



**ALL SAINTS'  
COLLEGE**

# Y12 PHYSICS ATAR

## Semester 1 Examination, 2017

### Question/Answer Booklet

Student Number:      In figures

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In words

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#### **Time allowed for this paper**

Reading time before commencing work:    ten minutes  
Working time for paper:                        three hours

#### **Materials required/recommended for this paper**

To be provided by the supervisor  
This Question/Answer Booklet  
Formulae and Constants Sheet

#### ***To be provided by the candidate***

Standard items:    pens, pencils, eraser, correction fluid, ruler, highlighters, mathaid

Special items:     non-programmable calculators satisfying the conditions set by the School  
                                 Curriculum Standards Authority for this course

#### **Important note to candidates**

No other items may be taken into the examination room. It is **your** responsibility to ensure that you do not have any unauthorised notes or other items of a non-personal nature in the examination room. If you have any unauthorised material with you, hand it to the supervisor **before** reading any further.

## Structure of this paper

Section	Number of questions available	Number of questions to be answered	Suggested working time (minutes)	Marks available	Percentage of exam
Section One: Short answer	14	14	50	54	30
Section Two: Extended answer	6	6	90	90	50
Section Three: Comprehension and data analysis	2	2	40	36	20
			<b>Total</b>	180	100

### Instructions to candidates

1. The rules for the conduct of Western Australian external examinations are detailed in the *Year 12 Information Handbook 2016*. Sitting this examination implies that you agree to abide by these rules.
2. Write answers in this Question/Answer Booklet.
3. When calculating numerical answers, show your working or reasoning clearly. Give final answers to **three** significant figures and include appropriate units where applicable.

When estimating numerical answers, show your working or reasoning clearly. Give final answers to a maximum of **two** significant figures and include appropriate units where applicable.

4. You must be careful to confine your responses to the specific questions asked and follow any instructions that are specific to a particular question.
5. Spare pages are included at the end of this booklet. They can be used for planning your responses and/or as additional space if required to continue an answer.
  - Planning: If you use the spare pages for planning, indicate this clearly.
  - Continuing an answer: If you need to use the space to continue an answer, indicate in the original answer space where the answer is continued, i.e. give the page number. Refer to the question(s) where you are continuing your work.

**Section One: Short response****30% (54 marks)**

This section has **fourteen (14)** questions. Answer **all** questions. Write your answers in the space provided. Suggested working time for this section is 50 minutes.

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**Question 1**

A plane is being flown at a horizontal speed of  $400 \text{ km h}^{-1}$  at an altitude of 1500 m. A piece of the plane becomes dislodged and drops off it whilst it is in motion. If air resistance can be ignored, calculate the velocity of this piece of the plane when it lands on the ground (in  $\text{m s}^{-1}$ ).

(4 marks)

**Question 2**

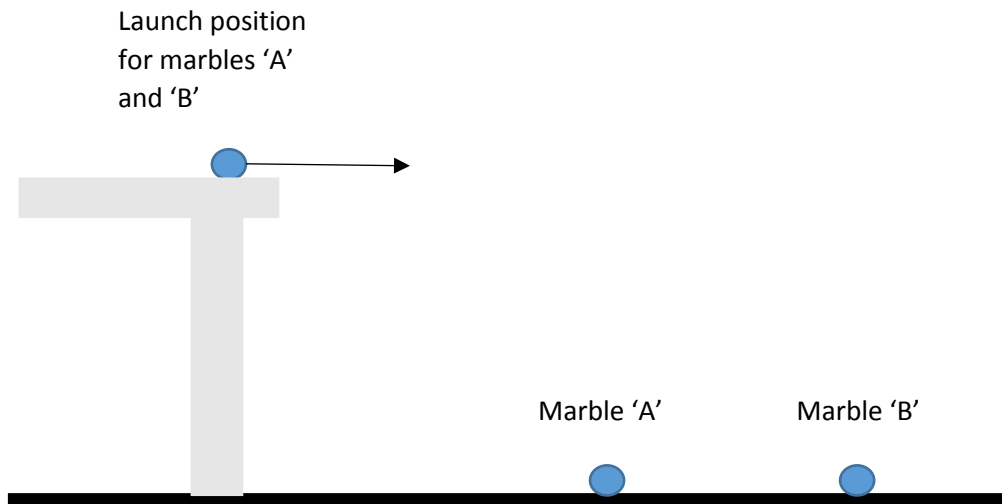
The banking of roads can help cars navigate high speed bends safely. Calculate the angle to the horizontal that a road should be inclined for a 1500 kg car to follow a horizontal circular path with a radius of 250 m at  $110 \text{ kmh}^{-1}$ . You do not need to allow for friction.

(3 marks)

**Question 3**

Two marbles ('A' and 'B') are rolled off a horizontal table separately and fall through the same vertical height to the floor below. Their landing positions are shown on the diagram below.

(4 marks)



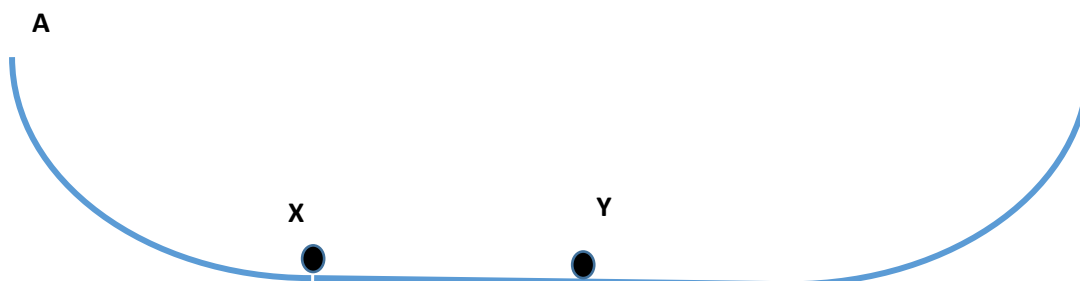
Which one of the following statements correctly describes the motion of marbles 'A' and 'B'? Circle a response and briefly explain the reasons for your choice in the space provided.

- A 'B' hits the ground before 'A' because it is further from the launch site.
- B 'B' has a larger launch velocity than 'A'.
- C 'A' and 'B' hit the ground simultaneously with the same velocity.
- D 'B' lands before 'A' due to its larger launch velocity.

EXPLANATION:

**Question 4**

The diagram below shows the cross-sectional structure of a skateboard halfpipe. Two positions 'X' and 'Y' are marked on the halfpipe ('X' is at the bottom of the curved section, 'Y' is on the flat section). A skateboarder starts from point A and moves through positions X and Y

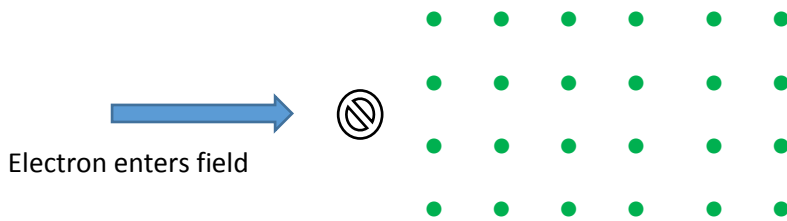


Compare the normal reaction forces experienced by the skateboarder at these two positions. At which point is this force greatest? Assume the skateboarder's speed is the same at both points. With reference to relevant formulae, explain your choice.

