

# Punctuality

## Syllables

punc•tu•al•i•ty

## Pronunciation

puhngk-choo-al-i-tee

## Definition

The quality of being on time and meeting deadlines.

*(Alvin, who was always right on time, won the prize for punctuality.)*

**Simply put:** Keep an eye on the clock, please.

## Related Terms

Prompt: Without delay.

## Fundamental Question:

**What does being punctual — or not being punctual — say about me?**

**Students will investigate the idea that** while there are lots of distractions that make it hard to stay on a schedule, punctuality is a habit that can be developed. More than just a time skill, punctuality is an important relationship quality and a show of personal character. Through punctuality we show esteem for others by letting them know that we think their time is valuable.

## Objectives

Each student will:

1. Describe emotions and physical sensations associated with being late;
2. Identify tardiness (in attendance, turning in assignments, and personal obligations) as an opportunity to hone time management skills;
3. Research and elaborate upon a basic suggestion for improving punctuality; and
4. Apply the concept of punctuality to a time-restricted classroom project.

## Before you begin

- Gather mask-making materials (paper plates or bags, popsicle sticks or tongue depressors, scissors, glue, markers, yarn, and other craft items) plus a mirror; and
- Print out a copy of *I'm Late, I'm Late, for a Very Important Date!* for each student.

## Suggested Sidebars:

### Speaking of Punctuality (Discussion Idea)

**Discuss:** Have you ever been tardy to sports, choir, or other group practice? Have you ever been late to school? How does it affect a group when members arrive late? What would it be like if buses, stores, and offices did not keep to their schedules of operation?

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## Taking It to the Next Level

Think of a time when you were late for something really important. Describe how you felt. How did your body react? Write five words that describe how you felt when you were late. Circle the word that describes it best. Show how your face might have reflected how you felt. (Look into the mirror, if it would help.) Then illustrate the feeling by designing a mask based on the circled word and your facial expression.

## Procedure

1. Complete both Speaking of Punctuality and Taking It to the Next Level before proceeding.
2. Say: “We have talked about how important punctuality is to a group and how we feel when we’re late for something. Now let’s think of some ways to improve being on time. Let’s brainstorm.” (Encourage the students to generate as many positive ideas as possible within a five-minute period. Discussion of ideas should not take place during the five-minutes and criticism of ideas must not be allowed. Record all of the ideas on the board).
3. After the brainstorming session, review and discuss the ideas with the class. Leave on the board only those ideas that answer the question, “What is a way to help someone improve his or her punctuality?”
4. Distribute the *I’m Late, I’m Late, for a Very Important Date!* sheets. Ask each child to select one of the suggestions from the board or the sheet. (If possible, be sure no more than two children have chosen the same suggestion. Consider a sign-up sheet.)
5. Guide the children as they gather information about their chosen suggestions. The school counselor, media specialist, and computer lab specialist would all be good resources.
6. Have each child write and present to the class a paragraph further explaining or supporting his or her suggestion.
7. Assign the class a very tight, but possible, production deadline.
8. Divide the group into five well-thought-out committees, each committee having a head. Ask the heads to meet and, keeping the deadline in mind, to consider and recommend a step-by-step time frame for the five groups.
9. Have:
  - an intake committee decide on an appropriate order for the paragraphs,
  - a committee of wordsmiths develop a title and edit the paragraphs,
  - a committee of artists illustrate the text,
  - a committee of hands-on folks turn the ordered and edited paragraphs and illustrations into a single publication (including making copies), and
  - a committee to handle circulation and end-of-project issues (e.g., clean up, thank yous, etc.).
10. **Follow Up:** Review the time-bound publication process. Were deadlines met at each stage of production? If not, what were the consequences? What helped the groups stay on schedule? What got in the way of their staying on schedule?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Reminder:** Punctuality means being on time and meeting deadlines.

## I'm Late, I'm Late, for a Very Important Date!

Your class has come up with some great ways to ways to improve being on time. Write your favorites on the back of this sheet.

Here are a few other ideas:

- Try to stay ahead of schedule or you will probably fall behind.
- Set deadlines and make sure others are aware of them, so they don't assume you will be available for other projects.
- Before agreeing to do something at a certain time, think about other events that might interfere. Don't say you'll do anything you have any doubt about being able to do on time.
- Avoid procrastination (putting something off). The same goes for waiting until the last moment to start a chore just because it's unpleasant.
- Compose a list of the things for which you are almost always late. Ask yourself what your reasons were ... and how you can improve.
- Count back from the time you're scheduled to do something and figure out when you should begin getting ready.
- Try to arrive at least 10 minutes early for events. (It's almost always better to be early than late.) Bring along something to read.
- Plan the next day the night before. Pick out your clothes the night before.
- Put things in order of their importance (prioritize).
- Be aware of the time. Keep your watch and clock accurate.
- Go to sleep on time and wake up on time.
- Be organized. Being disorganized often causes lateness.
- If you are having a hard time being punctual, admit it. You can't fix a problem if you won't admit there is one. (And if you think you are often late, you can bet others have noticed, too.)
- If you are late, tell those who need to know, but don't make excuses.

Your teacher will help you pick one of the ideas to investigate. You may make notes on the back of this sheet. Soon you will be asked to use your notes as you write a paragraph for a class project.

Today's Thought: *If I have made an appointment with you, I owe you punctuality, I have no right to throw away your time, if I do my own.* — **Richard Cecil, clergyman**