Pick up Sticks

You Will Need:

- Two players
- 14 sticks (these could be chopsticks, popsicle sticks, toothpicks, pencils, etc.)

How to Play:

1. Arrange the 14 sticks into two piles with 7 sticks each.

2. Players alternate turns.
   Decide which player will go first (Player 1) and which player will go second (Player 2).

3. On your turn, you can pick up as many sticks as you want, as long as all of the sticks you pick up come from the same pile.

4. The player who picks up the last stick wins the game!

Play this game a number of times. Alternate which player goes first. Is there a winning strategy for this game? If so, which player (Player 1 or Player 2) has a winning strategy?

Is there a connection between this game and the game we played on March 23 (Rook to the Top)?

Variations:

A. Change the number of sticks that you have in the two piles. There should still be an equal number of sticks in each pile. How does this variation affect your strategy for the game?

B. Play the game instead starting with two piles with a different number of sticks. How does this variation affect your strategy for the game?

More Info:
Check out the CEMC at Home webpage on Tuesday, April 14 for a discussion of a strategy for Pick Up Sticks. We encourage you to discuss your ideas online using any forum you are comfortable with.