

# Just a Second

## A RIF GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY COORDINATORS

**Themes:** Time, Measurement, Inventions

**Grade Level:** 3rd to 5th grade

**Book Brief:** What can happen in a second? A minute? An hour? Discover new and exciting ways to think about time.

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Illustrator:**  
Steve Jenkins



## TIME TO READ!

**Before reading:** Ask the children to think about how long a second is. How can we measure a second without a clock or timer? What about a minute? What do children do regularly that takes about a minute? An hour?

## RELATED ACTIVITIES

### SHAKE IT UP! (AGES 6-12)

Materials: clean baby food jars with labels removed, clean marbles, heavy whipping cream, crackers, timer

Fill each jar with cream and one marble; make sure lids are secured. Put children into groups and give each group one jar. Have children take turns shaking the jar. Start the timer; say “switch” every minute so the next person can have a turn. Stop every so often to observe the changes in the cream. Keep shaking and taking turns until butter forms. Let each group spread the butter on crackers to taste their effort!

### MEASURING TIME (AGES 8-12)

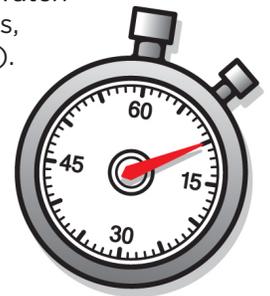
Materials: empty jars with screw-on lids, sand, plastic bowls, stopwatches

Punch a hole in the center of each of the jar lids; make the holes different sizes. Put children into groups and give each group a jar. Have them put 1/2 cup of sand in the jar and secure the lid. Have one child hold the jar upside down over a bowl while another keeps time. How long does it take for jar to

empty? Repeat the process with 1 cup of sand, then 1 1/2 cups, etc. Have children keep track of how long it takes for the jar to empty with different amounts. Can they find a pattern?

### STOPWATCH SCAVENGER HUNT (AGES 8-12)

Can you find someone who can do 10 things in 10 seconds? Give each group a stopwatch and a list of activities (snap fingers, clap hands, do jumping jacks, etc.). Have children try each action while another times with the stopwatch. If one group member completes an action 10 times in 10 seconds, cross the item off the list. The first group to cross off all the items wins!



### TECHNOLOGY LINK

Log onto [www.census.gov/main/www/popclock.html](http://www.census.gov/main/www/popclock.html) and calculate the estimated change in the US and world populations in one minute.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### OTHER BOOKS BY THIS AUTHOR

*Bones: Skeletons and How They Work* (2010), *Actual Size* (2011), *The Beetle Book* (2012).

### TECHNOLOGY LINK FOR KIDS

[www.rif.org/kids](http://www.rif.org/kids)



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