

## Habits of Mind #8

### Rumors on Cornhusker Lane

Rumors often fly on Cornhusker Lane where Herbie and Hannah Husker and four other couples live. Their favorite subject is Nebraska football. Last Saturday night, after the Nebraska-Oklahoma State game, there were lots of phone conversations between the neighbors to discuss the rumor that Bo Pelini had been offered the job of Head Coach for the Chicago Bears.

Although we have no idea who called whom, we do know that no one called themselves and no one spoke on the phone with his or her own spouse. Given these facts, a resident of Cornhusker Lane may have had a phone conversation with as many as eight other Cornhusker Lane neighbors. But it's also possible that a resident did not discuss the rumor on the phone with anyone that night.

Everyone got together for coffee the next morning (they are a very neighborly bunch), and Hannah asked the other nine people how many residents of Cornhusker Lane they had spoken to on the phone the night before to discuss the rumor about Bo. Much to Hannah's amazement, each person gave a different answer. That is, one neighbor didn't talk to anyone, someone had one conversation, someone had two conversations, someone else had three conversations, and so forth, down to the last person who had eight conversations.

Given this information, determine how many phone conversations Herbie had with other neighbors last Saturday night. (Explain your answer in detail, of course.)

**Due Date:** At the beginning of class on Wednesday, November 3.