(4 marks)

**Question 5**

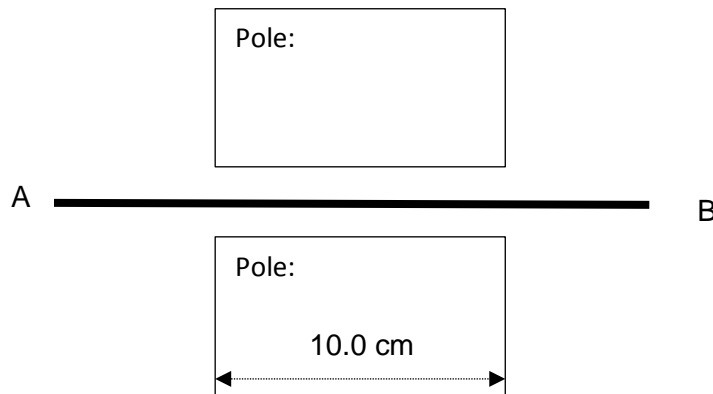
An electron emitted from the beta decay of a radioactive isotope enters a magnetic field at a speed of 90% the speed of light. It experiences a force of  $1.94 \times 10^{-12}$  N.



- a) On the diagram sketch the approximate path the electron will follow. (1 mark)
- b) Calculate the magnetic flux density of the field. (3 marks)

**Question 6**

A length of copper wire is pulled into the page between the poles of 2 bar magnets (as shown below). It moves with a velocity of  $2.00 \text{ cm s}^{-1}$  and the length of the wire exposed to magnetic flux is  $10.0 \text{ cm}$ .



The end of the copper wire marked 'B' gains a net negative charge and the wire generates a small emf with an average value of  $2.74 \text{ mV}$ .

- a) Mark each of the poles above as North or South. (1 mark)
- b) Calculate the magnetic flux density at the location of the wire. (2 marks)

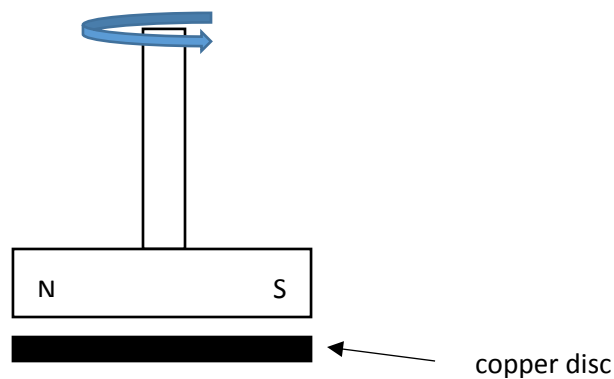
**Question 7**

A current-carrying straight conductor is placed in a magnetic field and experiences a magnetic force equal to 75% of the maximum value this force could be in this field. Calculate the size of the angle ' $\theta$ ' between the conductor and the magnetic field. Show working.

(3 marks)

**Question 8**

A simple analogue car speedometer utilises magnetic properties in its operation. Its main components consist of a rotating bar magnet placed above a circular copper disc (see the diagram below).

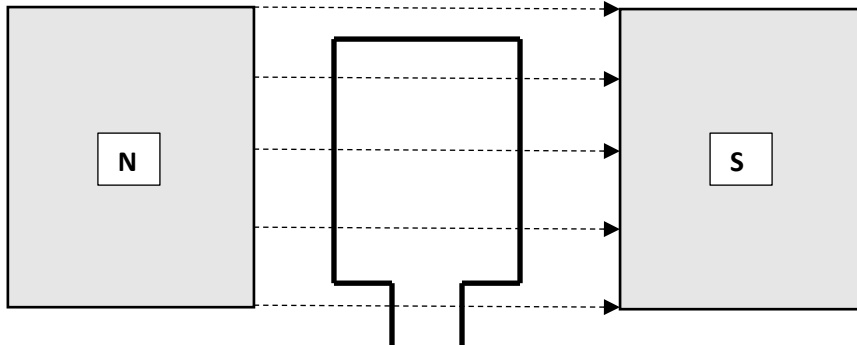


As the bar magnet rotates in the manner shown, the copper disc follows it by rotating in the same direction. Explain why.

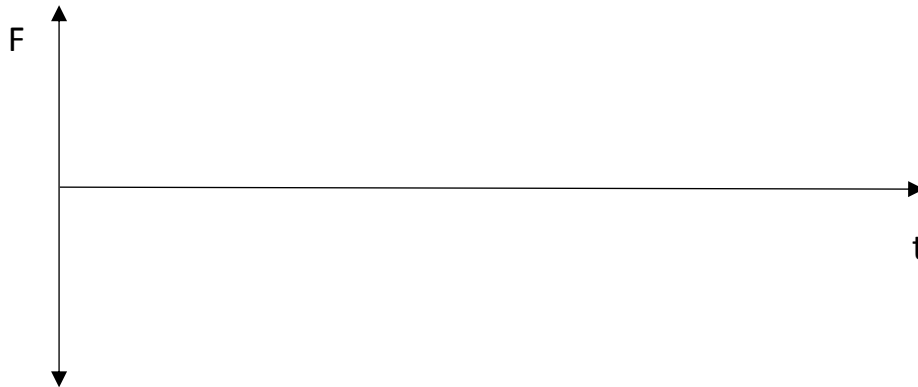
(4 marks)

**Question 9**

The diagram below shows the structure of a simple DC motor (ie – a coil and a uniform magnetic field). The coil can be assumed to have a constant current flowing in it; and the magnetic field can be assumed to be uniform through the coil as it rotates. The coil is connected to a DC battery by a commutator (not shown).



- a) On the set of axes below, show how the magnitude of the magnetic force acting on one side of the coil varies over a quarter of a rotation from the position shown at a constant rate of rotation. (1 mark)



- b) On the set of axes below, show how the torque ( $\tau$ ) acting on the coil varies over ONE complete rotation. Assume the coil starts in the position shown. (3 marks)





**Question 10**

A coil of area  $25.0 \text{ cm}^2$  is made with 200 turns of wire. The coil is placed at right angles to a magnetic field of strength  $175 \mu\text{T}$ .

a) Calculate the amount of flux passing through the coil.

(2 marks)

b) The field collapses to zero in a time of 25 ms, calculate the average emf generated in the coil.

(2 marks)

**Question 11**

a) Calculate the magnetic field strength at a distance of 20.0 cm from a long straight conductor carrying a current of 550 mA. The experiment is performed in air.

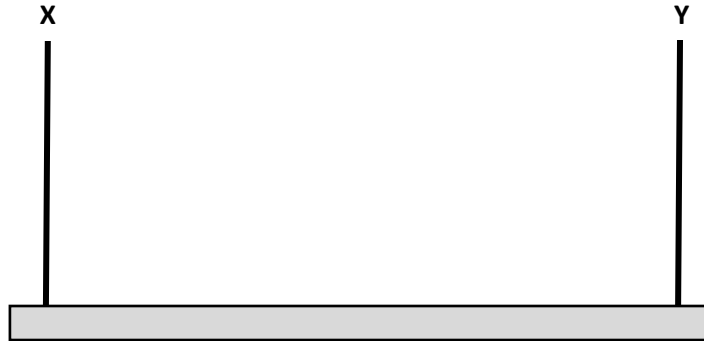
(2 marks)

b) The Magnetic Constant,  $\mu_0$ , is also known as “the magnetic permeability of free space” and applies to air. The magnetic permeability of high pressure argon is slightly lower than the value for air. If the experiment was conducted in high pressure argon, explain how that would change the result.

