

Silly Science

MINUTE MAYHEM!

Test your time perception with these 60-second challenges!



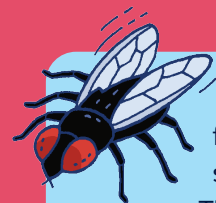
Slow race

Choose a route to walk around your house or garden that takes about 15-30 seconds. Decide on your start and finish lines, and start the timer as you set off from the start. The aim of the game is to arrive at the finish line in exactly 60 seconds. On the way, meow like a cat, bark like a dog or make other animal noises (so you can't cheat by counting!).



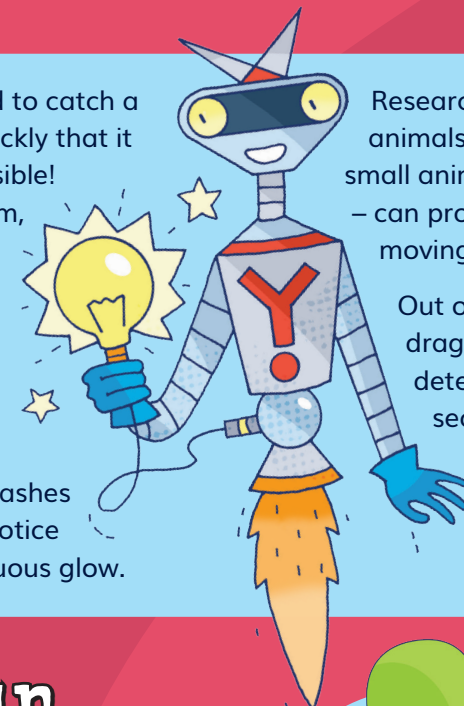
Depending on what you're doing, time can feel like it's passing quicker or slower. When something scary happens, the nerve cells in your brain (called neurons) have to process lots of information very quickly and it feels like time slows down. Scientists tested people who were bungee jumping and found that although they were falling for only two and a half seconds, they thought they were falling for four seconds! This feeling that things are happening in slow motion might help us to react more quickly if we find ourselves in danger.

Use a timer, stopwatch or one-minute sand timer for all of these games.



Have you ever tried to catch a fly? They react so quickly that it seems almost impossible! That's because to them, time appears to pass more slowly so it looks like we're moving in slow motion.

Scientists worked this out using flickering lights. Humans can detect light flickers at up to 65 flashes per second. If the light flashes any faster than that, we don't notice the flicker and just see a continuous glow.



Researchers tested more than 130 species of animals and found fast-moving ones – especially small animals, flying animals and top ocean predators – can process more frames per second than slow-moving animals.

Out of the animals tested, dragonflies see the fastest, detecting 300 flashes per second, while the crown-of-thorns starfish was the slowest, noticing only three flashes every four seconds!



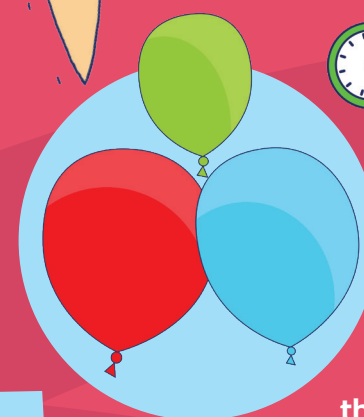
Drum fun

Hit a drum exactly 100 times in a minute! If you don't have a drum, use a wooden spoon and a cardboard box. Count to 100 out loud as you hit the drum and stop the timer when you reach 100. How close did you get to 60 seconds?



Barmy balloons

Blow up three balloons. When the timer starts, throw them up and then see if you can keep all three balloons in the air for one minute. Shout 'stop' when you think 60 seconds have passed!



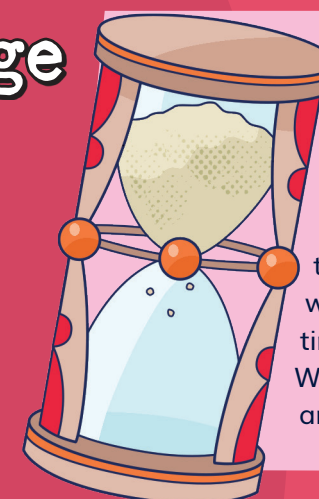
Beat it!

Listen to some music with a fast beat and shout 'stop' when you think one minute has passed. Now listen to a slow piece of music and do the same. Was there any difference in how long it took before you thought a minute had passed?



Chatty challenge

Talk about what you did yesterday for exactly one minute without stopping. Shout 'stop' when you think a minute has passed. You could play again while making up a story or singing a song!



If it takes 20 minutes for the sand to run from one chamber of this sand timer to the other, how many times will you have to turn it over to time two hours? Write your answer here and check it on page 34.