

THE BARTON SERIES

STILL LITTLE BARTON



Ages 5 and over

By

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STILL LITTLE BARTON

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Story	Page
THE HOUR HAS COME	9
IN AN HOUR	25
LITTLE TIMES	41
ROUND AS A BISCUIT, BUSY AS A BEE	52
IN A MINUTE WE SHALL SEE	62
GOOD, BETTER, BEST	78
WHAT MEASURE MEANT	92

THE HOUR HAS COME

A rather excited little boy stood by the school gate early one morning. The boy was awaiting the arrival of his friend, Barton. As soon as he spotted Barton a short distance away, he rushed up to meet him. However, before any greetings could be exchanged between the two friends, the little boy blurted out to his friend Barton.

“Barton, guess what I have to show you?”

Without even waiting for a response, the little boy continued to speak excitedly.

“I got a gift yesterday, Barton,” he said. “I am so excited to show it to you.”

Barton’s little friend took out a small watch from his pocket.

“Look at this, Barton. Do you like it? Don’t you think it is pretty?” he asked.

The little boy jumped up and down as he spoke, hardly able to contain his excitement.



It is eight o’ clock!

It was indeed a beautiful watch. The numbers from one to twelve were large, and written in a circle around the face of the watch. Both the shorter hand and the longer hand were brightly coloured and luminous. This made them quite easy to see, even in the dark.

“My Aunt visited us yesterday and brought this for me,” the little boy said. “Don’t you find that it is pretty, Barton?” he asked again.

“I think it is quite beautiful,” replied Barton. “Your Aunt must love you very much.”

“She does, she really does, Barton,” replied Barton’s friend almost immediately, as he smiled happily. “She even told me that I am her favourite nephew,” he added proudly.

The two boys admired the beautiful instrument as it shone in all its glory.

The little boy suddenly pulled Barton closer to him. He looked around, as though fearful that someone might overhear what he was about to say. Then, he whispered in Barton’s ear.

“Barton,” he said softly, “I am afraid that I have never learned to tell time.”

“Well, I have to admit, I am not any better,” said a slightly embarrassed Barton.

Both boys then fell silent as they thought for a moment.

“I have a great idea,” whispered Barton. “Let us meet at lunchtime and see if we can learn to tell the time together.”

The little boy was excited. He smiled broadly as he held the precious gift in his hand.

“My Aunt gave me a hug when she gave me the watch,” he whispered to Barton. “I didn’t tell her that I can’t tell the time. She didn’t ask me either.”

“She probably thought you could.”

“Barton,” the little boy shouted suddenly, “I believe you are right.”

Then, in a much softer voice, he continued.

“I think it would be best that I keep the watch safely in my pocket,” the little boy suggested.

“It would be quite safe in your pocket if your pocket does not have a hole,” agreed Barton.

“There is another reason why I prefer it in my pocket, replied the little boy.

He stretched across to whisper in Barton’s ear.

“You see, Barton, if I wear it on my hand, then someone might ask me to tell them the time of the day and I won’t be able to correctly give an answer. That can be very embarrassing, won’t it be, Barton?”

“I agree with you,” Barton replied.

“But do not worry; we will do our best to quickly learn to tell time and you will soon be able to wear your beautiful watch for all to see,” said a smiling Barton in a comforting tone of voice.

At the lunchtime interval on that day, the two friends met at their normal meeting spot. It was on a small bench under a short but shady tree.

The two ate their lunch quickly and silently, and which was quite unusual for them. The little boy packed away his lunch kit, carefully wiped his hands with a napkin, and slowly removed the watch from his pocket.

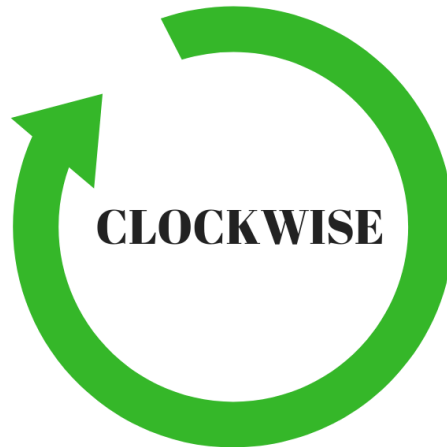
“What does either of us know so far about telling time?” asked Barton.

