AQA - Atomic structure – GCSE Combined Science Physics

1. May/2020/Paper_1F/No.2

0 2 Between 1951 and 1992 the USA tested nuclear weapons in a desert.

0 2 . 1 Complete the sentence.

Choose the answer from the box.

[1 mark]

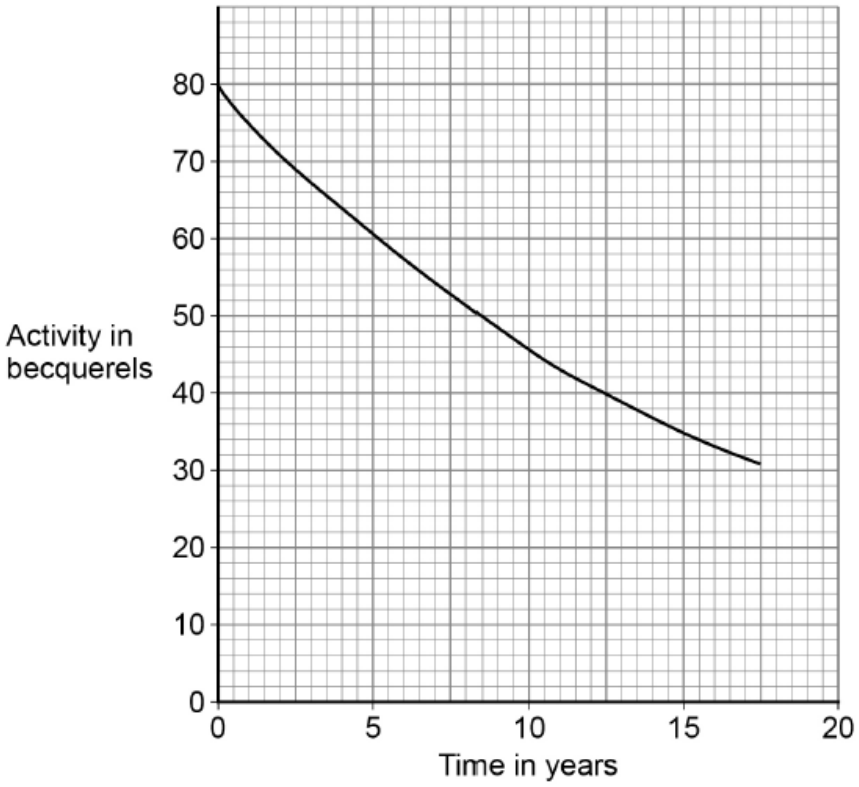
contamination	**irradiation**	**ionisation**	**decay**

Radioactive dust from the nuclear weapons testing settled on the desert. This is called radioactive _____ .

The desert now contains radioactive tritium.

Figure 3 shows how the activity of the tritium in a sample taken from the desert changed with time.

Figure 3



0 2 . 2 The sample was collected from the desert in 1992.

Determine the activity of the tritium in the sample in 2007.

[2 marks]

Activity = _____ Bq

0 2 . 3 How much time did it take for the activity of the tritium in the sample to decrease from 80 Bq to 40 Bq?

[1 mark]

Time = _____ years

0 2 . 4 What is the half-life of tritium?

[1 mark]

Half-life = _____ years

0 2 . 5 The sample started with 45 billion atoms of tritium.

After 4 years the sample had 36 billion atoms of tritium.

Calculate the percentage of the tritium in the sample that remained after 4 years.

[2 marks]

Percentage of tritium remaining = _____ %

0 2 . 6 A scientist determined the activity of a sample of tritium every minute for 3 minutes.

Table 1 shows the results.

Table 1

Time in minutes	Activity in Bq
0	149
1	151
2	148
3	152

Why do the activity readings in **Table 1** vary?

[1 mark]

Tick (✓) **one** box.

Radioactive decay is a random process. ☐

Temperature changes affect the radioactive decay. ☐

The number of radioactive nuclei keeps increasing and decreasing. ☐

0 2 . 7 What safety precaution should scientists take when working with radioactive materials in a laboratory?

[1 mark]

Tick (✓) **one** box.

Tie long hair back before handling the materials. ☐

Use long tongs to handle the materials. ☐

Wear safety goggles when handling the materials. ☐

0 2 . 8 Studies show that children born near the area of the desert containing tritium were more likely to develop cancer.

