TACTICS TUESDAY

CHESS LIFE KIDS ONLINE

BY JJ LANG

CHESS TRAPS: TRICK OR TREAT?

Trick or treat! We often ask this when our opponent just blundered a piece. Or have they? Is that shiny queen a **treat** or is there a nasty

trick? Today's puzzles all feature opening traps where it looks like a piece is hanging. But are they?

One of the most famous **examples** of this is known as Legal's mate. The game begins with **1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 d6 4. Nc3 Bg4 5. h3 Bh5?** (Diagram). Already, this position has been reached 482,336 times on LiChess, and White has found the best move in only 19% of the resulting games. White wins with **6. Nxe5! Bxd1 7. Bxf7+ Ke7 8. Nd5**

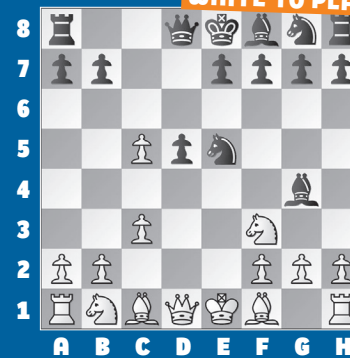mate. As a **bonus**: what's wrong with **6. ... Nxe5?**

WHITE TO PLAY

1. — WHITE TO PLAY

2. — BLACK TO PLAY

3. — WHITE TO PLAY

#4. — WHITE TO PLAY

5. — BLACK TO PLAY

6. — WHITE TO PLAY

SOLUTIONS

1) This position has been reached 61,565 times on LiChess, and White has found the best move in 91% of those games. **8. Nxd4** White offers a gift! Black ought not accept with **8. ... Qxd4** due to **9. Bb5+** winning the queen. **2)** This position has been reached 59,091 times, solved 70%. Black can take the knight! **6. ... Nxd5 7. Bxd8 Bb4+ 8. Qd2 Bxd2+** regains the material, as would 8. ... Kxd8. **3)** Of the 15,120 times this has been

reached, only 46% have offered the gift with **7. Nxe5!** when **7. ... Bxd1 8. Bb5+ Qd7 9. Bxd7+ Kd8 10. Kxd1!** Regains material and more. **4)** 8. Qa4+! The losing 8. Nxe5?? has been played 225 times. Black can run away with 8. ... Bxd1 9. Bb5+ Ke7 10. Bg5+ f6 winning. **8. ... Nd7** Alternatives: 8. ... Nc6 9. Qxg4; 8. ... Qd7 9. Bb5 Nc6 10. Qxg4; 8. ... Ke7 9. Nxe5. **9. Qxg4** and that's a piece. **5)** 5. ... dxe3 6. Bxb4 exf2+ 7. Ke2 Of the 74,242 games to get here, 82% of

them continue with **7. ... fxg1=N+! 8. Rxg1** Or 8. Ke1 Qh4+ 9. Kd2 Nc6 10. Bc3 Bg4 with a good position **8. ... Bg4+** Black comes out on top. **6)** Of 110 games, White has went wrong with **10. Qxa8?** 41% of the time! Best is 10. Nge2. **10. ... Nc6 11. Nge2 Qh4+ 12. g3 Qf6** and there is no way to stop Black from playing ... Bc8-a6. **Bonus)** Full credit only if you noted that **7. Qxh5** is met by **7. ... Nxc4** but found the important **8. Qb5+** regaining the extra piece!

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