (Black doesn't have any other sensible checks) **47.Qxe6**



It seems that Black has miscalculated: his queen is under attack, and as before he has no checks.

47...Qxc5!!

The cold-blooded capture immediately clarifies the situation. White's queen and rook are under fire, and moreover the queen has to protect the h3-c8 diagonal. He couldn't manage to do it all at the same time, and White resigned.

20. Winants-Guris, Belgium, 1992

All of White's pieces are exceptionally active, while his partner hasn't finished his development yet. A combination absolutely must be found. And it is found, although it's not very simple.

1.Nxe5!! Bxe5 2.Rxe5! Qxe5 3.Bc1!

With his rook sacrifice White has opened the a1-h8 diagonal and his bishop is ready to seize it. But it's too soon to stop calculating.

3...Qe7



You want to check with the bishop automatically, but this isn't the best move, as it significantly complicates White's task. Luc Winants found a forcing and impressive mate.

4.Qc3+!! Rf6 5.Qxf6+!! Qxf6 6.Rd8+! Qf8 (6...Qxd8 7.Bb2+ Qd4 8.Bxd4#; 6...Kg7 7.Rg8#) **7.Bb2#**

But why must you capture on f6 with the queen, and not with the bishop? The fact of the matter is that after 4.Bb2+?! Rf6 5.Bxf6+! (unclear is 5.Qc3 Ne4, for example, 6.Qe3 Be6 7.Bxe6 Qxe6 8.f3 Kg8 or 6.Re1 h6!?) 5...Qxf6 6.Rd8+! Black continues the battle, escaping with the king to the h6 square, which in the game was controlled by the bishop: 6...Kg7! 7.Rg8+ Kh6.

White continues the attack by the route 8.g4! Ne4 (natural) 9.Qd3. If 9...Qh4,

then 10.Qe3+ Ng5 11.Be2, and you don't envy Black's king. His relatively better chance is the exchanging combination 9...Qa1+ 10.Kg2 Qh1+! 11.Kxh1 Nxf2+ 12.Kg2 Nxd3. Then again, either after 13.g5+ Kh5 14.Bxd3 Kg4, or with 13.Bxd3 fg 14.Bf5 Bxf5 15.Rxa8 Kg5 16.Rxa5 White preserves a large advantage.

Comment on this month's column via our [Contact Page](#)! Pertinent responses will be posted below daily.

Readers' Responses

Peter from the **USA** - As always, an *excellent* article!!

Ankit from **India** - Very good tests, especially Test Five.

T.S. from the **USA** - Thank you for publishing your wonderful [Studies for Practical Players](#). I hope your work opens the doors for further appreciation of chess studies and leads other authors to offer similar works. In regard to the comment in your book, "...I remember that the famous study by the Sarychev brothers (1.Kc8!!) also had introductory moves, which no one today knows about." You may be pleased to note that Mr. Beasley and Mr. Whitworth appreciate the preceding moves and included these moves in the appendix of their book, *Endgame Magic*. Your efforts at [ChessCafe.com](#) are greatly valued and appreciated.

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