It is important that the results from these studies are checked by other scientists.

What is this process called?

[1 mark]

Tick (✓) **one** box.

Experiment review ☐

Peer review ☐

Results review ☐

Test review ☐

2. May/2020/Paper_1H/No.2

0 2 Different radioactive isotopes emit different types of nuclear radiation.

A polonium-210 (Po) nucleus emits an alpha particle (α) and turns into a lead (Pb) nucleus.

This can be represented by the equation:

$$^{210}_{84}\text{Po} \longrightarrow {}^{A}_{Z}\text{Pb} + \alpha$$

0 2 . 1 What is the value of A in the equation?

[1 mark]

Tick (✓) **one** box.

A = 206 ☐ A = 208 ☐ A = 210 ☐ A = 211 ☐

0 2 . 2 What is the value of Z in the equation?

[1 mark]

Tick (✓) **one** box.

Z = 80 ☐ Z = 82 ☐ Z = 85 ☐ Z = 86 ☐

0 2 . 3 A strontium-89 nucleus (Sr) emits a beta particle (β) and turns into an yttrium nucleus (Y).

This can be represented by the equation:

$$^{89}_{38}\mathrm{Sr} \longrightarrow {}^{A}_{Z}\mathrm{Y} + \beta$$

What are the values of A and Z in the equation?

[2 marks]

A = _____

Z = _____

0 2 . 4 Gamma radiation is another type of nuclear radiation.

What does gamma radiation consist of?

[1 mark]

Tick (✓) **one** box.

- High energy neutrons ☐
- Electromagnetic waves ☐
- Particles with no charge ☐
- Positively charged ions ☐

0 2 . 5 Explain the differences between the properties of alpha, beta and gamma radiations.

[6 marks]

3. May/2020/Paper_1H/No.6

0 6 A student modelled radioactive decay by rolling some dice in a tray.

Dice that landed on the number six were removed from the tray.

The removed dice represent nuclei that have decayed.

0 6 . 1 Why is rolling dice a suitable model for radioactive decay?

[1 mark]

0 6 . 2 The student rolled 144 dice and removed all those that landed on the number six.

The student rolled the remaining dice and again removed all those that landed on the number six.

When the student had rolled the dice 20 times there were 9 dice left.

Calculate the most likely number of times that the student had rolled the dice before the number of dice had halved.

You should show how you work out your answer.

[3 marks]

Answer = _____ rolls of the dice

0 6 . 3 The number of times the dice have to be rolled to halve the original number of dice in the tray represents the half-life.

Figure 7 shows an eight-sided dice and a six-sided dice.

Figure 7

The student now used eight-sided dice to model radioactive decay. Dice that landed on the number six were again removed from the tray.

The half-life represented by rolling eight-sided dice is likely to be different from the half-life represented by rolling six-sided dice.

Explain how.

[2 marks]

0 6 . 4 A teacher has two radioactive sources, **A** and **B**.

Source **A** has a longer half-life than source **B**.

What can be deduced about the nuclei in source **A** compared with the nuclei in source **B**?

Do **not** refer to isotopes in your answer.

[1 mark]

4. May/2019/Paper_1F/No.4

0 4 Protactinium (Pa) is radioactive.

0 4 . 1 An atom of one isotope of protactinium contains 91 protons and 143 neutrons.

What is the correct symbol for this atom?

[1 mark]

Tick (✓) **one** box.

$^{143}_{91}Pa$ ☐ $^{234}_{91}Pa$ ☐ $^{234}_{143}Pa$ ☐ $^{91}_{52}Pa$ ☐

A teacher investigated how the count rate from a sample of protactinium changed over time.

