

Problem Collection for Introduction to Mathematical Reasoning

By Dana C. Ernst and Nándor Sieben
Northern Arizona University

Problem 1. Three strangers meet at a taxi stand and decide to share a cab to cut down the cost. Each has a different destination but all are heading in more-or-less the same direction. Bob is traveling 10 miles, Sally is traveling 20 miles, and Mike is traveling 30 miles. If the taxi costs \$2 per mile, how much should each contribute to the total fare? What do you think is the most common answer to this question?

Problem 2. Multiply together the numbers of fingers on each hand of all the human beings in the world—approximately 7 billion in all. What is the approximate answer?

Problem 3. Imagine a hallway with 1000 doors numbered consecutively 1 through 1000. Suppose all of the doors are closed to start with. Then some dude with nothing better to do walks down the hallway and opens all of the doors. Because the dude is still bored, he decides to close every other door starting with door number 2. Then he walks down the hall and changes (i.e., if open, he closes it; if closed, he opens it) every third door starting with door 3. Then he walks down the hall and changes every fourth door starting with door 4. He continues this way, making a total of 1000 passes down the hallway, so that on the 1000th pass, he changes door 1000. At the end of this process, which doors are open and which doors are closed?

Problem 4. Suppose you have 6 toothpicks that are exactly the same length. Can you arrange the toothpicks so that 4 identical triangles are formed? Justify your answer.

Problem 5. I have 10 sticks in my bag. The length of each stick is an integer. No matter which 3 sticks I try to use, I cannot make a triangle out of those sticks. What is the minimum length of the longest stick?

Problem 6. Imagine you have 25 pebbles, each occupying one square on a 5 by 5 chess board. Tackle each of the following variations of a puzzle.

- (a) Variation 1: Suppose that each pebble must move to an adjacent square by only moving up, down, left, or right. If this is possible, describe a solution. If this is impossible, explain why.
- (b) Variation 2: Suppose that all but one pebble (your choice which one) must move to an adjacent square by only moving up, down, left, or right. If this is possible, describe a solution. If this is impossible, explain why.
- (c) Variation 3: Consider Variation 1 again, but this time also allow diagonal moves to adjacent squares. If this is possible, describe a solution. If this is impossible, explain why.

Problem 7. Consider an $n \times n$ chess board and variation 1 of the pebble puzzle from above. For what values of n is the puzzle solvable? For what values of n is the puzzle unsolvable? Justify your answers by either providing a method for a solution or an explanation for why a solution is not possible.

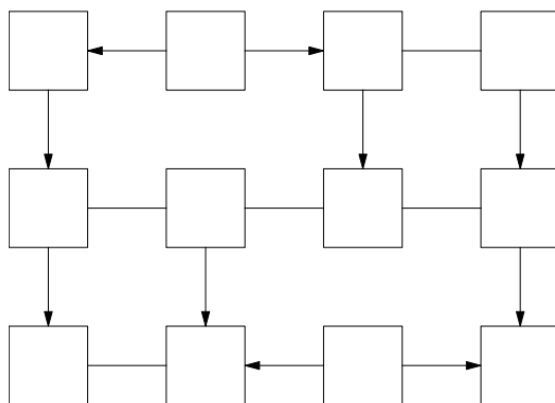
Problem 8. Consider an $n \times n$ chess board and variation 2 of the pebble puzzle from above. For what values of n is the puzzle solvable? For what values of n is the puzzle unsolvable? Justify your answers by either providing a method for a solution or an explanation for why a solution is not possible.

Problem 9. An ant is crawling along the edges of a unit cube. What is the maximum distance it can cover starting from a corner so that it does not cover any edge twice?

Problem 10. The grid below has 12 boxes and 15 edges connecting boxes. In each box, place one of the six integers from 1 to 6 such that the following conditions hold:

- For each possible pair of distinct numbers from 1 to 6, there is exactly one edge connecting two boxes with that pair of numbers.
- If an edge has an arrow, then it points from a box with a smaller number to a box with a larger number.

You do not need to prove that your configuration is the only one possible; you merely need to find a configuration that satisfies the constraints above.



Problem 11. In order to assess the reasoning skills of a newly developed android robot with artificial intelligence, the android's creator designs the following experiment. On Sunday, the creator describes the details of the experiment to the android and then turns the the android off. Once or twice, during the experiment, the android will be turned on, interviewed, and then turned back off. In addition, the creator will erase the awakening from the android's memory. On Sunday evening, a fair coin will be tossed to determine which experimental procedure to undertake:

- If the coin comes up heads, the android will be awakened and interviewed on Monday only.
- If the coin comes up tails, the android will be awakened and interviewed on both Monday and Tuesday.

In either case, the android will be awakened on Wednesday without interview and the experiment ends. Any time the android is awakened and interviewed, it will not be able to tell which day it is or whether it has been awakened before. During the interview the android is asked: "What is your credence now for the proposition that the coin landed heads?". One way to interpret "credence" in this context is the android's determination of the probability that the coin landed on heads.

Problem 12. As a broke college student, you agree to take part in a recurring experiment. Each experiment begins on Sunday evening and ends on Wednesday morning. The experiment will be repeated 100 weeks in a row. You are told the details of the experiment in advance. Each Sunday evening, the experimenter describes the details of the experiment and then gives you a drug to put you to sleep. Once or twice, during the experiment, you will be awakened, interviewed, and then put back to sleep using a drug that includes an amnesia-inducing component that makes you forget the awakening. On Sunday evening, a fair coin will be tossed to determine which experimental procedure to undertake:

- If the coin comes up heads, you will be awakened and interviewed on Monday only.
- If the coin comes up tails, you will be awakened and interviewed on both Monday and Tuesday.

In either case, you will be awakened on Wednesday without interview and the experiment ends. Any time you are awakened and interviewed, you will not be able to tell which day it is or whether you have been awakened before. During the interview you will be asked: "Is the coin heads or tails?". You are required to respond with either "heads" or "tails". The experimenter will record whether you were correct or not, but you will not be told whether you guessed correctly. At the end of the 100th run of the experiment, you will be given \$10 for each correct answer that you gave. What strategy should you employ in order to optimize your profit?