

Rajeev Atla

~~Settlers of Catan~~ A board game is played on a hexagonal grid of 19 tiles. A 'traveler' token starts on the center tile. Each turn a die is rolled to determine what neighboring tile the traveler moves to (all six directions equally likely). The turn that the traveler leaves the board, the game ends. What is the expected number of turns of the game?

The diagram shows a hexagonal lattice structure. The internal nodes are numbered 0 to 18, and the external nodes are numbered 19 to 36. The nodes are arranged in a hexagonal pattern, with the central node being 0. The external nodes are arranged around the perimeter of the internal nodes.

We wish to find the expected value of the number of turns in the game, which we denote  $N$ .

The dice is truly random, so there is no upper bound on  $N$ . We note that this game is really akin to a Markov chain, in that it doesn't matter what the past states are.



|       |                           |                            |                            |                              |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|-------|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| $N =$ | $P_{0,0} = \frac{45}{16}$ | $P_{1,0} = \frac{15}{16}$  | $P_{2,0} = \frac{15}{16}$  | $P_{3,0} = \frac{15}{16}$    | $P_{4,0} = \frac{15}{16}$  | $P_{5,0} = \frac{15}{16}$  | $P_{6,0} = \frac{15}{16}$  | $P_{7,0} = \frac{7}{2}$    | $P_{8,0} = \frac{5}{4}$    | $P_{9,0} = \frac{7}{2}$    | $P_{10,0} = \frac{15}{16}$ | $P_{11,0} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{12,0} = \frac{5}{4}$ | $P_{13,0} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{14,0} = \frac{5}{4}$ | $P_{15,0} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{16,0} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{17,0} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{18,0} = \frac{5}{4}$ |
|       | $P_{1,1} = \frac{15}{16}$ | $P_{2,1} = \frac{15}{16}$  | $P_{3,1} = \frac{15}{16}$  | $P_{4,1} = \frac{15}{16}$    | $P_{5,1} = \frac{15}{16}$  | $P_{6,1} = \frac{15}{16}$  | $P_{7,1} = \frac{7}{2}$    | $P_{8,1} = \frac{5}{4}$    | $P_{9,1} = \frac{7}{2}$    | $P_{10,1} = \frac{15}{16}$ | $P_{11,1} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{12,1} = \frac{5}{4}$ | $P_{13,1} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{14,1} = \frac{5}{4}$ | $P_{15,1} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{16,1} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{17,1} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{18,1} = \frac{5}{4}$ |                          |
|       | $P_{2,2} = \frac{15}{16}$ | $P_{3,2} = \frac{15}{16}$  | $P_{4,2} = \frac{15}{16}$  | $P_{5,2} = \frac{15}{16}$    | $P_{6,2} = \frac{15}{16}$  | $P_{7,2} = \frac{7}{2}$    | $P_{8,2} = \frac{5}{4}$    | $P_{9,2} = \frac{7}{2}$    | $P_{10,2} = \frac{15}{16}$ | $P_{11,2} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{12,2} = \frac{5}{4}$   | $P_{13,2} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{14,2} = \frac{5}{4}$ | $P_{15,2} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{16,2} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{17,2} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{18,2} = \frac{5}{4}$ |                          |                          |
|       | $P_{3,3} = \frac{15}{16}$ | $P_{4,3} = \frac{15}{16}$  | $P_{5,3} = \frac{15}{16}$  | $P_{6,3} = \frac{15}{16}$    | $P_{7,3} = \frac{7}{2}$    | $P_{8,3} = \frac{5}{4}$    | $P_{9,3} = \frac{7}{2}$    | $P_{10,3} = \frac{15}{16}$ | $P_{11,3} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{12,3} = \frac{5}{4}$   | $P_{13,3} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{14,3} = \frac{5}{4}$ | $P_{15,3} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{16,3} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{17,3} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{18,3} = \frac{5}{4}$ |                          |                          |                          |
