

Goal: Predict what you can get done in 10 or 20 minutes, then try it and see

Grades: 2–6+

Minimum number of participants: 1

Suggested grouping: individual

Time: 10–20 minutes

Math: developing time sense for 10, 20, or more minutes

Materials:

a clock or watch that displays minutes
scrap paper and pencil

Prerequisites: some familiarity with time

Books about time:

The Story of Clocks and Calendars.
Maestro, Betsy. (HarperTrophy, 2004).

On Time: From Seasons to Split Seconds.
Skurzynski, Gloria. (National Geographic Society, 2000).

1 Make Predictions

*We have 20 minutes before outdoor time.
What can you get done in 20 minutes?*

Talk
About...

Children record their predictions.

Predictions	What can we do in 20 minutes?
Daryn and Wayne	Play Name Game 3 times
Marina	Run through dance 5 times
Jose	Run through dance 8 times

2 Fill the time

Stop partway through the time period and ask if anyone wants to revise predictions.

Ten minutes have passed, and we've gotten through the dance once. Does anyone want to change predictions?



3 Compare predictions and results

When the time is up, children report what they accomplished.

Variations

Five-minute clean up (easier). Ask the group to predict if they can do several activities in 5 minutes, then try it and see: For instance, in the next 5 minutes, can we clean up, wash our hands, and then sing Happy Birthday twice?

Double time (harder). Ask children: “If you double the time, do you double what you can accomplish?” Then they try it.



Spotlight

Time sense for 10, 20, or more minutes

Throughout the day, children follow schedules that adults set: 15 minutes for snack, 30 minutes for gym, 40 minutes for math.

This activity gives children a chance to develop meaning for blocks of time by learning how long different activities take. Children gain a foundation for making realistic plans.



Connections

Setting realistic daily schedules

Setting schedules is a challenge for many people. Success at school and at work relies on knowing how long things take. What can you really accomplish in one Saturday afternoon of housework or in an hour set aside for homework?

Many children and teens juggle multiple after-school and weekend activities: homework, sports, clubs, household chores, social life, and part-time jobs. They need a solid sense of how long things take. Otherwise, they may find themselves overscheduled and overwhelmed, without enough time to get everything done.

