

# Meter Reading

In order to find out how much electricity your home or school is using you will need to know how to read an electricity meter.

Meter reading is quite easy if you remember a few rules:

- The dials are like watch faces. BUT every second dial moves counter-clockwise.
- Read each dial starting from the left.
- Write the number of each dial down in the same order as the dials.
- If the pointer is between two numbers, always record the smaller number it has just passed.
- If the pointer seems to be pointing directly at a number, look at the next dial on the right. If the hand on this next dial has recently passed zero, then write down the number the first pointer was directly pointing at. If the pointer on the dial on the right is short of zero, write down the next lower number.

**Note:** Some meters are marked with a x10 or x20. These meter readings should be multiplied by 10 and 20 respectively.

## What you need to do:

- Practice reading the meter at home or at school a few days in a row. Having an adult with you to do this is a good idea to make sure you are reading it correctly.
- Go over some energy bills from home or from school and ask an adult to help you understand how to read them.
- Check your electricity meters at home and/or at school daily for a week.
- From these readings work out the total kilowatt hours consumed daily.
- Compare your family's electricity use with others in your class.

## Answer the following questions:

1. How much electricity in kilowatt hours does the average family from your class use each day based on your meter reading exercises?

**2. Compare this usage with the average daily usage as recorded on the power bills? Does it differ very much? If it does can you suggest a reason? (different seasons etc)**

**3. Does your family use more electricity than the average family?**

**4. Can you suggest why this might be - consider family or house size.**

**5. List five ways your family could use less electricity?**


**6. Where does your electricity come from?**

**7. Calculate how much electricity all the families of the whole class used in a week?**

**8. Using the average family electricity use, find out how many families make up your school - how much electricity do the families of the whole school use in a day? In a year?**

**9. Repeat this weekly survey of electricity use at different times of the year. At what time of the year is electricity consumption highest? Why?**

**10. Graph a year's worth of your own electricity bills. Look at the result and see if you can explain the fluctuations.**

A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners, intended for the student to graph their electricity bills over a year. The box is white and occupies most of the page's central area.