Q16. German mix 'n' match – Solution

1. 1. Augen - eyes
2. Augenblick - moment, look of an eye
3. Augenarzt - eye doctor
4. Blick - glance, look (as a noun)
5. Blickfeld - range of vision
6. Flugfeld - airfield
7. Flughafen - airport
8. Flugreise - journey by plane
9. Hafen - harbour
10. Hafenstadt - seaport, harbour city
11. Rückblick - retrospect, looking back
12. Rückflug - return flight
13. Rückreise - journey home
14. Stadt - city
15. zurück - backwards

2. Arzt – doctor, Reise – travel/journey, Feld – field.

3. All others are nouns – *zurück* is an adverb. (In German, nouns are traditionally represented with capital letters.)

Strategies:

Many linguistics problems are structured this way, and some such "mix 'n' match" problems, such as the one above, deal mainly with *semantics* – the meanings of words.

Here, there are obviously a number of "compound" words which contain two meaning-elements (or "lexical components"). One method of starting on such a problem is to count the number of times a particular lexical component appears in the word list, and then to count the meaning-elements that recur in the English translations. So, for instance, the lexical element *flug* appears four times:

Flugfeld
Flughafen
Flugreise
Rück**flug**

…so we might be looking for a meaning-element that crops up four times in the English translations. On the other hand, the lexical element *arzt* occurs only once (in No.3), so its meaning will occur only once in the English translations.

Another thing to remember is that *the questions often provide clues as well as the data*. Here Question 3 should get you thinking: is there one word in the English list which is different to all the others? Yes: *backwards* is an adverb while all the others are nouns. So now we can make a decent guess that *zurück* means *backwards*.

But then we notice that *Rück* appears in a few of the German words. Are there any English translations that carry the sense of "backwards" in any way? Yes: "return flight", "retrospect" and "journey (back) home" all fit that bill.

One of the words that *Rück* is attached to is the *Flug* from before, which must appear four times in the meanings of the English translations. Is there a lexical element that fits that bill? Again, yes: "return flight", "airport", "airfield" and "journey by plane" are all clearly connected. So we can now propose that *Flug* means "plane" or something similar, which gives us *Rückflug* as "return flight".

What about "airport"? Well, a *port* is a *harbour* as well, and we have words for "harbour" and "harbour town". The other lexical elements that go with *Flug* are *Hafen*, *Reise* and *Feld*. But *Reise* doesn't appear on its own, and neither does *Feld*. So probably *Hafen* is "harbour", and *Hafenstadt* is "harbour city"; this makes sense, since *Stadt* also appears on its own as "city".

And you're on your way! Once you've gotten a start on such a problem, it's usually downhill from there.