

# UK Students Struggle to Read Traditional Clocks

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Category : Education/Family

## Unlocking Word Meanings

Read the following words/expressions found in today’s article.

- 1. **acquainted** / əˈkweɪn tɪd / (adj) – familiar with something  
*Example:* I just got my new self-driving car and I'm still not **acquainted** with it.
- 2. **minimize** / ˈmɪn əˌmaɪz / (v) – to lessen to the smallest amount possible  
*Example:* We should all **minimize** our noise in the library.
- 3. **exert** / ɪɡˈzɜrt / (v) – to use one’s strength or power  
*Example:* She’s very tired because she **exerted** a lot of effort in studying for the exam.
- 4. **object** / əbˈdʒekt / (v) – to disagree with an idea  
*Example:* My boss **objected** to my proposal because it was too ambitious.
- 5. **isolated** / ˈaɪ səˌleɪ tɪd / (adj) – not happening repeatedly or in another place  
*Example:* The incident is not **isolated** to one city; it also happened in five other cities.

## Article

Read the text below.

More and more students in the United Kingdom are struggling to read traditional clocks.

Many UK schools still use traditional or analog clocks. However, teachers have been receiving numerous complaints from students in Grades 10 and 11 that they cannot read the time in exam rooms. Several teachers voiced this concern during the “Partners in Excellence” conference in London.

According to the teachers, the students cannot read traditional clocks because they are more **acquainted** with digital clocks in smartphones or other gadgets. As a result, some teachers suggested replacing traditional clocks in schools with digital clocks.

A supporter of the suggestion said that during exams, students are getting unnecessary stress from having to read analog clocks. He added that using digital clocks in exam rooms instead can **minimize** the effort that students have to **exert** just to count the remaining time they have.

While other schools have already upgraded their clocks, some educators **objected** to the solution. The chairman of the UK Commons Education Committee argued that children should be taught how to read analog clocks, instead. He added that time reading is important because it teaches students about numbers and order.

Meanwhile, the situation is not **isolated** to the United Kingdom. In 2014, a teacher in Arizona reported that her colleague encountered Grade 7 students who are unable to read traditional clocks.

However, unlike in the United Kingdom, US schools are required to teach students how to read time as early as Grade 1. The skill is part of the Common Core curriculum for math that many US schools use as a standard.

## Viewpoint Discussion

Enjoy a discussion with your tutor.

### Discussion A

- Do you agree that UK schools should replace their traditional clocks with digital ones? Why or why not?

- How do you think parents can convince their children to learn how to read traditional clocks? Discuss.

**Discussion B**

- Do you think that some skills taught by schools are now already outdated (e.g. using traditional maps, writing in script, etc.)? Discuss.

- What skill would you like schools in your country to teach children? Why?