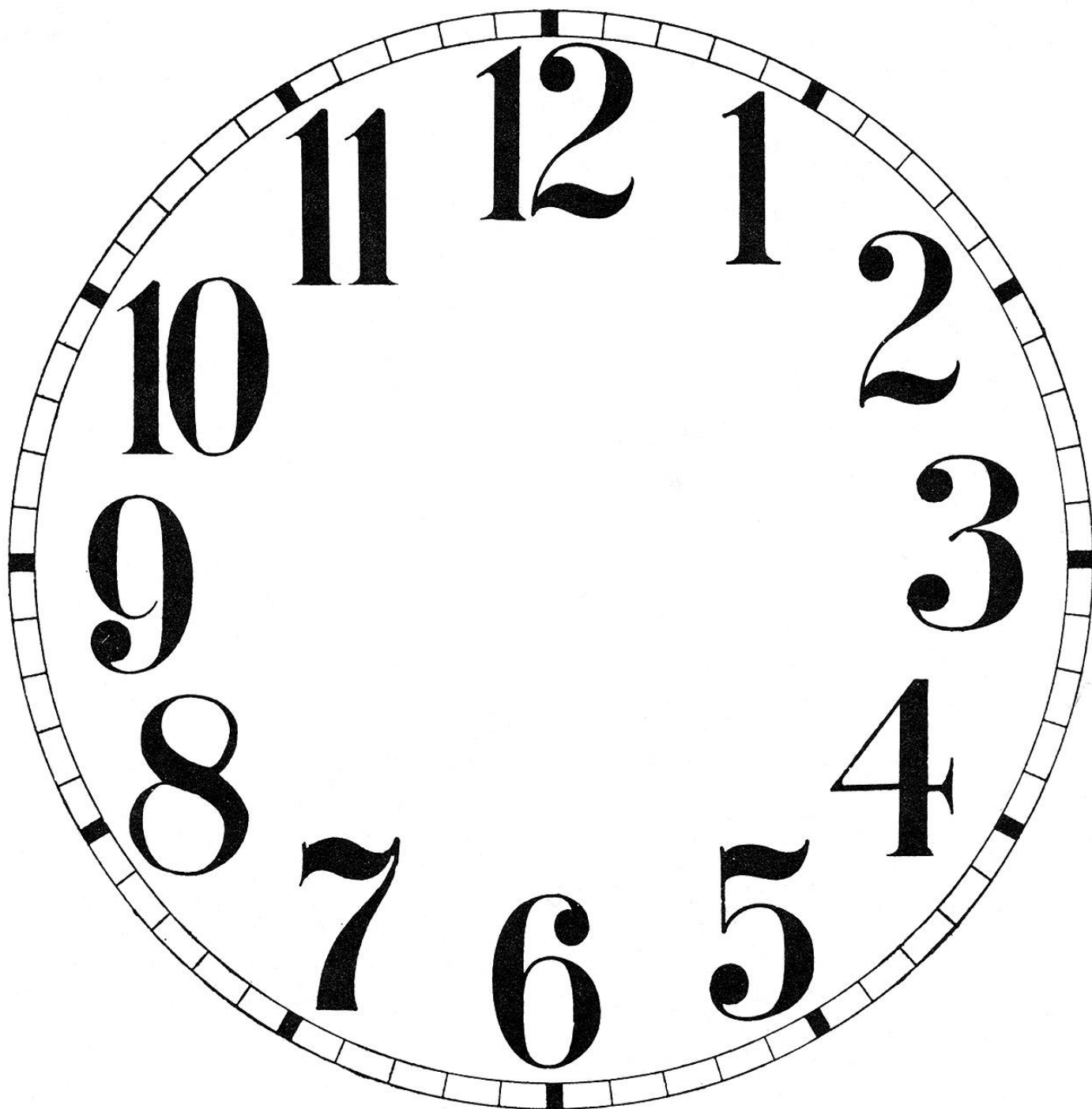
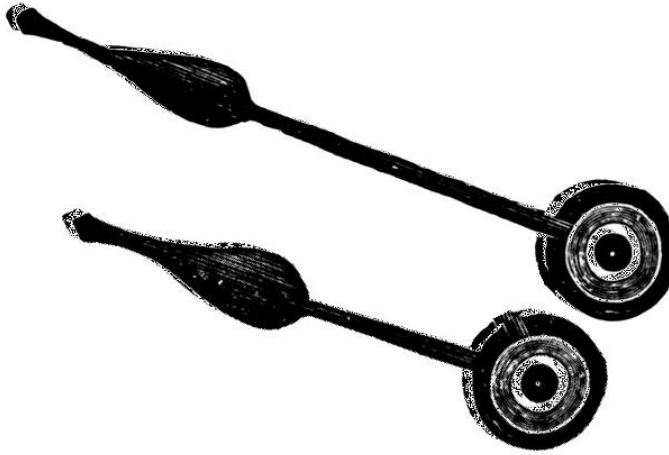






How to teach your child to tell time:

Teach him how to count by 5s.

Cut out the hands above.

Place the little hand only on the clock (secure it with a thumbtack or pin, perhaps over a piece of cardboard placed behind the clock graphic). Tell your child that the two hands of the clock are always moving, one fast and one more slowly. They hands always move in one direction, a direction we call “clockwise.” Trace the direction on the clock with your finger and have your child do the same.

