Beating Tetris

By: Kenda Albertson
Sally and Tom enjoy playing arcade games.
They play games like Pacman, Dunk Hunt, and Super Mario.
Today, Sally has challenged Tom to a game of Tetris.
After a few intense games, Sally and Tom are tied, 2-2, so they decide to play one more tie-breaker game.
Tom starts thinking that there must be an algorithm to optimize his score...
Maybe he can fill in lines from left to right…

Or maybe he could devise an algorithm that maximizes the lines filled at once…
Sally even agrees to let Tom know the sequence of bricks ahead of time.
Tom tries many different strategies. But how can he tell which strategy is the best, and which will optimize his score?
He can’t.

The game of Tetris is an NP-complete problem, so a sufficient algorithm does not exist to optimize his performance.
Sally uses her feminine intuition to win the tie-breaker and beat Tom 3-2.
The End