- Mr. Earl E. Bird leaves his house for work at exactly 8:00 A.M. every morning. When he averages 40 miles per hour, he arrives at his workplace three minutes late. When he averages 60 miles per hour, he arrives three minutes early. At what average speed, in miles per hour, should Mr. Bird drive to arrive at his workplace precisely on time?

(A) 45 **(B)** 48 **(C)** 50 **(D)** 55 **(E)** 58

2002 AMC 10 A, Number #12— "Distance is Rate times Time"

- **Solution (B)** Let t be the number of hours Mr. Bird must travel to arrive on time. Since three minutes is the same as 0.05 hours, $40(t + 0.05) = 60(t - 0.05)$. Thus,

$$40t + 2 = 60t - 3, \quad \text{so } t = 0.25.$$

The distance from his home to work is $40(0.25 + 0.05) = 12$ miles. Therefore, his average speed should be $12/0.25 = 48$ miles per hour.

Difficulty: Hard

NCTM Standard: Algebra Standard for Grades 9–12: Approximate and interpret rates of change from graphical and numerical data.

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Algebra > Linear Algebra > Linear Systems > Linear System of Equations