

Same Difference

Part 1

Choose a red Cuisenaire rod, and show that the difference between a blue and black rod is exactly one red Cuisenaire rod. Ask the students to find other pairs of rods whose difference is exactly one red rod. Let the students work for a few minutes, then bring them together again to share their results. What patterns did they notice? What conjectures do they have?

Part 2

Next, send students off to explore what would happen if they were looking for other differences: good ones to explore are a difference of a white, a light green, or a purple rod. Students can also experiment with building longer lines.

Part 3

Discuss the patterns and ideas students have noticed from their work, and then extend to longer lines. What will the difference be between two dark greens and two purples? Between two oranges and two browns? When will the difference be exactly two reds long? What about three reds long? If the exploration ends and you still have time, students can continue exploring the fill-ins from the last lesson.

Lesson retrieved from <http://mathforlove.com/lesson/cuisenaire-rod-lessons/>