

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, guided](#)

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 the clock interactive showing 9:47 and let the deliberate trap land — the short hand near the 10 tempts a wrong hour. Walk four clocks aloud (9:47, 3:15, 7:53, 12:01), pivoting each time on 'has the short hand actually reached the next number yet?'. Pupils sketch 3:15 and 7:53 in their copy, then take turns at the board for the Class Challenge, predicting the hour before checking the minute.

TEACHING MOVES

1. **Getting Started.** Display the clock interactive at 9:47 as pupils settle and take three hands-up answers, not call-outs. Listen for the slip 'ten something' caused by the short hand sitting near the 10 — don't correct it yet, just hold it for the wrap.
2. **Watch and Notice.** Walk each clock one at a time on the interactive. On 9:47 point to the short hand and ask 'it looks like it's on the 10 — but has it actually reached the 10 yet?'. Save 7:53 for last as the trickiest, and flag on 12:01 that one mark past the 12 is one minute, not five.
3. **Try It Together.** Send one pupil up per target time (4:25, 8:50, 11:08) to drag the hands. Before they settle, ask the whole class to predict the hour from the short hand, then check the long hand for the exact minute. Watch for pupils nudging the short hand fully onto the next number when the minute is large — revoice 'fifty past, so the short hand is nearly at the next number but the hour hasn't changed yet'.
4. **Sketch the Clocks in Your Copy.** Pupils sketch 3:15 and 7:53 as circles with 12 at the top, hands marked, time in digits underneath. Walk the room checking the short hand is clearly shorter than the long hand, and that on 7:53 it sits near the 8 but not on it. No marking.
5. **Class Challenge.** Keep board work brisk — pupils take turns, check each answer, class confirms before moving on. Before each Check, ask the class to predict the hour from the short hand. On the final 11:28, draw out where the short hand sits: past the 11 and nearly halfway to the 12, so the hour is still 11.
6. **What Did We Notice?.** Ask 'when does the short hand try to fool us?' and listen for pupils naming the large-minute case. Revoice a strong answer: 'the hour hand only counts as the next hour once it actually reaches that number'. Link back to the 9:47 from Getting Started if the early slip surfaced.

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

⚠ Pupils read 9:47 as 'ten forty-seven' (or just 'ten something') because the short hand is nearly touching the 10.

On the clock interactive, ask 'has the short hand actually reached the 10 yet?' and trace it back to the 9 it has just passed. The hour stays 9 until the hand lands on the 10 — name the hour the short hand has passed, not the one it's heading for.

⚠ Pupils count each number the long hand passes as one minute, so they read the long hand on the 9 as 'nine minutes' instead of forty-five.

On the interactive, count round in fives aloud as you point — 5, 10, 15 — landing on each number, then count the single small marks one at a time to show each number is a five-minute jump and each mark is one minute.

DIFFERENTIATION

EMERGING

- Stay with the friendly times only — 3:15 and 2:30, where the long hand points straight at a number and the short hand sits clearly past one hour.
- When sketching, pre-draw the circle and the 12 in the pupil's copy so they only place the two hands, not build the whole face.

DEVELOPING

- After the copybook clocks, ask pupils to write what the time will read five minutes later — does the hour change for 7:53?
- Hand a target like 6:58 and ask which hour the short hand is nearly fooling them into, and why it's wrong.

PROFICIENT

- Pose: 'the short hand is exactly halfway between the 4 and the 5 — what's the minute, and how do you know?'. Let pupils reason from the hour hand's position alone before checking on the interactive.
- Pull fast finishers straight into the Student Activity Book page while the class finishes the Class Challenge bank.

- **Cross-curricular:** Tie to the Irish school day — pupils read the analog clock to the nearest minute at lunchtime and home-time and write each as a digital time.

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