

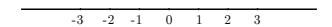
#### INTEGRAL LINE

## Why

We are constantly thinking of the integers as the endpoints of equal length segments of a line.

### Discussion

We commonly associate elements of the integers with the endpoints of equal-length segments of a real line. Take segment  $S_0$  of L with endpoints p and q. Associate the point p with 0. Associate the point q with 1. Take a segment  $S_1$  of equal length, non-overlapping with  $S_0$ , who shares the endpoint q. Associate the second endpoint of this segment 2. Continue with the rest. We call the line so formed the *integral line* of unit  $S_0$ .



# Integral Distance

Let  $f: \mathbf{Z} \to \mathbf{Z}$  be defined by f(a,b) = a - b if a > b and f(a,b) = b - a if b > a. Notice that f is symmetric: f(a,b) = f(b,a). The (geometric) interpretation of f is the distance between the points associated with the two integers  $a, b \in \mathbf{Z}$  in some integral line. We call f the *integral distance*. Notice that f(a,b) > 0 for all  $a,b \in \mathbf{Z}$ .

### **Notation**

We denote the distance between  $a, b \in \mathbf{Z}$  by |a - b|.

