UNIT 12

Chinese Chess

PART I

Theme Introduction

※ This part is used to let students have a rough knowledge about Chinese chess.

※ Before class, students are required to collect such information as the origin, rules of Chinese chess and the difference between Chinese chess and chess.

※ In class, students are free to talk about what they've found about Chinese chess in pairs.

※ Besides the blanks below, students should take notes about what they learned from others.

※ Some volunteers are asked to report their discussion.

※ The teacher can list useful information mentioned by the students on the blackboard in brief.

Task ❶ **Look at the following pictures, and try to find the appropriate words to match the pictures.**

King

Rook

Cannon

Knight

Pawn

Counselor

Minister

Task ❷ **Listen to the following passage about Chinese Chess, and fill in the blanks with missing information.**

The game of Chinese chess, also known as "elephant chess", is played by Chinese people all over the world. Despite its wide *popularity*, it is very difficult to review the history and *development* of Chinese chess because of the lack of *systematic* literature.

Like international chess, Chinese chess is easy to learn but difficult to play. The *basic* rule is as follows: each player has *sixteen* pieces of

chess: one king, two *rooks*, two cannons, two *knights*, two counselors, two ministers and five *pawns*. The player moves the pieces *according* to the rules with the *ultimate* aim of capturing the enemy king.

PART II

Listening Task

Word Bank

counselor /ˈkaʊnsələ/ *n.*	士
minister /ˈmɪnɪstə/ *n.*	象
pawn /pɔːn/ *n.*	卒
rook /rʊk/ *n.*	車
knight /naɪt/ *n.*	马
cannon /ˈkænən/ *n.*	炮
king /kɪŋ/ *n.*	将
meddle /ˈmedl/ *v.*	干涉，插手
tactical /ˈtæktɪkəl/ *adj.*	有策略的
diagonally /daɪˈægənəlɪ/ *adv.*	斜线地
squarewise /ˈskwɛrwaɪz/ *adv.*	田字形地

Task ❶ **Short Conversations**

You will hear eight short conversations about Chinese chess. A question will follow each conversation. Listen carefully and choose the best answer from the four possible choices.

1. W: Honey, my friend sent me a Chinese chess set, but I don't know how to play. Could you teach me?

   M: I'm very happy to have the opportunity to help you. But you should know the rules can't guarantee you a good player. You need more practice.

   Q: What does the man mean?

A. The rules can't guarantee the woman a good player

B. The woman needs more practice if she wants to be good at it.

C. She needs to learn the rules.

D. He is unwilling to do it.

2. W: I've learned how to play Chinese chess in my class. It's very interesting. Do you know how many pieces in the chessboard?

M: You can't knock me off. There are 16 pieces for each part in black and red: one king, two counselors, 2 ministers, 5 pawns, 2 rooks, 2 knights and 2 cannons.

Q: What can we infer from the conversation?

A. The man has learned Chinese chess from a master.

B. The man is learning Chinese chess in China.

C. The man loves Chinese chess.

D. The man can play Chinese chess.

3. M: Darling, it's amazing that our neighbor, Jack, knows how to play Chinese chess.

W: He is a real chess enthusiast. I heard that he went to China and learned from a master.

Q: What's the most probable relationship between the two speakers?

A. Classmates. *B. Husband and wife.*

C. Colleagues. D. Teacher and students.

4. M: Oh, you put your cannons in the wrong place. Put it here please. And counselor is beside the king.

W: This is the first time I learned Chinese chess. You know, there is no cannon and counselor in chess.

Q: What are they doing?

A. They are playing chess.

B. They are playing cannon.

C. They are playing counselor.

D. They are playing Chinese chess.

5. W: Susan, that's not the best move. You'd better check to his king with

the knight.

M: Hey, don't you know there is a Chinese saying , "He who is a real man keeps silent when watching others playing Chinese chess."

Q: What does the man mean?