(2 marks)

**Question 12**

A uniform, 35.0 kg horizontal platform is supported by two vertical steel cables 'X' and 'Y' situated 10.0 m apart as shown. A person with a mass of 85.0 kg stands 3.00 m from 'X'.



With the person in the position stated, calculate the tension in cables 'X' and 'Y'.

(4 marks)

**Question 13**

Khai has a study lamp that uses a 35 W globe that operates at 24 V<sub>RMS</sub>. The lamp plugs into the house mains 240 V<sub>RMS</sub> power supply; consequently, it has a transformer placed in its base that allows the lamp to transform the voltage to the required value. The transformer can be assumed to be ideal. The secondary coil has 30 turns.

- a) Calculate the number of turns on the primary coil.

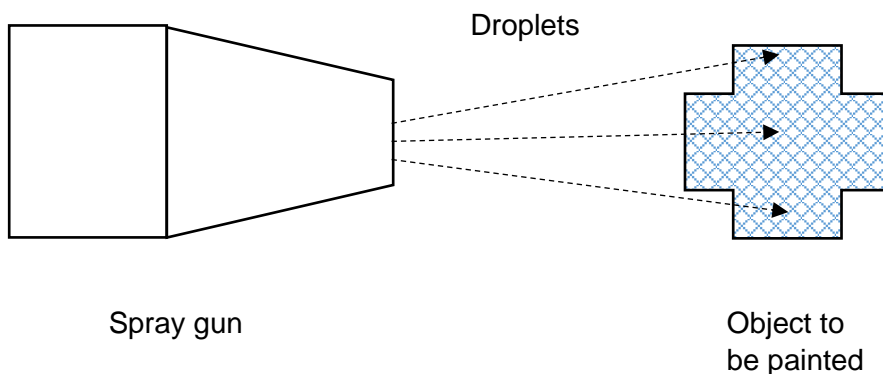
(2 marks)

- b) Calculate the RMS current flowing in the primary coil of the lamp when it is operating if the transformer is 84% efficient at transferring energy from the primary coil to the secondary coil.

(3 marks)

**Question 14**

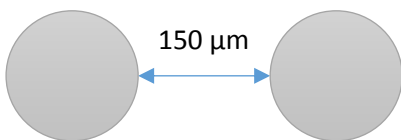
In an electrostatic spray painting system, droplets of paint are ejected from a positively charged spray gun to the object to be painted, which is negatively charged.



The charge on each spherical droplet is  $+2.00 \times 10^{-10}$  C and they have a diameter of  $150 \mu\text{m}$ .

- a) State whether electrons were added to or removed from the droplets of paint by the spray gun. (1 mark)

- b) Calculate the electrostatic force acting between 2 adjacent droplets when they have a surface to surface separation of  $150 \mu\text{m}$  as shown below, (3 marks)



**End of Section One**

**Section Two: Problem-solving 50% (90 Marks)**

This section has **six (6)** questions. You must answer **all** questions. Write your answers in the space provided. Suggested working time for this section is 90 minutes.

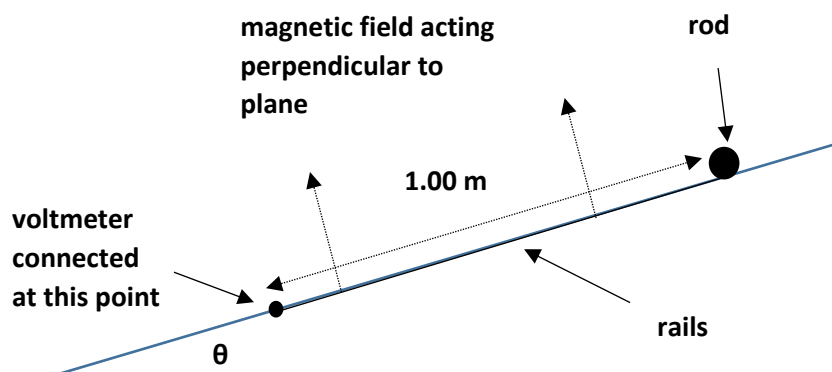
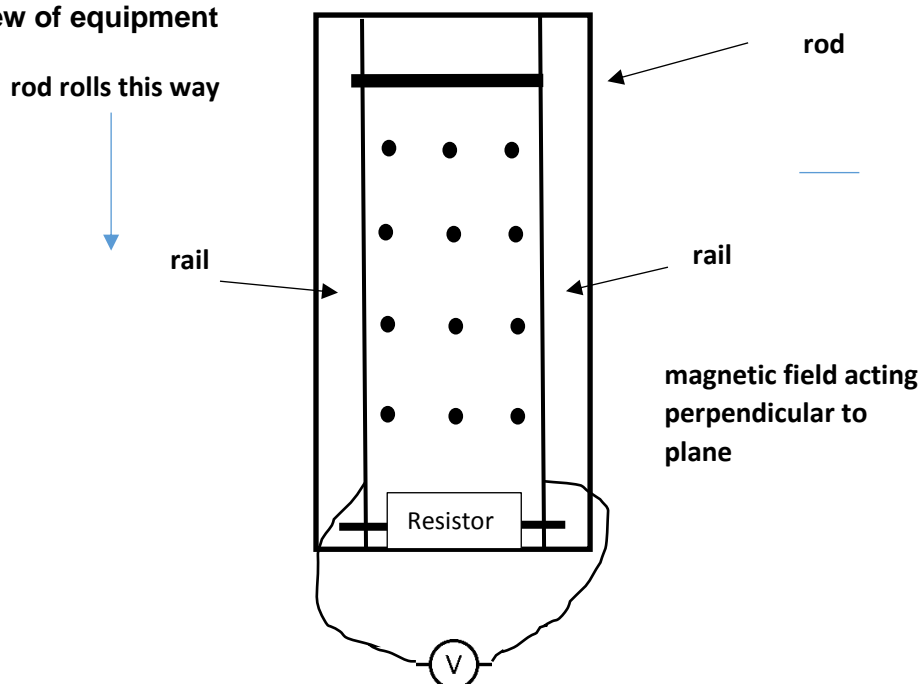
**Question 15****(18 marks)**

Some Year 12 Physics students conducted an experiment investigating the link between electromagnetic induction and gravity in the following situation.

The students placed a conducting rod on an inclined plane. The rod started from rest and was allowed to slide freely down the slope on parallel conducting rails (friction can be ignored in this activity).

A magnetic field was acting at right angles to the slope; hence, an emf was induced in the rod as it moved down the slope. A voltmeter was connected to the rails at a distance of 1.00 m down the slope and the emf ( $V_{MAX}$ ) was measured at this point. A resistor was connected between the rails at the bottom of the slope

The diagrams below illustrate how the equipment was set up in this experiment.

**Diagram 1: Side view of equipment****Diagram 2: Top view of equipment**

SEE NEXT PAGE

The following parameters were measured by the students:

**Initial velocity of rod,  $u = 0 \text{ m s}^{-1}$**

**Distance travelled down the inclined plane,  $s = 1.00 \text{ m}$**

**Mass of rod,  $m = 45.0 \text{ g}$**

**Magnetic flux density,  $B = 0.50 \text{ T}$**

**Distance between rails (ie – length of conducting rod),  $l = 10.0 \text{ cm}$**

During the course of their investigation, the students discovered that they could calculate an experimental value for 'g' (acceleration due to Earth's gravitational field) by investigating the relationship between ' $\theta$ ' (the angle between the inclined plane and the horizontal) and ' $V_{MAX}$ ' (the maximum EMF induced in the rod at a distance of 1.00 m down the plane).