|       | $P_{4,4} = \frac{15}{16}$ | $P_{5,4} = \frac{15}{16}$  | $P_{6,4} = \frac{15}{16}$  | $P_{7,4} = \frac{7}{2}$      | $P_{8,4} = \frac{5}{4}$    | $P_{9,4} = \frac{7}{2}$    | $P_{10,4} = \frac{15}{16}$ | $P_{11,4} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{12,4} = \frac{5}{4}$   | $P_{13,4} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{14,4} = \frac{5}{4}$   | $P_{15,4} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{16,4} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{17,4} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{18,4} = \frac{5}{4}$ |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|       | $P_{5,5} = \frac{15}{16}$ | $P_{6,5} = \frac{15}{16}$  | $P_{7,5} = \frac{7}{2}$    | $P_{8,5} = \frac{5}{4}$      | $P_{9,5} = \frac{7}{2}$    | $P_{10,5} = \frac{15}{16}$ | $P_{11,5} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{12,5} = \frac{5}{4}$   | $P_{13,5} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{14,5} = \frac{5}{4}$   | $P_{15,5} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{16,5} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{17,5} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{18,5} = \frac{5}{4}$ |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|       | $P_{6,6} = \frac{15}{16}$ | $P_{7,6} = \frac{7}{2}$    | $P_{8,6} = \frac{5}{4}$    | $P_{9,6} = \frac{7}{2}$      | $P_{10,6} = \frac{15}{16}$ | $P_{11,6} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{12,6} = \frac{5}{4}$   | $P_{13,6} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{14,6} = \frac{5}{4}$   | $P_{15,6} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{16,6} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{17,6} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{18,6} = \frac{5}{4}$ |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|       | $P_{7,7} = \frac{7}{2}$   | $P_{8,7} = \frac{5}{4}$    | $P_{9,7} = \frac{7}{2}$    | $P_{10,7} = \frac{15}{16}$   | $P_{11,7} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{12,7} = \frac{5}{4}$   | $P_{13,7} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{14,7} = \frac{5}{4}$   | $P_{15,7} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{16,7} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{17,7} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{18,7} = \frac{5}{4}$ |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|       | $P_{8,8} = \frac{5}{4}$   | $P_{9,8} = \frac{7}{2}$    | $P_{10,8} = \frac{15}{16}$ | $P_{11,8} = \frac{7}{8}$     | $P_{12,8} = \frac{5}{4}$   | $P_{13,8} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{14,8} = \frac{5}{4}$   | $P_{15,8} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{16,8} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{17,8} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{18,8} = \frac{5}{4}$   |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|       | $P_{9,9} = \frac{7}{2}$   | $P_{10,9} = \frac{15}{16}$ | $P_{11,9} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{12,9} = \frac{5}{4}$     | $P_{13,9} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{14,9} = \frac{5}{4}$   | $P_{15,9} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{16,9} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{17,9} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{18,9} = \frac{5}{4}$   |                            |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|       |                           |                            |                            |                              |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| $N =$ | $P_{1,1} = \frac{15}{16}$ | $P_{2,1} = \frac{15}{16}$  | $P_{3,1} = \frac{15}{16}$  | $P_{4,1} = \frac{15}{16}$    | $P_{5,1} = \frac{15}{16}$  | $P_{6,1} = \frac{15}{16}$  | $P_{7,1} = \frac{7}{2}$    | $P_{8,1} = \frac{5}{4}$    | $P_{9,1} = \frac{7}{2}$    | $P_{10,1} = \frac{15}{16}$ | $P_{11,1} = \frac{7}{8}$   | $P_{12,1} = \frac{5}{4}$ | $P_{13,1} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{14,1} = \frac{5}{4}$ | $P_{15,1} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{16,1} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{17,1} = \frac{7}{8}$ | $P_{18,1} = \frac{5}{4}$ |                          |
|       | $P_{2,2} = \frac{15}{16}$ | $P_{3,2} = \frac{15}{16}$  | $P_{4,2} = \frac{15}{16}$  | $P_{5,2} = \frac{15}{16}$ </ |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |

$$t = N\mathbf{1}$$
[illegible]

Finally, we see that  $t_0 = \boxed{\frac{213}{29} \approx 7.345}$