Point the little hand to the different numbers and tell your child that the little hand names the hour. If it’s pointed at the 1, the hour is 1. If it’s pointed at the 2, the hour is 2. Etc. Point the little hand at different numbers and have your child tell you what the hour is.

Tell him that the little hand is slow and takes an hour – 60 minutes -- to move from one number to the next. Put the little hand on the 3 and ask him how long it will take it to move to the 4. Do this with other numbers to make sure he grasps the concept.

Throughout the day, point the little hand to a number and ask your child what the hour is. Sometimes move the big hand in between numbers and make sure he knows that the hour will be the number the little hand just left as it moves clockwise – i.e., if the little hand is between the 6 and 7, the hour is 6.

The next day, drill your child again on the little hand, as you did yesterday.

Now add the big hand to the clock. Tell your child that the little hand is fast – 12 times faster than the little hand -- and takes only 5 minutes to get to the next number. The little hand takes an hour just to get to the next number, but the big hand goes all the way around the clock in an hour.

Show your child the spaces between the little marks between the numbers on the clock, and let him know that each space stands for 1 minute. Show him that there are 5 minutes between each number.

Remind him that the little hand tells us the hour. Now tell him that the big hand tells us the minute.

Now show him the hour hand pointing at 2 and the little hand pointing at 1. Show him that, by the little hand, we can know the hour is “two”. Now we have to find out how many minutes by looking at the big hand. It is pointed at the 1, which is 5 minutes past the 12 (the starting point, or zero). So it is 2:05 or “five minutes after 2.”

Now move the big hand to the 3. Show him – count out for him at each space between the minute marks -- how it is 15 minutes past the 12, so it is now 2:15. Choose a few other times and show him the same, having him count out the spaces marking the minutes each time: 6:20; 7:30; 12:11, etc.

Now count around the face of the clock by fives, starting at the 12, which is 0. $12=0$, $1=5$, $2=10$, $3=15$, etc. Knowing how to count by fives will help him to tell the time much more quickly. If your child knows his times tables, he can also think of the minute hand pointing to a number which we should then multiply by 5: i.e., when the big hand is pointing at the 4, we know the minutes after the hour will be $5 \times 4 = 20$.

Tell him we have phrases we use for certain times:

When it is 15 minutes past an hour (when the big hand is on the 3), we sometimes say it’s a “quarter past” the hour. Here, a “quarter” means a “quarter” – a fourth – of an hour.

When it’s 30 minutes past an hour (when the big hand is on the 6), we sometimes say it’s “half past” the hour. Here, “half” means a half of an hour.

When it’s 15 minutes until a new hour (when the big hand is on the 9), we sometimes say it’s a “quarter til” the hour.

We also use the phrase “o’clock”, which means “of the clock.” When the little hand is on, say, the seven, we might say it’s “it’s seven” or we might say “it’s seven o’clock.” We only use this phrase to refer to the hour (the position of the little hand), not to the minute (the position of the big hand): i.e., we might say it’s “nine o’clock,” but we wouldn’t say it’s “nine-fifteen o’clock.”

When the little hand is on the 12, we say it’s “noon” if it’s daytime, and “midnight” if it’s night.

Now let your child know that the little hand goes around the clock two times in a day. That’s 2 times in 24 hours. A new day begins when it’s midnight and the little hand starts its first trip around the clock for the day. The hours of the first trip the little hand takes around the clock in a new day are called “ante meridiem” hours, which we abbreviate “A.M.” So if it was midnight 4 hours ago, the time now would be 4:00 A.M.

The second trip the little hand takes around the clock are called “post meridiem” hours, which we abbreviate “P.M.” So if it was noon 4 hours ago, the time would now be 4:00 P.M.

Midnight is 12:00 A.M. All the hours after midnight and until noon are “A.M.” hours.

Noon is 12:00 P.M. All the hours after noon and until midnight are “P.M.” hours.

Show your child how we indicate times in writing by writing the number of the hour first, followed by a colon, and then the number of the minutes (using a placeholder zero in numbers less than 10). Have him read the following times AND move the hands on the clock to match:

8:00

4:05 (Make sure he knows to pronounce the 0 as “oh”)

6:15 (Can your child express this two different ways?)

8:21

3:45 (Can your child express this two different ways?)

9:03 P.M. (Would this be day or night?)

12:00 (What do we call this hour when it is day? What is its name when it is night?)

10:10 A.M. (Would this be day or night?)

12:12

11:01

7:14

Now quiz your child with questions like these:

- It is 12:00 A.M. What are you likely doing?
- It is 12:00 P.M. What are you likely doing?
- What time do you usually go to bed? What are the hands on the clock doing when it is bedtime?
- Show what the clock looks like when it’s lunch time.
- Show on the clock what time Daddy usually comes home from work.
- What time do you usually eat dinner?

Boys will like this: Soldiers, marines, airmen, firemen, and police indicate the position of things by the use of clock imagery. You have to imagine a large clock lying on the ground and you’re standing in the middle of it facing the 12. If you hear “enemy at 3:00” you can know that the enemy will be directly to your right, since that’s where 3:00 would be if you were facing the 12. If you hear “Watch your six!” that means “Watch your six o’clock” – the area that is right behind you. What would “sniper at 9:00” mean?