It is known that the acceleration of an object down an inclined plane ( $a_s$ ) is given by:

$$a_s = g \sin \theta$$

It is also known that the instantaneous velocity of the rod at any distance 's' down the slope is given by:

$$v^2 = u^2 + 2as$$

Hence, by combining these two relationships, the following expression can be derived to determine the final velocity 'v' of the rod after it has rolled 1.00 m down the inclined plane:

$$v = \sqrt{2 s g \sin \theta}$$

a) The emf induced in the rod at any point on the slope is given by the formula:

$$emf = lvB$$

Combine this formula with the expression derived for 'v' shown earlier to show that the induced EMF ( $V_{MAX}$ ) in this rod after it has moved 1.00 m down the slope is given by the expression:

$$V_{MAX}^2 = 0.005 g \sin \theta$$

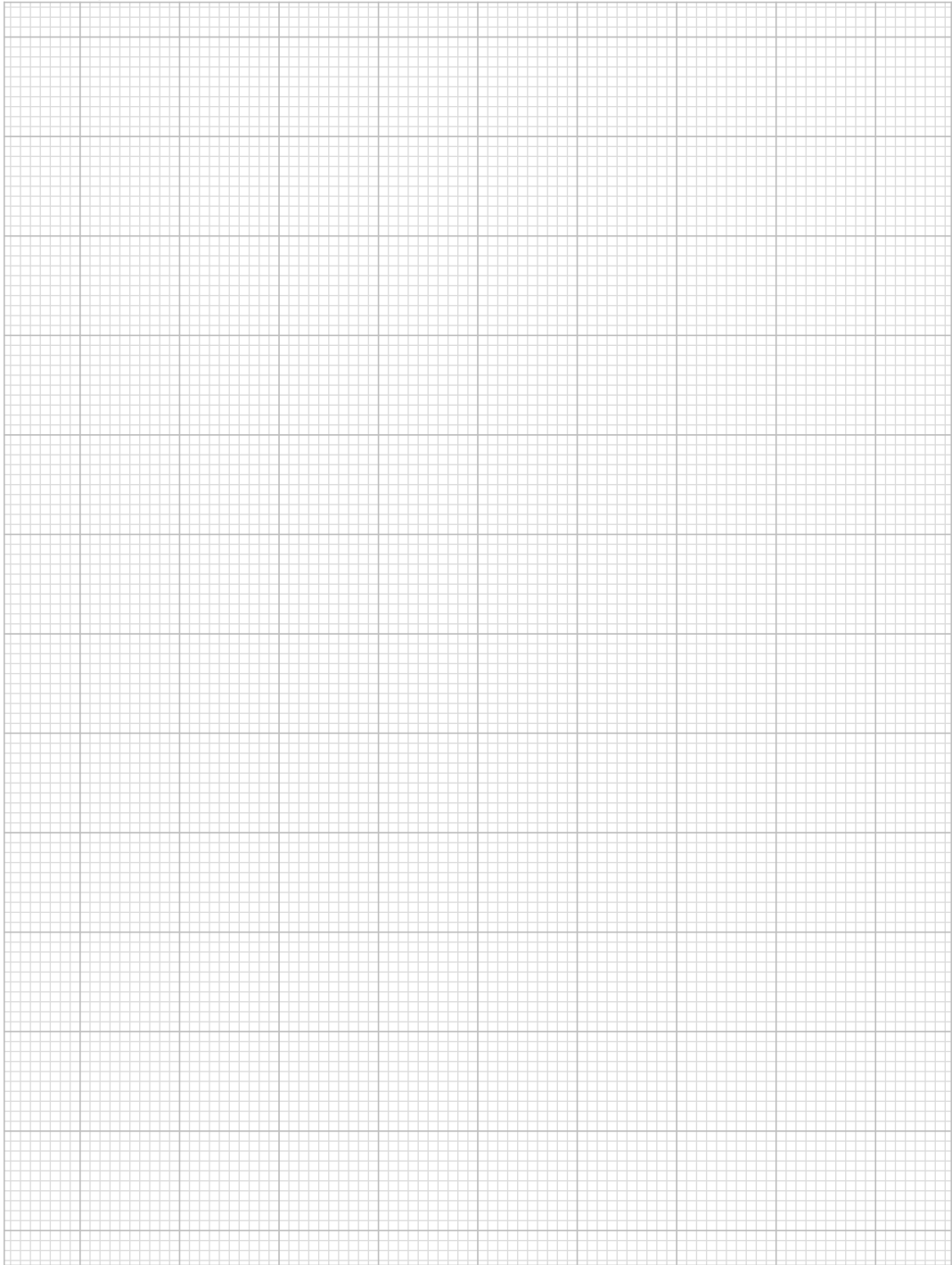
(3 marks)

The students collected data to investigate the relationship between ' $\theta$ ' and ' $V_{\text{MAX}}$ '. They gradually increased the angle ( $\theta$ ) the plane made with the horizontal and recorded the value of the emf induced ( $V_{\text{MAX}}$ ) measured by the voltmeter after rolling 1.00 m down the slope. Their measured values are shown in the table below.

$\theta$	$\sin \theta$	$V_{\text{MAX}} \text{ (x } 10^{-2} \text{ V)}$	$(V_{\text{MAX}})^2 \text{ (x } 10^{-3} \text{ V}^2)$
$10^\circ$	0.17	7.80	6.08
$20^\circ$	0.34	11.0	12.0
$30^\circ$		13.2	
$40^\circ$	0.64	15.0	22.5
$50^\circ$	0.77	16.4	26.8
$60^\circ$		17.4	

- b) Complete the table by filling in the missing values for  $\sin \theta$  and  $(V_{\text{MAX}})^2$ . (2 marks)
- c) Plot a graph of ' $(V_{\text{MAX}})^2$ ' versus ' $\sin \theta$ ' so that the gradient you obtain can be used to determine 'g'. You must **break your axes** to get your data on as much of the graph paper as possible with standard axes steps. Draw a line of best fit through the data. (5 marks)
- d) (i) Determine the slope of your line of best fit. Show on the graph how you obtained your values. (3 marks)
- (ii) Use your value of the gradient to calculate an experimental value of 'g'. (Show working). (2 marks)
- e) You should have found that your experimental value for 'g' is significantly less than the accepted value. Explain why this should be the case in this experiment. (3 marks)

