

Alannah and the Clockwork Cloud Castle

A magical adventure in learning to tell time

AN ALANNAH DIOR LEARNING ADVENTURE



The Day That Happened at Once

At the Clockwork Cloud Castle, sunrise, lunch, music time, and bedtime all happened at once! The great clock had lost its hands. Alannah found a short golden hand and a long silver hand. “Each hand has a special job,” chirped Tock.



Seven O’Clock Breakfast

The short hand tells the hour. The long hand tells the minutes. When the long hand points straight up, it is exactly “o’clock.” Alannah pointed the short hand to seven. Ding! It was seven o’clock, and the breakfast room filled with morning sunshine.



Half Past Eight

Alannah counted by fives around the clock: five, ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, thirty. The long hand pointed down, so thirty minutes had passed. The short hand rested halfway between eight and nine. “It is half past eight!” she said.



Quarter Past Three

A clock can be split into four equal quarters. When the long hand travels one quarter of the way around, fifteen minutes have passed. It pointed to the third dot while the short hand moved just past three. “Quarter past three—music time!” Alannah cheered.



Quarter To Five

At the cloud-train station, the long hand pointed to the ninth dot. Forty-five minutes had passed, leaving fifteen minutes until the next hour. The short hand was almost at five. “It is quarter to five,” Alannah said as the train puffed into the station.



Putting the Day in Order

Alannah matched clocks to picture clues: seven o’clock for breakfast, noon for a sunny picnic, and eight o’clock for bedtime. Time helps us know when things happen. She placed morning first, afternoon next, and nighttime last. The castle’s day began to make sense.



How Long Does It Take?

The moon pastries went into the oven at ten minutes past four. They came out at half past four. Alannah counted forward: fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, thirty. “Twenty minutes passed,” she said. Elapsed time tells how long something takes.



The Castle Chimes Again

Every clock ticked together. Breakfast came in the morning, music played in the afternoon, and stars appeared at night. Alannah and Tock led the Clockwork Parade. “Read the hour hand, read the minute hand, and count by fives,” Alannah called. The castle chimed right on time!

After-Story Questions & Activities

Talk About the Story

1. Which clock hand tells the hour?
2. Where does the minute hand point at o’clock?
3. How many minutes are in half an hour?
4. What does “quarter past” mean?
5. How long did the moon pastries bake?

Try It Yourself

Human Clock

Stretch one short arm and one long arm like clock hands. Ask a grown-up to call out an hour, then show it!

My Time Trail

Draw three clocks for something you do in the morning, afternoon, and evening. Put them in order.

Alannah’s Time-Telling Reminder

SHORT HAND = HOUR • LONG HAND = MINUTES • COUNT BY FIVES

Look at both hands, say the hour, then count the minutes around the clock.