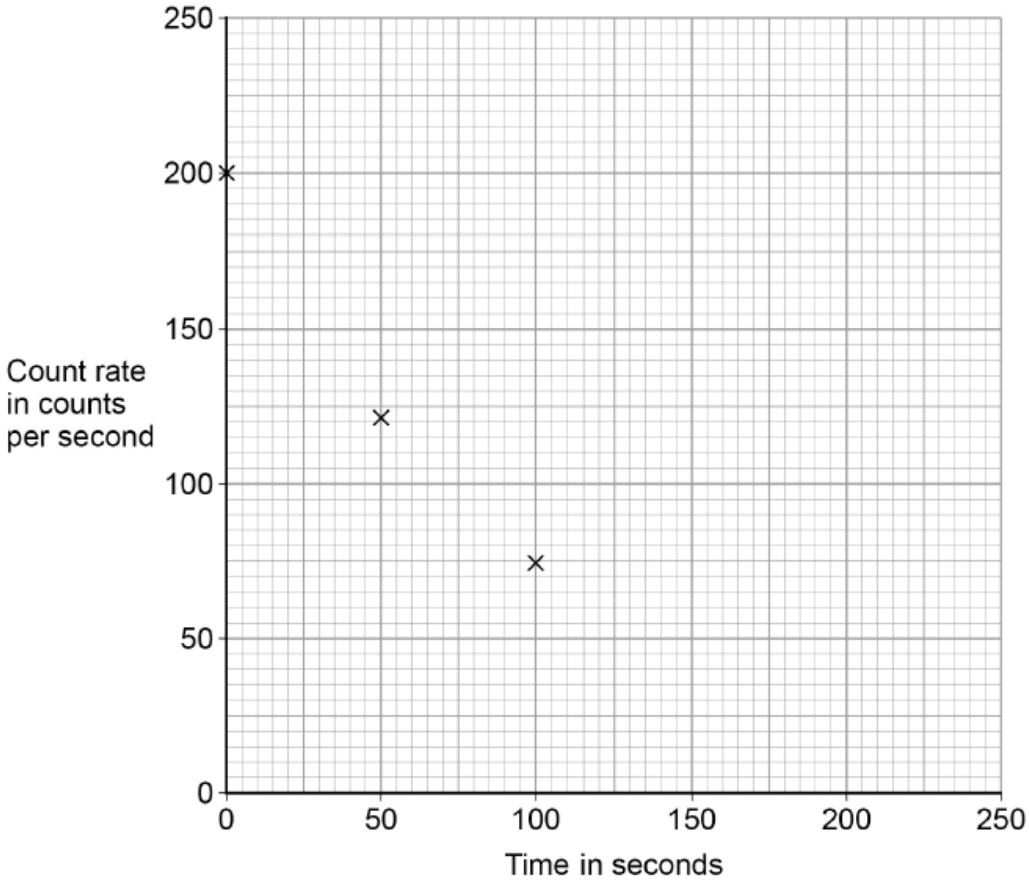
Table 2 shows the results.

Table 2

Time in seconds	Count rate in counts per second
0	200
50	122
100	74
150	45
200	27

Figure 6 shows some of the teacher's results.

Figure 6



0 4 . 2 Complete the graph in **Figure 6**.

Use data from **Table 2**.

Draw the line of best fit.

[2 marks]

0 4 . 3 How much time did it take for the count rate to change from 200 counts per second to 100 counts per second?

[1 mark]

Time taken = _____ s

0 4 . 4 What is the half-life of protactinium?

[1 mark]

Half-life = _____ s

0 4 . 5 The nuclear radiation from the protactinium can pass through paper.

This radiation can only be detected up to 1 metre away from the protactinium.

What type of radiation is emitted by the protactinium?

[1 mark]

Tick (✓) **one** box.

Alpha ☐

Beta ☐

Gamma ☐

Neutron ☐

0 4 . 6 The teacher read an article about the effects of radiation on the human body.

Why are articles in scientific journals generally more trustworthy than articles in newspapers?

[1 mark]

5. May/2019/Paper_1H/No.6

0 6 Lanthanum-140 is a radioactive isotope.

0 6 . 1 A nucleus of lanthanum-140 emits gamma radiation.

What happens to the mass number and the charge of the nucleus when gamma radiation is emitted?

[1 mark]

Tick (✓) **one** box.

Mass number	**Charge**	
Decreases	Decreases	☐
Decreases	Stays the same	☐
Stays the same	Decreases	☐
Stays the same	Stays the same	☐

0 6 . 2 Why is it difficult to detect gamma radiation?

[1 mark]

0 6 . 3 Activity is the rate at which a radioactive source decays.

A teacher measured the count-rate from a sample of lanthanum-140 using a Geiger-Muller (G-M) tube.

