

## Reading the analog clock – to the nearest minute

### CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

MEA.TIM.4

solve and pose practical tasks and problems involving the interpretation and calculation of time.

INTERACTIVES [Analog Clock Builder · challenge, display, explore](#)

### WHAT THIS LESSON TEACHES

An analog clock has two hands. The **short hand** shows the **hour**. The **long hand** shows the **minutes** — count round in fives from the 12.

- Short hand on **3**, long hand on **6** → **3:30** (half past three).
- Short hand just past **7**, long hand on **9** → **7:45** (quarter to eight).
- Long hand on **2** is **10 past**. On **10** is **10 to**.

### LESSON ARC

Open with a 9:47 clock face on the IWB and hold the question open — let pupils disagree before you name the time. Build the hour-hand rule through three worked clocks (3:15, 7:53, 12:01), with 7:53 as the load-bearing example. Pupils take turns at the IWB setting times in the Try It Together round, then sketch four clocks in their copybook before pairing up with printed clock slips for the Class Challenge.

### TEACHING MOVES

1. **Getting Started.** Hold the 9:47 question open for a full two minutes — take three or four readings from the class and do NOT correct yet. You want the class to hear the disagreement between 'nearly ten' and 'nine forty-seven' before you name the time aloud. Don't explain the hour-hand rule here; that's the next step's job.
2. **Watch and Notice.** On 7:53, cover the hour hand with your finger and ask 'what is the minute hand saying?' before revealing. Then uncover and ask 'so the hour is...?' Listen for pupils who say 8 — that's the moment to revoice the rule: the hour does not turn over until the minute hand reaches the 12. Don't move on until a pupil can say this back in their own words.
3. **Try It Together.** Call each time in words ('twenty past four', not '4:20') so pupils translate before they touch the hands. Ask the class where the minute hand points and take a couple of answers, then have one named pupil predict where the hour hand sits between two numbers. The 8:55 round is the one to watch — pupils will pull the hour hand back to the 8 instead of leaving it near the 9.
4. **Sketch the Clocks in Your Copy.** Walk the room glancing at the hour hand on each sketch, not the minute hand. On 7:53 look for pupils drawing the hour hand still at the 7; nudge with 'where has it crept to?' On 12:01 watch for identical hand positions — ask 'where exactly is the minute hand pointing?'
5. **Class Challenge.** Hand out one clock-face slip per pair with erasers ready. Circulate and listen for the three traps: 6:55 hour-hand-at-7 confusion, 7:30 hour-hand-still-at-7 (it has crept halfway), and 10:45 hour-hand-pulled-back-to-10. Don't re-explain — let pairs disagree and self-correct, and the homework bank will consolidate what they spotted.
6. **What Did We Notice?.** Listen for pupils naming the minute hand as the answer to both prompts — that is the lesson's load-bearing idea. Close by asking one pupil to restate the rule in their own words; that sentence is what carries into tomorrow's 24-hour clock lesson.

## COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

⚠ Pupils read 7:53 as 'nearly eight' and call the hour 8, because the hour hand looks like it has already arrived at the 8.

Cover the hour hand with your finger on the IWB clock and ask the minute hand question first. Once pupils say 'fifty-three past', uncover and revoice the rule: the hour does not turn over until the minute hand reaches the 12. Repeat with 6:55 in the Class Challenge.

⚠ When asked to set 8:55 or 10:45, pupils pull the hour hand back to the 8 or the 10 — they treat the hour hand as if it sits exactly on its number for the whole hour.

Stop the round and revoice with a gesture: the hour hand only moves because the minute hand is moving — it never jumps on its own. Slowly drag the IWB minute hand from 12 back round and show the hour hand creeping with it.

⚠ On 7:30, pupils sketch the hour hand still pointing at the 7 — they don't yet see that the hour hand sits exactly halfway between two numbers at half past.

Build it on the IWB clock face: drag the minute hand from the 12 to the 6 slowly and watch the hour hand creep halfway across. Ask 'where is the hour hand sitting now?' before revealing the answer.

## DIFFERENTIATION

### EMERGING

- On the copybook sketches, pre-mark the 12, 3, 6 and 9 on each circle so pupils only place the hands, not invent the whole face.
- For the Class Challenge, call on these pupils for the early on-the-hour times (2:00, then 5:15) and ask them to read the displayed time aloud before they set the hands.

### DEVELOPING

- After the Class Challenge bank, ask these pupils to invent one 'almost the hour' time (between 50 and 59 past) for the class to read and check on the board.
- Add a digital-to-analogue swap: write 9:38 in the copybook and sketch the clock face from scratch with no pre-marked numbers.

### PROFICIENT

- Pose: where exactly does the hour hand sit at 4:20 — closer to the 4 or closer to the 5? Justify with the minute-hand rule. Pair this with a copybook sketch.
- Ask: if the minute hand is at the 6 and the hour hand is exactly halfway between two numbers, how many different times could it be? Sketch two.

◦ **Cross-curricular:** Tie to English — pupils write a short note explaining to a younger pupil why 7:53 is not eight o'clock, using the hour-hand rule in their own words.

## ANSWER KEY

- a) 7:10 — short hand just past 7, long hand on 2.      Q2: 12:35  
b) 9:45 — short hand almost on 10, long hand on 9.      Q3: 15:35  
c) 12:55 — short hand almost on 1, long hand on 11.      Q4: 22:15  
Q1: 3:35

## EXTENSION SHEET · STRETCH ANSWERS

- S1: 15:50      S3: 3:50  
S2: 10:15