Mastering the Clock: French Time Challenge

1. Il est sept heures. (2 marks)

Working: The passage states Rosa wakes up at 7:00.

Award 1 mark for 'Il est' and 1 mark for 'sept heures'.

2. It is half past seven. (2 marks)

Working: Translation of 'sept' (seven) and 'et demie' (half past).

Award 2 marks for the correct time translation.

3. Il est neuf heures et quart. (3 marks)

Working: 9:00 is 'neuf heures' and 15 minutes is 'et quart'.

Award 1 mark for 'Il est', 1 mark for 'neuf heures', and 1 mark for 'et quart'.

4. We use 'moins le quart' because it means 'quarter to' the next hour. At 4:45, there are 15 minutes remaining until 5:00. (4 marks)

Look for: Explanation that it refers to the time remaining until the next hour.

Good: It means quarter to five.

Better: We use it because it is 15 minutes before the next hour, which is five o'clock.

Best: In French, 'moins le quart' translates to 'minus the quarter'. At 4:45, we are 15 minutes away from 5:00, so we say it is five o'clock minus a quarter.

What moves an answer up: Moving from good to best requires explaining the mathematical logic of the phrase rather than just translating it.

5. At 12:30, I eat lunch. (4 marks)

Working: Translation of 'À midi et demie' (At half past twelve) and 'je mange' (I eat).

Award 4 marks for a full, accurate translation.

6. Je me réveille à sept heures. Je mange à sept heures et demie. Je pars à l'école à huit heures moins le quart. J'arrive à l'école à huit heures et demie. (10 marks)

Look for: Four sentences, three different times, correct French structure.

Good: Je me réveille à 7:00. Je mange à 7:30. Je vais à l'école à 8:00.

Better: Je me réveille à sept heures. Je mange à sept heures et demie. Je pars à l'école à huit heures moins le quart.

Best: Je me réveille à sept heures. Je mange à sept heures et demie. Je pars à l'école à huit heures moins le quart. J'arrive à l'école à huit heures et demie.

What moves an answer up: Moving up requires using written-out French numbers and correct time phrases instead of digits.

What a secure answer looks like

A secure answer demonstrates an understanding that French time uses 'et' for past and 'moins' for to, mirroring the English logic.

If your child is stuck

Ask the child to draw the clock hands first. If they can see the position of the hands, it is easier to decide if they need 'et' (past) or 'moins' (to).

Common mistakes to watch for

Confusing 'et quart' (quarter past) with 'moins le quart' (quarter to), and forgetting that 'midi' is specifically used for 12:00 midday.