

Clock Partners

A strategy for choosing partners in the classroom



Clock Partners

There are lots of times throughout each school day when you'd like students to choose a partner for any given reason - a quick discussion, a project, or sometimes, simply who to sit with during the work cycle. While often we have children choose someone on the fly, sometimes it's nice to have a pre-determined partner for each student. One strategy that my Upper Elementary co-teachers and I have used successfully for choosing partners in the classroom is called "clock partners."

The idea is simple - each child has a clock face printed on a piece of paper. For each hour, students have a different child's name, who will be their partner when that "hour" is called. So for example, when you need students paired up for a science experiment, simply say, "Please find your 7:00 partner." They check their clock partner sheets (unless they have their partners memorized) and find their partners. When a specific hour is called, there is no need for negotiating or decision making - the children find their pre-chosen buddies and can get down to business!

Instructions

1. Make copies of the clock partner sheets for your students.

2. Introduce what clock partners are, how they'll be used, and then give them time to set up their partners.

We used some guidelines, such as each hour has to have a different person's name, there has to be a mix of boys and girls as partners, and being a multi-age classroom, the children needed to include a mix of levels as well.

We found it easiest to have them locate one partner at a time, rather than all 12 at once. For example, say "OK, everybody find a 1:00 partner." Invite the kids to mill around the room for a minute or two, finding partners for that hour, and recording their partner's name (in this case, on the line next to 1:00). It is important that both partners write down the other's name (or have each other sign their own name) for the same hour! Then ask if anyone is still looking for a partner. At that point it is easy to locate anybody still without someone and create pairs. Continue this process until partner groups for all 12 hours are complete.

3. Suggest a place to store their clock sheets so they remember who their partners are, such as in the front of a binder, so it is easy to see and find. :)

4. Try it out! Find an activity to use clock partners either immediately after creating their clocks, or soon after. They are likely to be pretty excited about it, so take advantage of that!

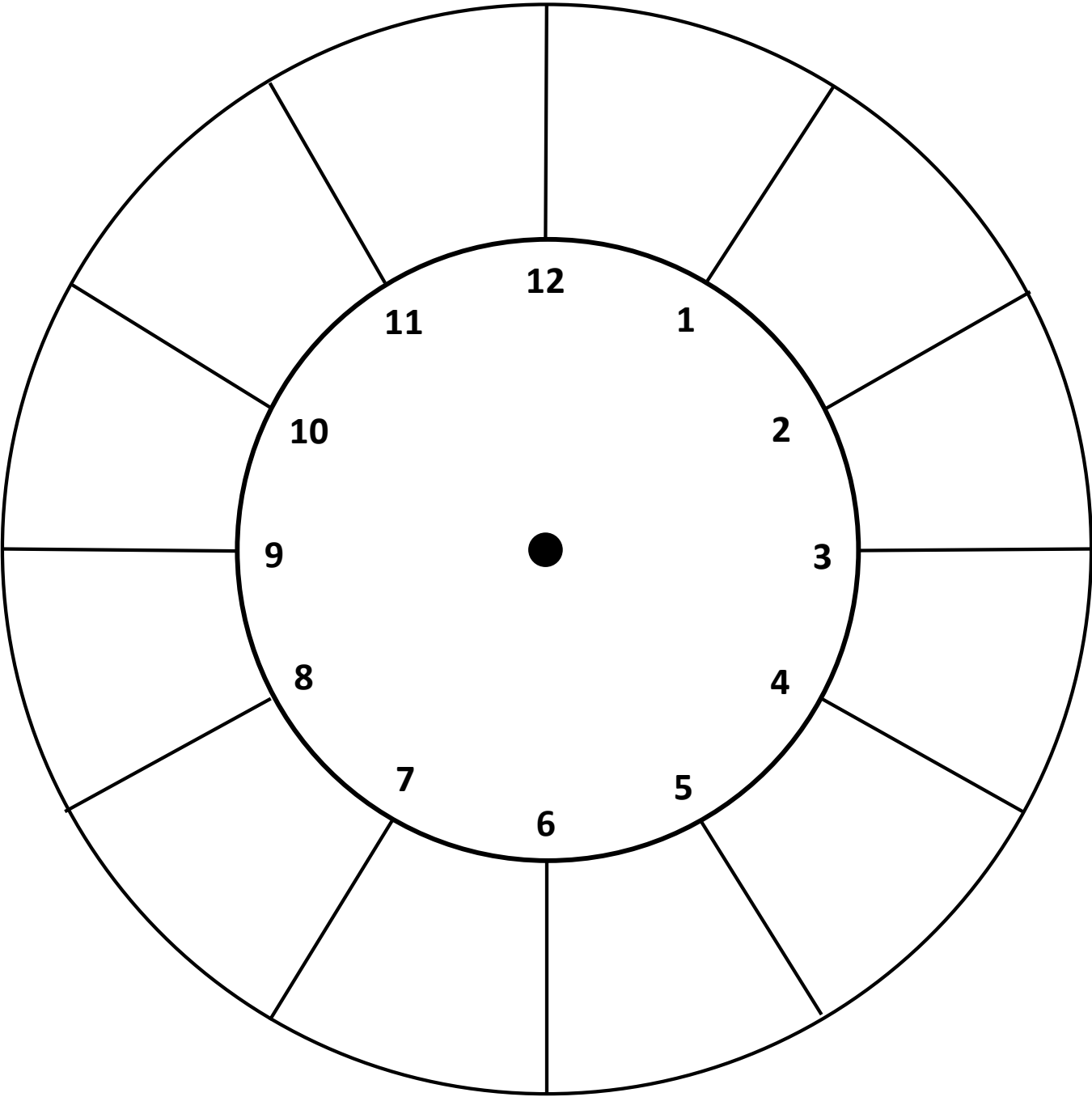
Name _____

My Clock Partners

12	Grayson
1	Alvin
2	Michael
3	Bella
4	Aidan
5	Maddie
6	Kinan
7	Macy
8	Laurel
9	Frederick
10	Ariana
11	Solomon

Name _____

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