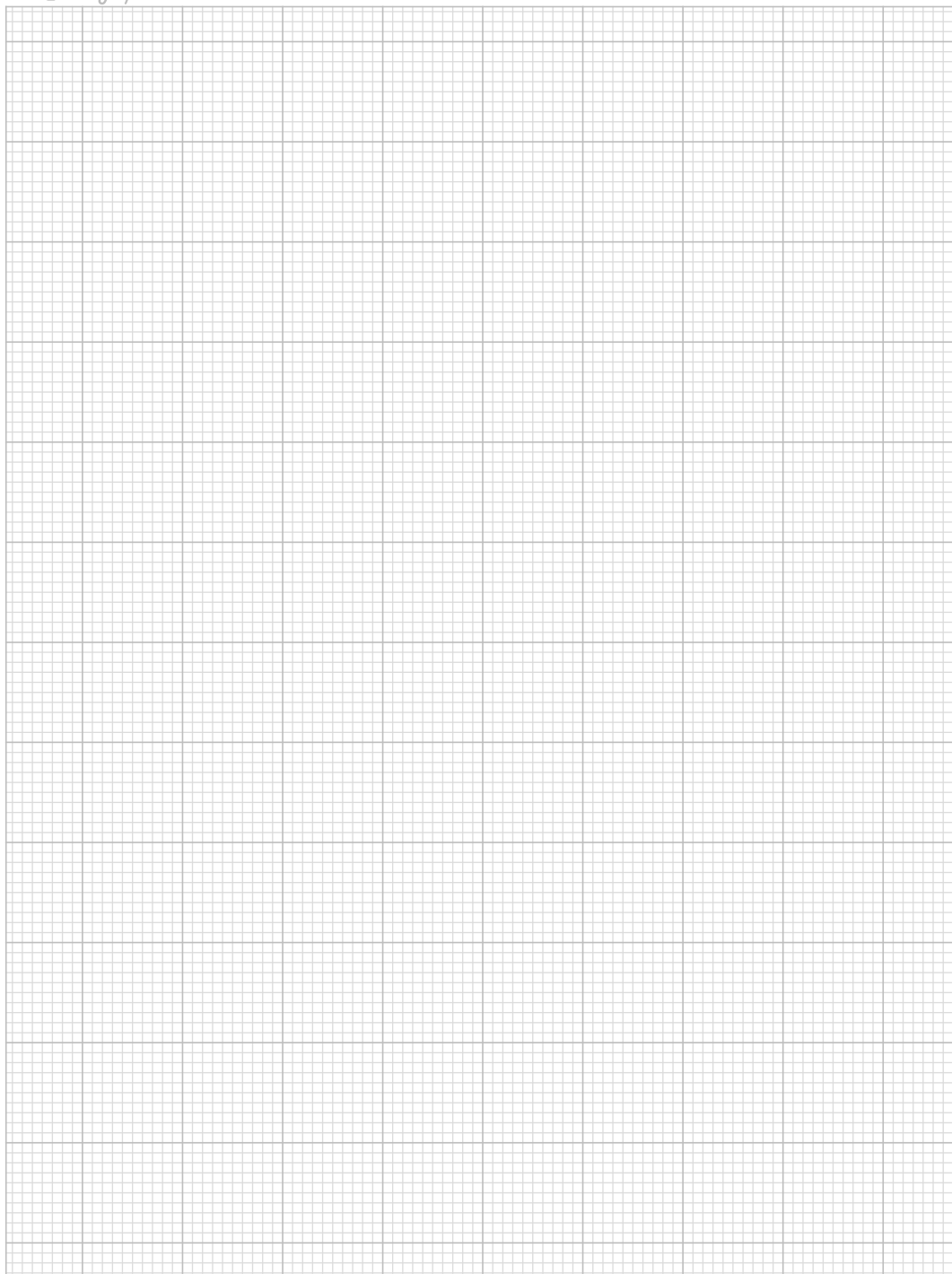
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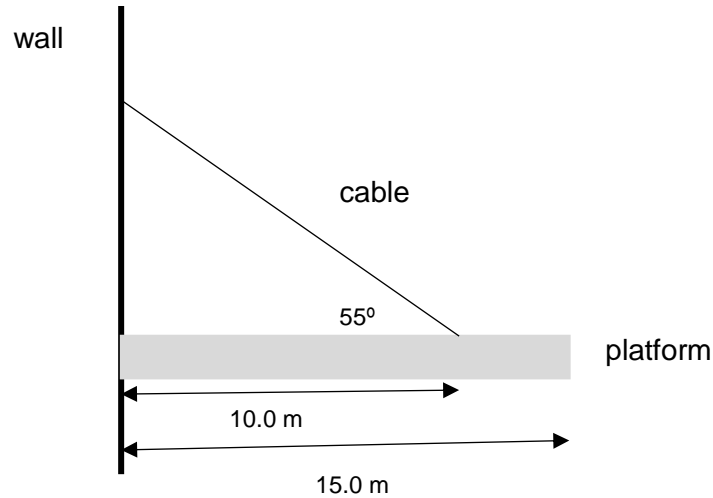
**Additional graph paper if required.**

*Custom Graph*



**Question 16****(16 marks)**

A platform has been constructed so people can walk out over a gorge and view it. The platform structure is shown in the diagram below.



The platform is designed to support a load of 4.5 tonnes and is 15 m long. A single steel cable supports the platform and is attached 10.0 m from the end at  $55^\circ$  as shown in the figure. The platform has a mass of 0.7 tonnes that is uniformly distributed. The platform is pivoted to the wall at the left hand edge.

The 4.5 tonne design load is acting at the right-hand edge of the platform.

The steel cable shown has a maximum tensile strength of  $1.50 \times 10^5$  N.

- a) Draw a free-body diagram showing all the forces acting on the platform. Label the forces appropriately on the diagram above.

(3 marks)

- b) Show that with the design load acting at the right of the platform, the cable will be able to support the platform. Support your answer with calculations to determine the tension in the cable.

(4 marks)

- c) Calculate the magnitude of the force that the wall exerts on the platform. [If you could not calculate an answer for the previous question, use a value of  $8.70 \times 10^4$  N for the tension in the cable]

(4 marks)

- d) If the design load of 4.5 tonnes is moved towards the middle of the platform, describe what happens the magnitude and direction of the reaction force you calculated in part c).

(2 marks)

Magnitude:

Direction:

- e) If the design load is exceeded, calculate how much mass the platform can support at the right-hand edge before the cable snaps

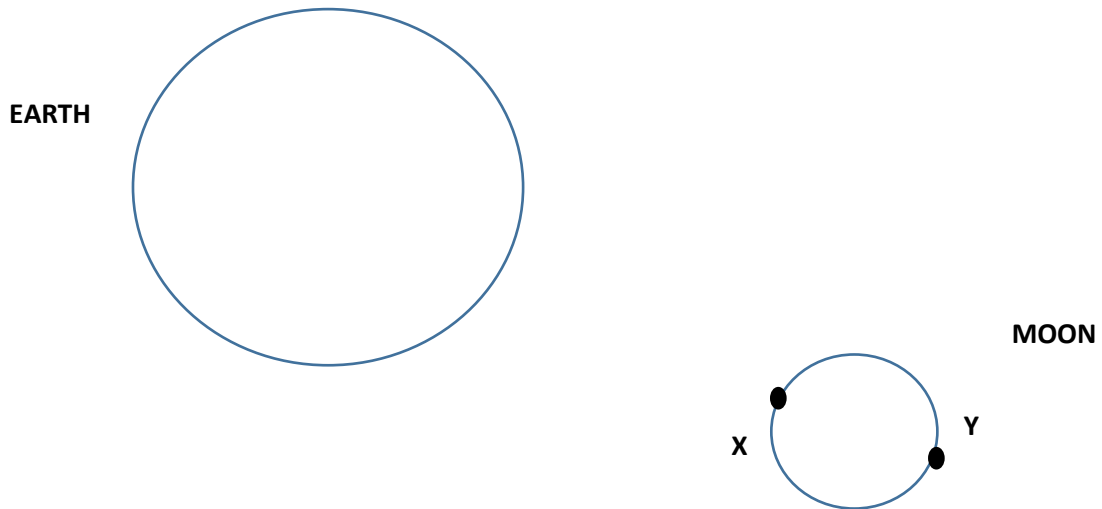
(3 marks)

**Question 17****(14 marks)**

In astrophysics, the 'Roche Limit' or 'Roche Radius' is the distance within which a natural satellite (eg – the Moon) will disintegrate due to its host celestial body (eg – the Earth) exerting a 'tidal force' on it. Disintegration occurs because the tidal forces from the host exceed the gravitational force holding the natural satellite together.

