



## What Are Clock Buddies?

Clock Buddies is meant to be a quick and easy way to create pairs for partnered activities while avoiding the problem of kids always having the SAME partners. It begins with a clock face, with slots for names extending from each hour on the dial. The basic idea is that each student has his or her own copy of a Clock Buddies sheet, with the names of 12 classmates on each hour's slot. Each of those other students, in turn, has this student's name in the matching hour slot on each of their clock sheets.

## How Does It Work?

When the teacher needs to quickly pair up students without it always being the same partners every time, she can say to the class: "Get with your 4 o'clock buddy." Each student will pull out his or her clock buddies sheet, look at the

4 o'clock slot, and then join the partner indicated. This works because when the strategy is set up, it is done so that partners always have each other's names on their matching hour on the clock buddy chart.

## Sounds Complicated...How Do I Set It Up?

The reason it may sound complicated is because you need to see it...reading about it here is about the least productive way to really get it. Nonetheless, we'll press on! Look at the example graphic that appears here.

This is Joey's clock buddies chart, and 12 of his classmates are listed on it. If we were to pull out Rick's chart, we'd see that Joey's name is on Rick's 1 o'clock slot, and other children's names fill out the rest of his clock.

## What's the Best Way to Set It Up?

From the Massachusetts D.A.R.E. Program I get this idea: Clock buddies are chosen by giving each student a [clock handout](#) with a blank line next to each hour. Each student then goes to classmates to find a buddy for each hour. If Mike goes to Joe, Joe signs Mike's clock at \_\_\_PM and Mike signs Joe's clock for the same time. Students cannot use a name twice and all hours must be filled in. The clocks are then attached to the inside cover of their notebook or workbook. When you want students to work with a buddy, you call out a random time, for example, "It's time to work with your \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock buddy." Students will then move to and work with the buddy whose name is at that time slot. [From [Massachusetts D.A.R.E.](#)]

I've also set this up using two concentric circles, with half of the students on the inside circle, and around them in the larger circle is the other half of the group. (I usually take the left half and right half of the room, or the front half and rear half, to make the two concentric circles. That way, the opposite circle is composed of students who don't normally sit near each other.) Once the two concentric circles are formed, each student will have one person directly across from him or her. (If there is an odd number of students, the teacher joins the circle that has one fewer student in it.) Have the students in pairs across from each other write each other's name in their 1 o'clock slots. Then, tell the outer circle to move one person to the right. Now, each student has a new partner across from him or her. This would be the 2 o'clock buddy; students write each other's name in the 2 o'clock slot. Next, tell the inner circle to rotate one person to the right. Again, now new partners are matched up, and these should write each other's name in the 3 o'clock slots.

Continue until all students have been all the way around or until all 12 clock slots are filled, whichever comes first. I alternate having the outer circle move, then the inner circle, then the outer, and so on. If each always moves to the right, you'll have an orderly progression all the way around.

**Download and Print:**

- [Clock Buddies Chart](#)