“I know very little more than the hands of a clock or a watch move around in only one direction,” confessed Barton.”



“I see,” replied Barton’s friend.

“I also heard it said that when anything moves in the same direction as do the hands of a clock, the direction is called clockwise,” added Barton.



“That makes good sense,” said the little boy, as he looked skywards, in a posture of deep thought.

The two boys giggled at the idea. The little boy then gently placed the watch in Barton’s hands and he spread out his arms like the wings of a bird. He began to turn around in the same direction as the hands of a clock, laughing as he did so and singing over and over,

Ahoy! Ahoy!

I am a clockwise boy!

Ahoy! Ahoy!

I am a clockwise boy!

Barton laughed as his friend became dizzy and yet he continued singing.

As the boy wobbled about, Barton helped him to stop and sit down, though he found his friend's performance rather amusing.

“Well,” said Barton, “my father told me that when the long hand of a clock points to 12 and the shorter hand points to any number from 1 to 12, then the number that the shorter hand points to, that is the number o'clock.”



It is one o'clock!

“What do you mean by, the number o’clock?” asked the little boy, sounding a bit confused.

“It means that if the longer hand points to 12 and the shorter hand points to 5 then the time is said to be 5 o’clock.”



It is five o’ clock!

The little boy listened carefully as Barton continued.

“If the longer hand points to 12 and the shorter hand points to 6 then it is six o’clock, and so on,” explained Barton.

“I believe you are right, Barton,” said the little boy, with a thoughtful look on his face. “This morning, when the school bell rang, I went to a quiet corner of the school, where no one could see me, and I looked at my watch. The longer hand was indeed pointing to twelve (12) and the shorter hand was pointing to eight (8).”



It is eight o' clock!

“Interesting,” said Barton.

“Doesn't the school bell ring at 8 o'clock, Barton?” he asked.

The little boy looked directly into Barton's eyes. He was expecting to see Barton nodding in agreement. His friend Barton, certainly did so.

"That is correct," said Barton, much to his friend's relief and delight.

"I know something else about telling time," said Barton to his attentive friend. "When the number o'clock goes up by one, then one hour has passed."

"Do you mean, for example, that the time that passes from say 8 o'clock to 9 o'clock is one hour, or from 9 o'clock to 10 o'clock is also one hour, and so on?" asked Barton's friend.

"Yes, that is so," replied Barton. "But, do you have any idea of just how long an hour lasts?"

"I think I could make a good guess," said the boy after a brief thought.

“It is as long as our lunchtime,” he suggested.

Barton looked a bit puzzled.

“If our lunchtime is one hour long, then that’s how long an hour takes to pass,” explained the little boy, as he poked Barton at the side.

Barton shook his head in an immediate agreement.

“Barton,” he continued, “doesn’t the school bell ring at 3 o’clock when school is dismissed? If so, then shouldn’t the watch show its long hand pointing to twelve and its shorter hand pointing to three, at the time of dismissal?”

“I believe that should be so,” Barton replied.

“Why don’t you check to see if the hands of your watch are pointing to these two numbers, twelve (12) and three (3) when the dismissal bell sounds today?” suggested Barton.

So, with this grand plan made, the two friends went happily off to their afternoon session at school. They could hardly wait to confirm their belief.

As Barton approached the school gate that evening, he could see his little friend jumping up and down and waving excitedly. The boy rushed up to Barton, slightly out of breath and he whispered into his ear.

“It is true, Barton,” he said as he breathed heavily. “The longer hand did point to twelve (12) and the shorter hand pointed to three (3). We were correct.”



It is three o' clock!

“This is great,” said Barton. “I think we are well on the way to learning to tell time,” he remarked. “We shall try to ensure

that what we have learned today is correct,” suggested Barton.

“When we get home this evening, let us ask our parents.”

The little boy’s face suddenly became saddened, and he pulled at Barton’s shoulder.

“You ask your Mom and Dad for me please, Barton. I have no mother or father of my own,” he said softly.

The little boy then waved to Barton, as he raced off in another direction and headed towards his own home.

NEW WORD	MEANING

ACTIVITY PAGE

Can you tell the time shown on the watches below?

