

## Question 25: What's the time in Tallinn Solution

### D1.

- (a) Twenty-five past nine
- (b) Quarter past three
- (c) Half past two
- (d) Quarter to twelve
- (e) Twenty-five to seven

### D2.

- (a) *Kolmveerland üheksa*
- (b) *Veerand viis*
- (c) *Pool kaksteist*
- (d) *Viis minutit seitse läbi*
- (e) *Pool üks*

## Comments

This was a problem that required you to work methodically and think logically, and above all not make too many assumptions. Here is one way to arrive at the solutions:

The first two clocks tell you that *Kell on* probably means 'o'clock' (actually it just means 'It is' but that does not affect the solution) and that *üks* is 1 and *kaks* is 2. The third and fifth clocks give you 'quarter to/past' as *veerland* and *kolmveerland*. Notice that 1:15 involves the word for 2 ... a clue to further solutions. 'Half past' is *pool*, but given that 1:15 is *veerland 2*, we can't yet be sure what number *neli* represents. The final clock face suggests that *viis* is 5 and that 'minutes past X' is *minutit X läbi*.

Now let's look at the problems. 1a is a 'minutes past' problem, so we have to figure out what *kakskümmend* and *üheksa* are. Neither of these words has been already seen, but *kaks* is 2 and *kümme* is 10, so  $2 \times 10 = 20$  is a reasonable guess. What about *üheksa*? This does require a bit of ingenuity: look at the word for 8, *kaheksa*. It's a bit like *üheksa*, and it's also a bit like *kaks* (2). If we present it as follows, maybe you can see where the answer comes from: *kaks* (2) is to *ka-heksa* (8) as WHAT is to *ü-heksa*? Answer *üks* (1) so if *-heksa* means 'away from 10' then *üheksa* is  $10 - 1 = 9$ .

1b is 'quarter past' something ... we're still not sure what *neli* is. And 1c is 'half past' something, depending on what *kolm* is. We've seen *kolm* in *kolmveerland*, which may be related to *veerland*. Yes, it turns out that *veerland* means 'quarter', and *kolmveerland* is 'three quarters', so *kolm* is 3. So is *pool kolm* 3:30? No, we've seen that 3:30 is *pool neli*. The answer is that in Estonian, the :15, :30 and :45 times are all expressed as fractions to the **next** hour. So *veerland kaks* is 'quarter of the way to 2', *kolmveerland üksteist* ' $\frac{3}{4}$  to 11', and *pool neli* is 'half to 4'. *Neli* is 4! 1c is 'half to 3' i.e. 'half past two'. By the way, notice that the question asks you to write your answers in **words**!

1d should be easy now. *Kolmveerland* is 'quarter to'. We don't know what *kaksteist* is, but we've seen *üks* (1), *üksteist* (11) and *kaks* (2), so it's not hard to guess that *kaksteist* is 12. And we now have all the information we need for the rest of the problems, though we should mention that for 1e, some people wrote 'thirty five minutes past six' which I have never heard anyone say, even in this digital age!