

Show that, for any fixed integer  $n \geq 1$ , the sequence

$$2, 2^2, 2^{2^2}, 2^{2^{2^2}}, \dots \pmod{n}$$

is eventually constant.

[The tower of exponents is defined by  $a_1 = 2$ ,  $a_{i+1} = 2^{a_i}$ . Also  $a_i \pmod{n}$  means the remainder which results from dividing  $a_i$  by  $n$ .]

FTSOL, let "a" be the minimum value of "n" such that

$2, 2^2, 2^{2^2}, \dots \pmod{a}$  is not constant.

Since  $2, 2^2, 2^{2^2}, \dots \pmod{a}$  is not constant, let "k" be the period of the sequence.

$\therefore 1 \leq k \leq a-1 < a$  holds.

Because  $2, 2^2, 2^{2^2}, \dots \pmod{a}$  is periodic,  $1, 2, 2^2, 2^{2^2}, \dots \pmod{k}$  must also be periodic.

Therefore,  $1, 2, 2^2, 2^{2^2}, \dots \pmod{k}$  is not constant.

As a result,  $2, 2^2, 2^{2^2}, \dots \pmod{k}$  is also not constant.

However,  $k < a$  and "a" was assumed to be the least value of "n" such that  $2, 2^2, 2^{2^2}, \dots \pmod{n}$  is not constant. Thus, contradiction is present.

□