



Defensive Fight - Activity

Staircases were narrow and went up counterclockwise.

This was a defensive strategy based on most people being right-hand dominant.

The attacker would be walking up the stairs. The right hand carried the sword which would be impeded by the wall, forcing them to the left wall and fully open to attack from above.

The defenders, which were higher on the stairs, were able to be half shielded by the wall of the stair and have their right hand open to the air.

The narrow staircase allowed for only one man abreast, limiting the ability of a large army to take the castle.

The purpose of this exercise is to not only explain, but show how this defense actually worked with volunteers from the class.

Materials Needed

Stacks of chairs (to form the walls)

"swords" - center of wrapping paper works well

At least four right-handed volunteers, all with "swords"

Directions:

Make three or four stacks of chairs, at increasing heights.

Place in a semi-circle with the higher stacks veering to the right

Approximately 3' from the chair stacks, place chairs to form the outer wall

One volunteer is the defender and stands where the highest chairs are

The remaining volunteers are the attackers and stand at the lowest stack, single file

In slow motion, show how the defender uses the wall as a shield while still able to fight with his/her right sword hand.

In slow motion, show how the attacker must open up his/her defense in order to use the sword hand.

