

# Just a Second

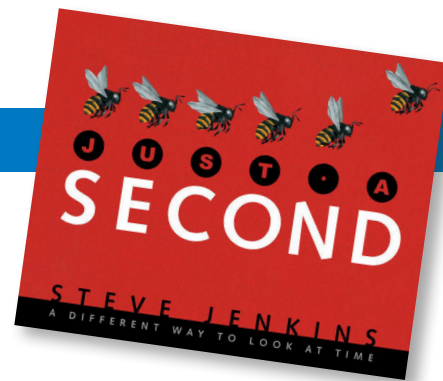
## A RIF GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES

**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.

**Author and  
Illustrator:**  
Steve Jenkins



## TIME TO READ!

### Before reading, build background knowledge:

Ask your child to think of ways to measure a second without a clock. What are

things you do every day that take about a second?

**While reading, make connections:** Which facts from the book are familiar? Do any of the facts make you think of things you've seen happen?

### After reading, ask questions:

- ◆ Which fact was most surprising?
- ◆ What do you think “natural cycle” means?
- ◆ How would life be different if there were no clocks? How would we keep track of time?
- ◆ What can you do in just a second?

## RELATED ACTIVITIES

### 2-MINUTE BANANA BITES

*Time yourself to see how long it takes to make this snack. Can you do it in 2 minutes?*

Ingredients: graham cracker, peanut butter, banana slices, coconut (optional)

Set kitchen timer to 2 minutes. Break graham cracker into 4 pieces. Spread peanut butter on each piece. Cut 4 thin slices of banana; place a slice on each cracker. If desired, sprinkle with coconut. Ta-da! How long did it take to make? Did you beat the clock?

### STOPWATCH SCAVENGER HUNT

Can you find 10 things that take a second? A minute? Take a stopwatch outside to see what you can measure. Possible things to observe: an ant walking, a bird moving its head back and forth, leaves blowing in the wind, a passing car, someone walking. Take a notebook with you to write down what you see.

### MEASURING TIME

Materials: empty jars with lids, sand, stopwatch

Have an adult help punch a hole in the center of the jar lid. Fill jar with sand and secure the lid. Hold the jar upside down over a bowl.

Have another person start a stopwatch. How long does it take for the sand to empty out of the jar? If it takes 15 minutes, write “15 minutes” on the outside of the jar. Experiment with different size jars and different size holes in the lids.



### 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).



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