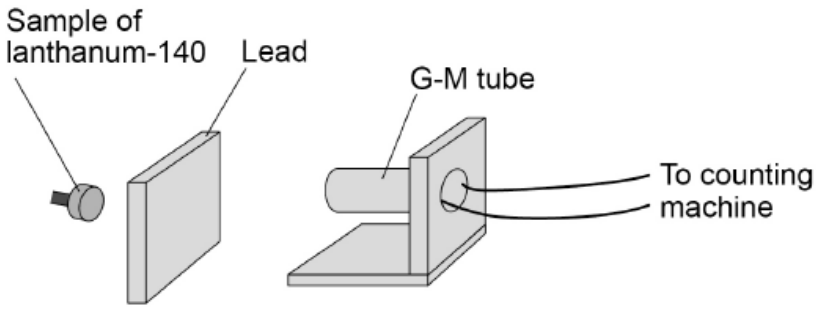
Explain why the count rate was less than the activity of the sample of lanthanum-140

[2 marks]

The teacher investigated how the thickness of lead affected the amount of gamma radiation that could pass through it.

Figure 6 shows the apparatus.

Figure 6



0 6 . 4 Explain why the teacher stood as far away from the apparatus as possible.

[2 marks]

Table 1 shows the results.

Table 1

Thickness of lead in cm	Count rate in counts per second
0.5	110
1.0	60
1.5	33
2.0	18
2.5	10

0 6 . 5 The teacher concluded that the count rate was **not** inversely proportional to the thickness of lead.

Explain why the teacher was correct.

Use the data in **Table 1**.

[3 marks]

0 6 . 6 Lanthanum-140 can also emit beta radiation and change into cerium.

Complete the equation showing the decay of lanthanum (La) 140 into cerium (Ce).

[2 marks]

$$^{140}_{57}\mathrm{La} \longrightarrow {}^{\quad}_{\quad}\mathrm{e} + {}^{\quad}_{\quad}\mathrm{Ce}$$

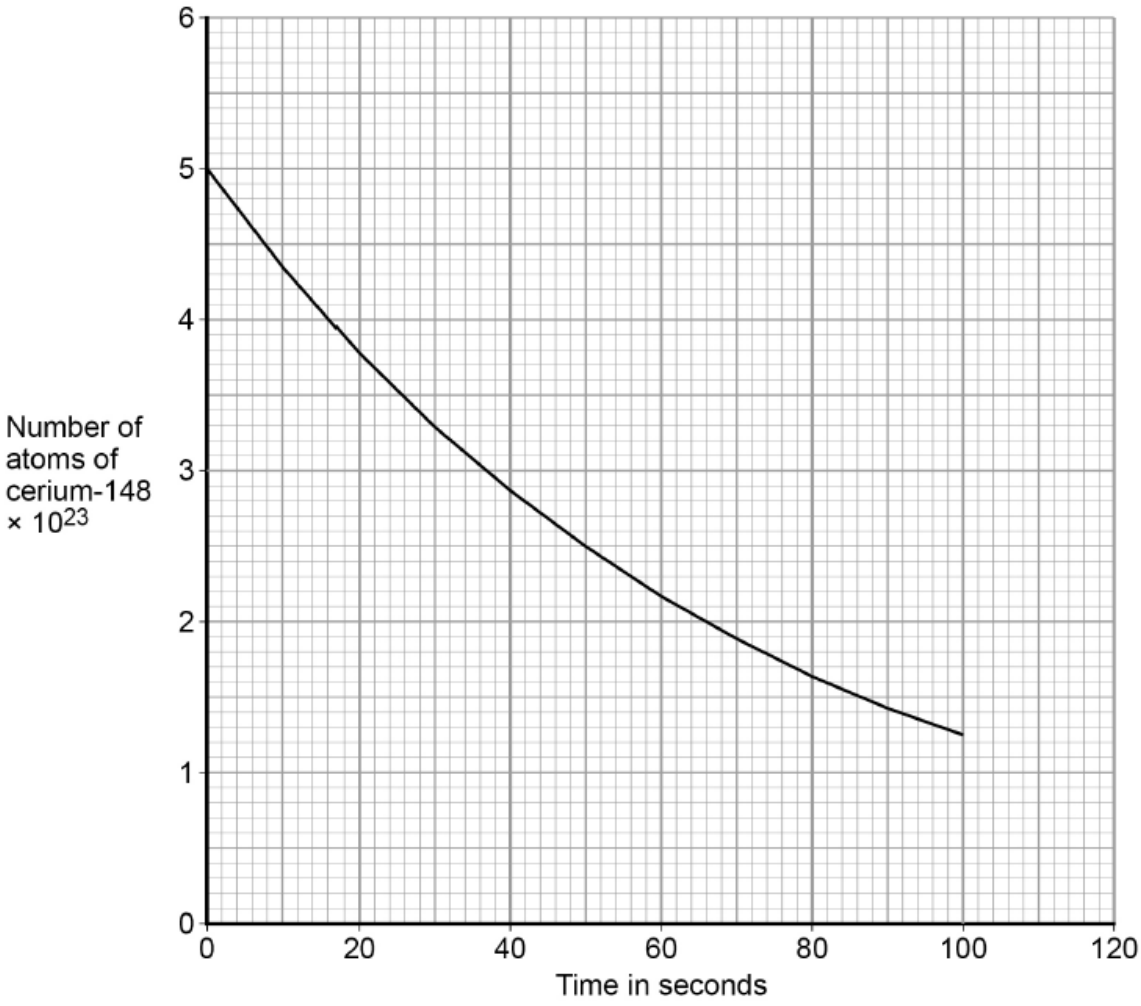
There are other isotopes of cerium which are radioactive.