A. The woman shouldn't make comments.

B. The woman knows the saying in China.

C. The woman is watching others playing Chinese chess.

D. The woman is silent when watching others playing Chinese chess.

6. W: Chess is traditionally a man's world. In the world's top chess-playing match, women usually rank well below the top men.

M: Maybe you're right. But have you heard Hou Yifan? She won against four top players who were above her own rating. Three of these players were men. She has redefined the stereotype.

Q: According to the man, what did Hou Yifan do?

A. She ranks far below the top players.

B. She won against all the top players.

C. She won against three top men.

D. She won against one top man.

7. M: I've got a wrong move. I need to change another piece.

W: Oh, no. no. no... Don't you know that you can't withdraw the piece when you move it? You'd better learn the basic rules of Chinese chess.

Q: What does the woman mean?

A. He got a wrong move.

B. He can change a wrong move.

C. He can't change another piece.

D. He knows the basic rules of Chinese chess.

8. W: Guess what? I've heard an item of news which says in Xi'an there is a huge Chinese chessboard with 32 basin-like pieces. People have to fetch it with two hands.

M: Sounds interesting. People can not only develop their intelligence

but also can build up their bodies.

Q: What does the man mean?

A. There is a huge chessboard.

B. He has heard a piece of news.

C. The pieces are so huge that people have to use two hands to move it.

D. People can do exercise in playing the huge Chinese chess.

Task ❷ **Long conversation**

You will hear a long conversation. Five questions will be asked following this conversation. Listen carefully and choose the best answer from the four possible choices.

W: Hey, I haven't seen you for ages. Where have you been?

M: I've been to Beijing and learned to play Chinese chess.

W: I know nothing about Chinese chess, but I know how to play chess. Chess is a game played by two people on a chessboard, with sixteen pieces for each player. How about Chinese chess?

M: In this way they are the same, but they have pieces of different types. In Chinese chess, there are 7 types: king, counselor, minister, knight, rook, cannon and pawn while in chess, there are only 6 types: king, queen, bishop, knight, rook and pawn.

W: Sounds interesting. I'm wondering why there's no queen in Chinese chess.

M: Ha-ha. There's something you don't know. In chess, queen is the most powerful piece because queen represents the powerful backup from another country because of political marriage. But in old China, queen couldn't meddle in state affairs and they were just women behind kings.

W: Wow, you really impressed me. Maybe you need to find some time to teach me how to play Chinese chess.

M: Oh, sure. I'm always available for you.

Questions:

1: What did the man learn in Beijing?

A. Chinese chess. B. Chess.

C. Chessboard. D. Game.

2: How many types are there in Chinese chess?

A. 16. B. 32.

C. 7. D. 6.

3: According to the man, what are the same pieces in both chesses?

A. King, queen, knight and pawn.

B. King, knight, rook and pawn.

C. Queen, knight, bishop and pawn.

D. King, bishop, rook and pawn.

4: Why is there no queen in Chinese chess?

A. Because queen is the most powerful piece.

B. Because queen represents the powerful support.

C. Because queen's marriage was political.

D. Because queen couldn't interfere with politics.

5: Will the man find time to teach the woman?

A. He can because he is good at it.

B. He can because he'll always find time for her.

C. He can't because he is busy.

D. He can't because he isn't good at it.

PART III

Speaking Task

Teaching Steps

1. Remind students of the expressions about Chinese chess, its rules and the difference between Chinese chess and chess.
2. Listen to the model dialogue one time, and ask several students to

repeat the model dialogue. It is helpful to train the students' ability to understand the main idea and grasp important details of the listening text by this way.

3. Arrange the students in pairs and ask them to do role-play activity in the part of Oral Activity.
4. Go around the classroom to supervise the students' discussion. If necessary, give help to the students, especially the weaker ones.
5. Select one or two groups to make short presentation of their discussion in class.

Model Dialogue

Ben: I saw you play Chinese chess and you're very tactical.

Jack: Thanks. Practice makes perfect, you know, I've been practicing it all these years. When I got to know Chinese chess, I went crazy about it.

Ben: So did I, but I'm a new learner. I've learned it for 3 months. Every time when I played Chinese chess, I totally forgot the time.