Inside the Roche Limit or Roche Radius, satellites break up into particles and dust and typically form rings (eg – like those around Saturn); outside of it, satellites tend to form almost perfect spherical shapes.

- a) The diagram below shows the Moon in orbit around the Earth (Not to scale). Consider the two points shown: 'X' and 'Y'. On the diagram, draw vectors with arrows to show the relative magnitude and direction of the Earth's gravitational field acting at these points. (2 marks)



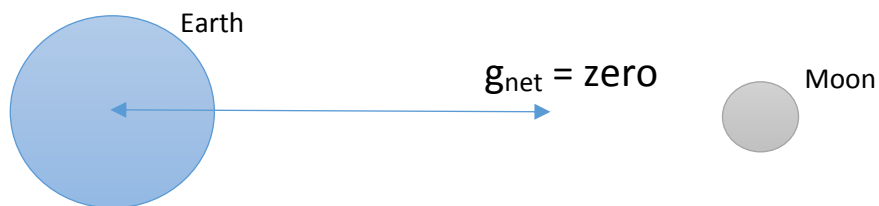
- b) The 'Roche Radius' for the Moon orbiting around the Earth is 9492 km. With reference to the Formulae and Data Sheet and information in this question, clearly explain why the Moon has not disintegrated. No calculations are required but you must make 2 separate points to justify your response. (2 marks)
- c) The Roche Limit is different if the natural satellite is composed of gas or liquid. Explain whether the value would be higher or lower than for a natural satellite composed of rock. (2 marks)

- d) Use the data supplied in your Formulae and Data Sheet to calculate the Earth's gravitational field strength at position 'X' ( $g_x$ ) on the Moon's surface.

(3 marks)

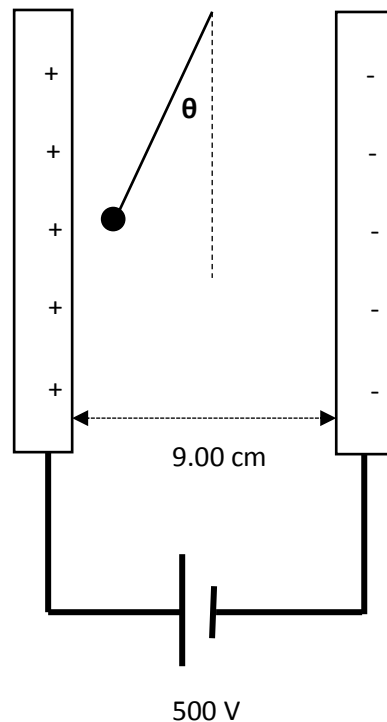
- e) There is point between the Earth and the Moon where the net gravitational field strength due to the Earth and the Moon is zero. Calculate how far this point is from the centre of the Earth.

(5 marks)



**Question 18****(14 marks)**

A small charged object of mass 0.500 mg is suspended from an 8.00 cm long piece of string made of insulating material. The charge on the object is 25.0 nC. The object is placed between 2 parallel plates that are connected to a 500 V voltage source which gives them an electric charge as shown. The plate separation is 9.00 cm.

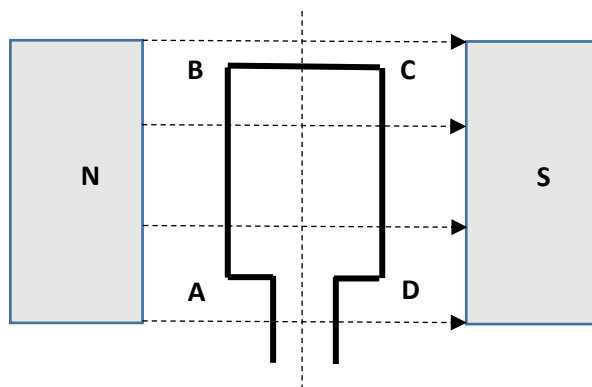


- a) On the diagram above, draw the electric field between the charged plates with 5 field lines. (2 marks)
- b) Is the object positively or negatively charged? Explain your choice. (2 marks)
- c) Calculate the electric field strength between the two charged plates. (2 marks)

- d) Calculate the electrostatic force acting on the charged object (if you could not calculate an answer to part c), use  $E = 5550 \text{ V m}^{-1}$ .  
(2 marks)
- e) Calculate the size of the angle ' $\theta$ '. Show all working. [If you could not calculate an answer for part (d), use  $F_E = 1.40 \times 10^{-4} \text{ N}$ ].  
(3 marks)
- f) An electron initially at rest on the negative plate travels through the electric field to the positive plate. Calculate the maximum speed that the electron can attain in this electric field.  
(3 marks)

**Question 19****(13 marks)**

The diagram below shows the structure of a simple AC generator. Slip rings are not shown.



The coil ABCD consists of 30 turns, is pivoted around its central axis, and has dimensions  $AB = CD = 20.0$  cm and  $AD = BC = 10.0$  cm. It lies in a uniform magnetic field of strength  $0.400$  T. At the moment in time shown, side AB is rotating **out of the page**.

- a) As the coil rotates from this position, an emf is induced. In which direction is this induced emf – ABCD or DCBA? You must justify your response to earn both marks.

**(2 marks)**

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

Justification:

- b) As the coil rotates from this position is the instantaneous value of emf increasing or decreasing? You must justify your response to earn both marks.

**(2 marks)**

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

Justification:

The AC generator rotates at rate of 600 revolutions per minute.

- c) Calculate the maximum emf generated.

**(3 marks)**



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When the generator is turned at a slower speed the RMS voltage ( $V_{\text{RMS}}$ ) is measured as 4.00 V

d) . Determine the maximum emf in this case.

(2 marks)

e) When the generator is connected to an external resistive circuit the torque required to turn the generator at the same rate of rotation increases. Explain why.

(2 marks)

f) Slip rings in an AC generator are less prone to electrical damage compared to the commutator arrangement in a DC generator. Explain why this is the case.

(2 marks)

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**Question 20****(15 marks)**

Our Sun is a medium sized star that is part of a spiral galaxy called the Milky Way. Like all spiral galaxies, the stars in the Milky Way rotate around a galactic centre.

Our Sun's orbit is circular with a radius of  $2.50 \times 10^{20}$  m (about 26000 light years); its average orbital speed is  $2.20 \times 10^5$  m s<sup>-1</sup>.

- a) Demonstrate by calculation that the orbital period of the Sun around the galactic centre of the Milky Way is  $2.26 \times 10^8$  years.

(3 marks)

- b) The circular orbit of the Sun around the galactic centre of the Milky Way is due to the gravitational force of attraction between the Sun's mass and centre of mass of the Milky Way. Calculate the mass of the Milky Way based on this information.

(4 marks)

The planet Mercury is a natural satellite of the Sun. Mercury has a mass of  $3.29 \times 10^{23}$  kg and a radius of 2 440 km. Mercury is travelling around the Sun at an orbital radius of 57 909 050 km

- c) Calculation that the centripetal acceleration of Mercury around the Sun.

(3 marks)

- d) Calculate the orbital speed of Mercury around the Sun.

(3 marks)

- e) Over billions of years the mass of the Sun will decrease. What effect this will have on the orbit of Mercury? You must refer to the orbital radius and the orbital period in your response.

