

O'clock: the hour hand points the way

CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

MEA.TIM.2a

understand how time is measured, expressed and represented.

INTERACTIVES (Analog Clock Builder · challenge, display, explore)

WHAT THIS LESSON TEACHES

At an o'clock time the long hand points straight up to 12 and the short hand points right at the hour number.

→ At 3 o'clock the long hand is on 12 and the short hand is on 3.

→ At 8 o'clock the short hand points at 8 and the long hand sits on 12.

MODEL THIS ON THE BOARD

READING 4 O'CLOCK ON THE CLASS CLOCK

- 1 Find the long hand. It points straight up to 12.
- 2 Find the short hand. It points right at 4.
- 3 The time is exactly 4 o'clock.

LESSON ARC

Open with the IWB clock on 3 o'clock and five seconds of quiet think-time — where are both hands pointing? Walk three worked clocks (3, 8, then 12 o'clock), naming the long hand on 12 each time and lingering when both hands meet at the top. Pupils take turns setting 4, 7, 1 and 10 o'clock on the board while the class checks the long hand. Everyone draws 3 o'clock in the copybook. Class Challenge runs 2, 6, 9 and 11 o'clock briskly, then maths-talk asks why the long hand always sits on 12.

TEACHING MOVES

1. **Getting Started.** Show 3 o'clock on the IWB clock and hold five seconds of quiet think-time before hands go up. Take three answers; listen for anyone naming both hands, not just the short one on 3.
2. **Watch and Notice.** Point to each hand as you name it on 3 o'clock, then 8 o'clock. Ask: where must the long hand be for every o'clock? Pause hard on 12 o'clock so the class sees both hands together at the top, then linger on the board line: minutes are zero, so the long hand is back at the start on 12.
3. **Try It Together.** Call 4 o'clock, 7 o'clock, 1 o'clock, then 10 o'clock. One pupil sets both hands; the class reads the time back out loud. Watch only for the long hand landing anywhere except 12 — stop and reset that hand before moving on. Rotate four pupils.
4. **Write 3 o'clock in your copy.** Pupils draw a simple clock circle, mark 12 and 3, and place both hands. Walk the rows glancing for long hand straight up and short hand on 3. If a pupil freezes on the circle, sketch a quick outline on the board for them to copy — this is whole-class practice, not marking.
5. **Class Challenge.** Keep board turns brisk: 2, 6, 9, then 11 o'clock. After each set ask once: where must the long hand point for every o'clock? Watch 11 o'clock closely — the short hand sits near 12 and pupils often push both hands together. Class confirms long hand on 12, then move on.
6. **What Did We Notice?.** Ask why the long hand always points to 12 at o'clock. Listen for 'minutes are zero' or 'back at the start' in pupils' own words, then re-voice: at every o'clock the long hand is back at the start, straight up on 12.

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

⚠ Pupils set the long hand on the hour number (e.g. both hands on 4 for 4 o'clock) because that is the number they heard.

Freeze the board. Point to the long hand and ask 'which hand tells the minutes?' Sweep it back to 12, leave the short hand on 4, and have the class chorus the time again.

⚠ On 11 o'clock (and sometimes 12), pupils park both hands together at the top because the short hand is already near 12.

Set 11 o'clock slowly beside a clean 12 o'clock. Trace the short hand stopping on 11 while the long hand alone sits on 12 — same long-hand rule, different short-hand place.

⚠ Pupils mix the names: they call the short hand the 'long hand' because it is the one that moves to a new number each hour.

Hold one board clock and have the class chorus 'long hand — minutes — 12' while you touch the longer hand, then 'short hand — hour' on the shorter one before any further setting.

DIFFERENTIATION

EMERGING

- Give a pre-drawn clock circle with 12 and 3 already marked so the pupil only places the two hands for 3 o'clock.
- Stay on the cardinal hours 3, 6, 9 and 12 during board turns; those short-hand positions are easier to spot.

DEVELOPING

- After a correct set, cover the short hand and ask: if the long hand is on 12, how do we still know it is an o'clock?
- Once 6 o'clock is set, ask what the next o'clock will look like and have the pupil move only the short hand.

PROFICIENT

- After Class Challenge, send fast finishers to the copybook to draw 12 o'clock and write one sentence on why both hands meet at the top only then.
- Ask them to set 5 o'clock, then show with a finger where the short hand will drift toward before the next o'clock — still without moving the long hand off 12.

✓ **Cross-curricular:** Link to the school day: set home time as an o'clock on the IWB clock and read it together before the bell.

ANSWER KEY

Scaffold: visual check on the page

Q1: 2

Q2: 12

Q3: 1 o'clock

Q4: short hand 9, long hand 12

Q5: long hand 12, short hand 8

a) Always : Every o'clock time has the long hand straight up on 12.

b) Always : That is the rule for every exact hour.

c) Never : At 7 o'clock the short hand points to 7, not 12.

d) Sometimes : Only at 12 o'clock does the short hand also sit on 12.

EXTENSION SHEET · STRETCH ANSWERS

S1: half past 1

S2: 8 o'clock

S3: half past 10

S4: half past 1