Jack: There's a lot of fun in it, isn't it?

Ben: Yeah, when I play, I feel like I am the king. Everything is under my control. It's fantastic.

Jack: And it can also develop people's good qualities, such as tolerance, calmness, and wit.

Ben: I can't agree with you more. It is time for class. I've got to go. Nice talking to you.

Jack: Me too. Bye.

Oral Activity

Work with a partner. Make up short conversations based on the following situations, using appropriate expressions for talking about

Chinese chess and chess. You may imitate the following model dialogue.

- ◆ Jack and Ben are intimate friends. Jack is a Chinese chess enthusiast and Ben is a beginner. They are talking about their love for it
- ◆ Kim wants to know something about Chinese chess and he is asking an exchange student from China how to play it.
- ◆ Alex is a new learner of Chinese chess. Tom is his teacher, who wants to show him some basic rules of playing Chinese chess.
- ◆ Rose and Taylor are trying to find out the difference between Chinese chess and chess.

Oral Activity:

After listening to the model dialogue, the students are required to imitate the dialogue and organize their own conversations .

※ Ask all the students to find out their own partners, work in pairs.

※ Ask the students to make up their own conversations.

※ Assign them to organize their conversations, and select at least two pairs to present their conversations in class.

PART IV

Leisure Time

You're going to enjoy two videos about Chinese chess, one of which shows you how modern people get fun from it while the other displays politics behind chess.

00:01 —

Playing Chinese chess can build up a person's body. Don't be kidding. You are lucky if you don't have a pain in the back after playing chess a whole day. Not in a hurry to make comments. First let's look at this set of chess. The length of the chessboard is 8 metres and the width of it is 7 metres. Each chess piece is basin-like. You can't move it with

only one hand although it's made of wood. So some use two hands to move it , some wheel it and others kick it. You not only use your head but also use your hands and legs while playing such chess. You can both do mental and physical exercises. This set of chess is in the revolutionary Park of Xi'an. If you have the chance, give it a try.

0:42 — 01:47

In the Hanyang tomb museum, there's a rock chess board. It's about 30 centimetres long on each side. There had been a story of a blood shed behind this chessboard. The main character of the story was emperor Jing. In 133 B.C. Jing was only 8 years old. He was then the heir in line to become the emperor. One day he was playing chess with the prince from the country of Wu. During the games the two princes had a disagreement and the conversation became heated. Prince Jing was full of anger and lifted the rock chessboard and hit the prince of Wu over the head. He died at the scene. Historians believe that this event was not an accident because the King of wu had not been obedient to the emperor. The emperor was then new to power. By killing Wu's heir, the emperor secured his power and threatened those who were in line with the disobedient.

PART V
Additional Task

Task ❶ **Oral Practice**

Which piece is the most important one when playing Chinese chess? Do you know the basic chess rules? Discuss with your partner the Chinese meaning of each rule, and try to talk about how to play the Chinese chess.

车走直线	rook going a straight liner
马走日	Knight moving diagonally

相走田	minister moving squarewise
过河卒	pawn behind the enemy's line (not permitted to retreat)
炮打隔子	cannon hopping over a chessman to score
士走斜线	counselor moving diagonally inside the palace

The king is the most important piece. If the king is lost, the game is lost.

Task ❷ **Listening practice**

Listen to a passage and fill in the blanks while listening.

Rules of Modern Chinese Chess

Today, Chinese chess has very *standardized* and specific rules of the game. The chess pieces *differ* in color (black for one side, red for the other) and they are *placed* on the intersections of the *outer* horizontal lines. The setup of the chess pieces is like this: king is in his *palace*, on each side of the king, from near to far are placed counselor, minister, knight and rook. Cannons are *positioned* in their special places in the middle of each territory and pawns on the *front* line near the river.

Usually the game starts with a *move* by the red side first, black side second. Each piece can *capture* any piece of the opponent's. The *object* of the game is to capture the opponent's king. If the king is lost, so is the game.