(2 marks)

**End of Section 2**

SEE NEXT PAGE

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**Section Three: Comprehension****20% (36 Marks)**

This section contains **two (2)** questions. You must answer both questions. Write your answers in the space provided. Suggested working time for this section is 40 minutes.

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**Question 21****(18 marks)****“How do gravitational slingshots work?”**

By Fraser Cain (From Universe Today Astronomy and News,  
<http://www.universetoday.com/113488/how-do-gravitational-slingshots-work/>)

*Have you ever heard that spacecraft can speed themselves up by performing gravitational slingshot maneuvers? What's involved to get yourself going faster across the Solar System.*

So, before we go any further a “gravitational slingshot” is a gravity assist that will speed up a spacecraft.. For example, when Voyager was sent out into the Solar System, it used gravitational slingshots past Jupiter and Saturn to increase its velocity enough to escape the Sun’s gravity.

So how do gravitational assists work? You probably know this involves flying your spacecraft dangerously close to a massive planet. But how does this help speed you up? Sure, as the spacecraft flies towards the planet, it speeds up. But then, as it flies away, it slows down again. Sort of like a skateboarder in a half pipe.

This process nets out to zero, with no overall increase in velocity as your spacecraft falls into and out of the gravity well. So how do they do it? Here’s the trick. Each planet has an orbital speed travelling around the Sun.

As the spacecraft approaches the planet, its gravity pulls the much lighter spacecraft so that it catches up with the planet in orbit. It’s the orbital momentum from the planet which gives the spacecraft a tremendous speed boost. The closer it can fly, the more momentum it receives, and the faster it flies away from the encounter.

To kick the velocity even higher, the spacecraft can fire its rockets during the closest approach, and the high speed encounter will multiply the effect of the rockets. This speed boost comes with a cost. It’s still a transfer of momentum. The planet loses a tiny bit of orbital velocity.

If you did enough gravitational slingshots, such as several zillion zillion slingshots, you’d eventually cause the planet to crash into the Sun. You can use gravitational slingshots to decelerate by doing the whole thing backwards. You approach the planet in the opposite direction that it’s orbiting the Sun. The transfer of momentum will slow down the spacecraft a significant amount, and speed up the planet an infinitesimal amount.

NASA’s MESSENGER spacecraft made 2 Earth flybys, 2 Venus flybys and 3 Mercury flybys before it was going slowly enough to make an orbital insertion around Mercury.

Ulysses, the solar probe launched in 1990, used gravity assists to totally change its trajectory into a polar orbit above and below the Sun.

Cassini used flybys of Venus, Earth and Jupiter to reach Saturn with an efficient flight path.

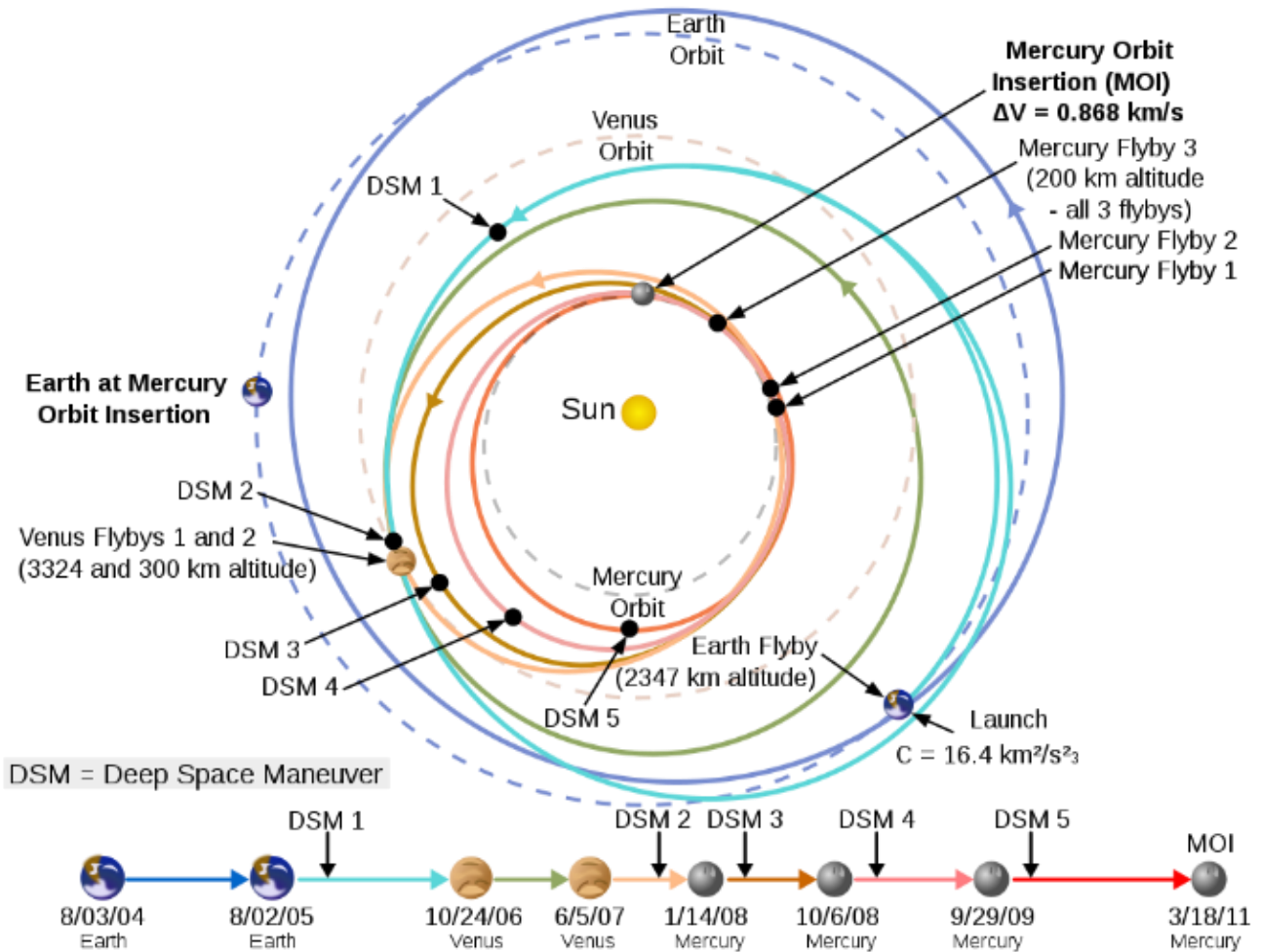


Diagram detailing the Messenger orbital maneuvers.

Nature sure is trying to make it easy for us. Gravitational slingshots are an elegant way to slow down spacecraft, tweak their orbits into directions you could never reach any other way, or accelerate to incredible speeds.

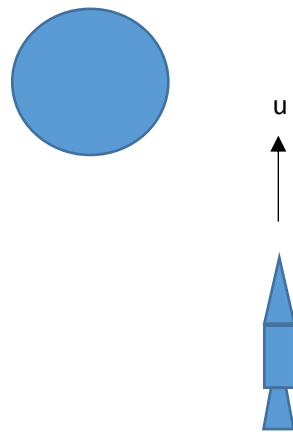
It's a brilliant dance using orbital mechanics to aid in our exploration of the cosmos. It's a shining example of the genius and the ingenuity of the minds who are helping to push humanity further out into the stars.

- a) "Voyager is a spacecraft that was sent out beyond the Solar System, it used gravitational slingshots past Jupiter and Saturn to increase its velocity enough to escape the Sun's gravity."