Different isotopes of cerium have different half-lives.

The half-life of an isotope can be found by studying how the number of atoms changes over time.

Figure 7 shows how the number of atoms of cerium-148 in a 120 g sample changes over time.

Figure 7



0 6 . 7 Determine the ratio of the number of cerium atoms in the sample when it was 100 seconds old compared with when the sample was 350 seconds old.

Use data from **Figure 7**.

[4 marks]

Ratio = _____

0 6 . 8 Determine the activity of the sample of cerium when the sample was 20 seconds old.

Use **Figure 7**.

[3 marks]

Activity = _____ Bq

6. May/2020/Paper_1F/No.6

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- Particles with no charge ☐
- Positively charged ions ☐

0 6 . 5 Explain the differences between the properties of alpha, beta and gamma radiations.

[6 marks]

7. May/2019/Paper_1F/No.3

0 3 In an experiment, a beam of alpha particles was directed at a thin sheet of gold foil.

0 3 . 1 Most of the alpha particles passed straight through the gold foil.

Alpha particles which passed close to the nucleus of a gold atom did **not** pass straight through.

What happened to the alpha particles which passed close to the nucleus of a gold atom?

[1 mark]

0 3 . 2 The results suggested that the diameter of the nucleus of a gold atom is $\frac{1}{6000}$ of the diameter of the atom.

The diameter of a gold atom is 0.18 nm

Calculate the diameter of a gold nucleus in nm

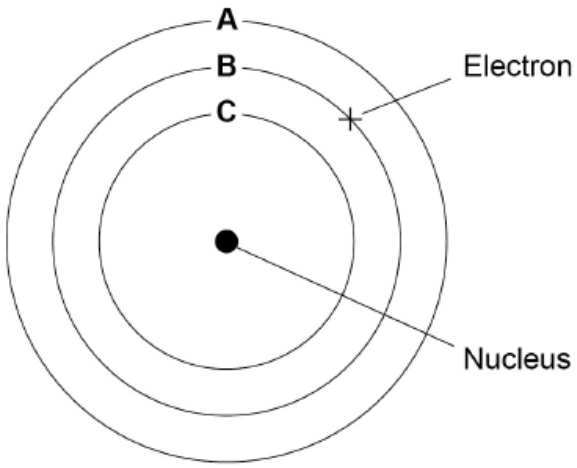
[2 marks]

Diameter = _____ nm

0 3 . 3 Further experiments showed that gold nuclei are surrounded by electrons in different energy levels.

Figure 4 shows three of the energy levels around the nucleus of a gold atom.

Figure 4



The electron in energy level **B** absorbs electromagnetic radiation.

Which energy level will the electron be in after it has absorbed the electromagnetic radiation?

[1 mark]

Tick (✓) **one** box.

A ☐ **B** ☐ **C** ☐