Party at Pascal's







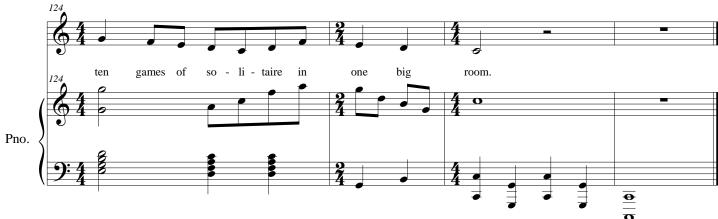












Q: How can one room be large enough for a basketball court and a rowing pool?

A: It's a big room. This fact is repeated several times. Please pay attention.

Q: Why does Pascal have a live cox for his crew boat but no live caller for his square dance?

A: Rowing without a live cox is considerably more dangerous than square dancing to a recorded caller.

Q: Is this another parody of "12 Days of Christmas"?

A: Absolutely not, but since you ask, I will say this: the total number of gifts given on the kth day of Christmas is 1+2+3+...+k, which is equal to k(k+1)/2, which is the number of chess games played the kth time chess is mentioned. The cumulative number of gifts given on Christmas days 1 through k is k(k+1)(k+2)/6, which is the number of monkey in the middle games played the kth time monkey in the middle is mentioned. The number of types of gifts given on the kth day of Christmas is simply k, which is the number of solitaire games played the kth time solitaire is mentioned. In short, mathematically speaking, all the interesting patterns in "12 Days of Christmas" are also encoded in "Party at Pascal's".

Q: They play a lot of games, don't they?

A: The total number of games played at Pascal's house when k people are present is 2^k (if you count the room itself as an "empty game"), which is the number of subsets of a k-person set. That sounds like a lot, but it's nothing compared to what happens at the end of the party, when somebody insists that the 10 guests line up (in all 10! permutations) for photographs.

Q: What if more guests arrive?

A: Proceed with a refereed basketball game, a volleyball game, a witches' coven, a 14-piece jazz band, a 5-4-3-2-1 cheerleader pyramid, a double square dance, a double square dance with a live caller, a baseball game, a 19-piece chamber orchestra, a lacrosse game, a 6-5-4-3-2-1 cheerleader pyramid, a soccer game, and a round of "Let's see if two of us share a birthday".