Voyager needed a minimum speed to escape the Sun's gravity. Explain why this speed is needed and how it gets to this speed.

(4 marks)

- b) The diagram below is incomplete. It shows a spacecraft approaching a planet which it is planning to use for a gravitational slingshot to increase its velocity. Its initial velocity direction ( $u$ ) as it approaches the planet is also shown with an arrow.



- i) On the diagram, indicate with an arrow the direction of the planet's motion around the sun. Label it 'planet motion' and briefly explain your choice.

(2 marks)

- ii) On the same diagram draw the path of the spacecraft as it passes by the planet. Briefly explain your response. (3 marks)
- c) The gravitational slingshot maneuver involves flying a spacecraft dangerously close to a massive planet. In August 2011, NASA's Juno mission to Jupiter was launched. Juno used the Earth to complete a gravitational slingshot. Juno came to within 560 km of the Earth's surface. If Juno has a mass of 1593 kg, calculate the gravitational force acting on Juno at this point. (4 marks)
- d) It's possible that if a spacecraft like Juno performs enough 'gravitational slingshot' maneuvers around a planet like Earth that it could cause the planet to move closer to the Sun and possibly spiral into it. Explain with reference to Physics concepts in the passage and from the Physics ATAR course. (3 marks)
- e) Consider a spacecraft which is about to complete a slingshot maneuver. Is the total mechanical energy of the spacecraft the same before and after the slingshot? Explain. (2 marks)

**Question 22****(18 marks)****“Tesla turns in his grave: Is it finally time to switch from AC to DC?”****By John Hewitt, from ExtremeTech, 10/12/2012**<https://www.extremetech.com/extreme/142741-tesla-turns-in-his-grave-is-it-finally-time-to-switch-from-ac-to-dc>**Paragraph 1**

AC power transmission losses are greater than DC losses. That is hardly an industry secret. In fact the reason you can wirelessly charge a cell phone is because any changing current will radiate away some energy. You just need to coil the wire up to gather some of that energy in a convenient place. At the Three Gorges Dam in China, high voltage DC transmission lines were chosen to bring the power to the people for a variety of reasons. Many power companies are now starting to rethink the decisions that made AC transmission the obvious choice in the previous era.

**Paragraph 2**

Depending on the voltage, wire characteristics, and environment, other parasitic losses in AC transmission can become insidious, much more so than the relatively small radiative loss. At a mains power frequency of 50 or 60 hertz, the skin effect — where the majority of the current travels only on the surface of the conductor — starts to become more important. If most of the current is travelling in only a portion of the total cross section available, it will see an effectively higher resistance. To combat the skin effect, more expensive, multi-stranded wire must be used.

**Tesla v Edison****Paragraph 3**

So why do we use AC? To begin with, it typically comes hot off the presses as AC. In other words, it is most efficiently produced in this form by three-phase-alternators at the power station's turbines. If you then want to transmit power any significant distance from the point of generation, you need to step up the voltage quite a bit just to get something worthwhile on the other end. If, for example, you are starting with 20 volts and are dropping one volt every mile because of the resistance of the wire alone, 20 miles out you will have next to nothing. Actually the losses will diminish a little less than linearly but you get the idea.



#### Paragraph 4

Transforming to higher voltages is simple for AC, you use a transformer — but for DC, it typically means using motor-generator sets or other fancy elaborations. When you then manage to get some power transmitted, your biggest customer might very well be a large motor that compresses, pumps, or other moves stuff, and runs on — you guessed it — AC power. The three-phase AC induction motor, first envisioned by Tesla, is far and away the most efficient way to convert electricity into mechanical power. DC motors, until recent times, required graphite brushes for commutation which severely restrict maximum RPM, reliability, and lifespan.

#### Paragraph 5 **Voltage is King**

To transmit power, voltage is king. The same power transmitted at a higher voltage requires less current — in fact a whole lot less current — and therefore less of that expensive copper, or aluminum as the case may be in high voltage wires. Less metal will make cables lighter and thinner. Support towers can therefore be shorter since current-laden wire won't lengthen and couple to the ground when unable to sufficiently disperse its heat. To transmit the same power as DC, an AC system will need to operate with a higher peak voltage, since most of the time the level is below that of an equivalent DC system. During the portion of the cycle when the AC is at lower voltages, efficiency is lost because, as above, voltage is king.

#### Paragraph 6

Some new projects, such as the Three Gorges Dam in China (pictured), and undersea transmission lines and longer spans in the western US are now planning to use DC transmission. The question is how far will this new trend go? It would sure be convenient to do away with all those DC wall chargers for phones and computers, so why not run the DC to the doorstep? Instead of three lines for three-phase industrial power, business would only need one power line in addition to ground.



#### Paragraph 7

If widespread change does happen, hopefully it will be gradual enough to permit proper precautions to be put in place. Standard wisdom for handling AC electrical power will have to be re-written for DC by experience. Cartoonists, in particular, will be severely affected as they have by tradition used DC exclusively in their work. When Jerry hands Tom a DC live wire, Tom is unable to let go — to ensuing dramatic effect. With the rapid reversal of current in AC, the muscles relax long enough for you to release and pull away. Undoubtedly, there would be some safety issues like this to be ironed out, but it looks like high voltage DC transmission will be here to stay, at least for some applications.

- a) “AC power transmission losses are greater than DC losses. This is hardly an industry secret.” (Paragraph 1). Two of the reasons for this statement are outlined in the article – the “skin effect” (Paragraph 2); and in Paragraph 5 (“Voltage is king”). Using physics concepts, explain these losses and why they make AC power transmission less efficient than DC power.

(4 marks)

- b) State two (2) reasons that AC power transmission is still mostly used instead of DC power transmission.

(2 marks)

Reason 1:

Reason 2:

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At the Muja power station in WA, power can be generated at 200 MW and 16000 V RMS. For transmission, a step-up transformer increases the voltage to 330 Kv and can be assumed to be 100% efficient. The total resistance of the transmission lines to the next substation are  $50 \Omega$

- c) calculate the voltage drop in those lines

(3 marks)

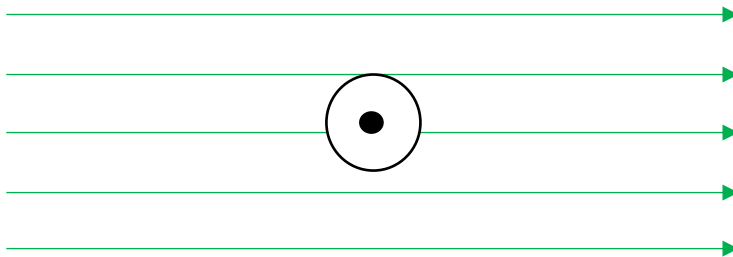
- d) In paragraph 4, the article talks about “commutation” in DC motors using “graphite brushes”. Discuss what “commutation” means and the role that graphite brushes plays in this process.

(3 marks)

- e) Explain why AC power is less dangerous than DC power in terms of electrocution. (2 marks)

- f) Consider a DC power line carrying a current of 150 A horizontally above the ground (indicated out of the page). A section of the power line has a mass of 25.4 g and a length of 10.0 m. The Earth's magnetic field has a direction right as indicated on the diagram and has a flux density of  $5.55 \times 10^{-5}$  T. Consider the **weight** of the power line and the **force due to current** to determine the net force on the power line

(4 marks)



End of Section 3

SEE NEXT PAGE







