

# A Story to Teach Telling Time

by Patricia L. Zielinski

Once upon a time there were two mice—Tall Minnie and Short Howard. Now Tall Minnie liked to run and she would race around all the time. She had tiny feet and she would speed here and there. Short Howard, however, did not like to run. He had big feet and he just liked to stroll along in a very slow manner. (Hold up picture of the two mice). Even though the two mice were very different, they got along very well.

The two mice lived in a house near a little pond. Since their name was O'Clock, the house where they lived was called "the O'Clock House". (Draw a circle on the chalkboard and then show a picture of the house at the top of the circle).

One winter when it had just snowed, Minnie and Howard went outside to take a walk around their pond. Minnie saw that they were making footprints in the snow. "Let's count our prints," she suggested.

So off Howard went, trudging along through the snow, leaving LARGE footprints. Minnie started to count -(Write the numerals from 1 through 12 as the class counts). "1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12---it took you 12 steps to go all around the pond."

"Now YOU run around the pond," said Howard. "I'll count!" (Put little marks around the circle—five for each numeral. Have the students count as you put the dots on the chalkboard). "1, 2, 3, 4, ....60!" It took you sixty steps to get all the way around the pond, Minnie!"

As some of you have guessed, we have that "pond" right here in our own room—do you know where it is? That's right—on our wall. It is the CLOCK. Let's look and see if we can see the footprints left by Howard. (Point to the numerals 1 through 12). Now can we find the prints left by Minnie? (Point to the minute marks between the numerals).

Let's look at this model clock. The long thin hand is "Minnie"—she keeps track of the minutes. Let us follow her around the clock as she "races" around the pond and back to her house. (Show a geared clock—move the minute hand). See how she leaves the footprints—sixty—around the clock? And now let's watch Howard. He is the short hand. He moves VERY slowly. Watch how slowly he moves as Minnie is racing around the pond. See how he has only taken a half of one step while Minnie has raced halfway around the puddle. He FINALLY reaches the end of his step when Minnie gets to the "12"—home.

I am going to tell you a secret. If we play the "footprint" game with Howard and Minnie we can actually tell what time it is. To read the clock, FIRST we look at Howard. What footprint is he pointing to? Remember, his footprints are the numerals. If he is pointing at the "5" we'll say, "FIVE". We can't say "six" until he REACHES six, because he is SO slow he doesn't finish his step until Minnie gets back home.

Now let's look at Minnie. How many steps has she taken? We could count all of the steps one at a time, but it might be faster to count by fives. Let's see—when Minnie is pointing at the "7" we can count, "5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35." The time would be HOWARD'S step—"FIVE" and the Minnie's step—"THIRTY-FIVE". We'll read the clock as "5:35". So when Howard is at the "6" and Minnie has gone back home we can read the time as "six o'clock."