

# ASTR 105G Lab Manual

## Fall 2008



Astronomy Department  
New Mexico State University



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# 1 Tools for Success in ASTR 105G

## 1.1 Introduction

Astronomy is a physical science. Just like biology, chemistry, geology, and physics, astronomers collect data, analyze that data, attempt to understand the object/subject they are looking at, and submit their results for publication. Along the way astronomers use all of the mathematical techniques and physics necessary to understand the objects they examine. Thus, just like any other science, a large number of mathematical tools and concepts are needed to perform astronomical research. In today's introductory lab, you will review and learn some of the most basic concepts necessary to enable you to successfully complete the various laboratory exercises you will encounter during this semester. When needed, the weekly laboratory exercise you are performing will refer back to the examples in this introduction—so keep the completed examples you will do today with you at all times during the semester to use as a reference when you run into these exercises later this semester (in fact, on some occasions your TA might have you redo one of the sections of this lab for review purposes).

## 1.2 The Metric System

Like all other scientists, astronomers use the metric system. The metric system is based on powers of 10, and has a set of measurement units analogous to the English system we use in everyday life here in the US. In the metric system the main unit of length (or distance) is the *meter*, the unit of mass is the *kilogram*, and the unit of liquid volume is the *liter*. A meter is approximately 40 inches, or about 4" longer than the yard. Thus, 100 meters is about 111 yards. A liter is slightly larger than a quart (1.0 liter = 1.101 qt). On the Earth's surface, a kilogram = 2.2 pounds.

As you have almost certainly learned, the metric system uses prefixes to change scale. For example, one thousand meters is one "kilometer." One thousandth of a meter is a "millimeter." The prefixes that you will encounter in this class are listed in Table 1.2.

In the metric system, 3,600 meters is equal to 3.6 kilometers; 0.8 meter is equal to 80 centimeters, which in turn equals 800 millimeters, etc. In the lab exercises this semester we will encounter a large range in sizes and distances. For example, you will measure the sizes of some objects/things in class in millimeters, talk about the wavelength of light in nanometers, and measure the sizes of features on planets that are larger than 1,000 kilometers.

Prefix Name	Prefix Symbol	Prefix Value
Giga	G	1,000,000,000 (one billion)
Mega	M	1,000,000 (one million)
kilo	k	1,000 (one thousand)
centi	c	0.01 (one hundredth)
milli	m	0.001 (one thousandth)
micro	$\mu$	0.0000001 (one millionth)
nano	n	0.0000000001 (one billionth)

Table 1.1: Metric System Prefixes

### 1.3 Beyond the Metric System

When we talk about the sizes or distances to objects beyond the surface of the Earth, we begin to encounter very large numbers. For example, the average distance from the Earth to the Moon is 384,000,000 meters or 384,000 kilometers (km). The distances found in astronomy are usually so large that we have to switch to a unit of measurement that is much larger than the meter, or even the kilometer. In and around the solar system, astronomers use “Astronomical Units.” An Astronomical Unit is the mean (average) distance between the Earth and the Sun. One Astronomical Unit (AU) = 149,600,000 km. For example, Jupiter is about 5 AU from the Sun, while Pluto’s average distance from the Sun is 39 AU. With this change in units, it is easy to talk about the distance to other planets. It is more convenient to say that Saturn is 9.54 AU away than it is to say that Saturn is 1,427,184,000 km from Earth.

### 1.4 Changing Units and Scale Conversion

Changing units (like those in the previous paragraph) and/or scale conversion is something you must master during this semester. You already do this in your everyday life whether you know it or not (for example, if you travel to Mexico and you want to pay for a Coke in pesos), so **do not panic!** Let’s look at some examples (**2 points each**):

1. Convert 34 meters into centimeters:

Answer: Since one meter = 100 centimeters, 34 meters = 3,400 centimeters.

2. Convert 34 kilometers into meters:

3. If one meter equals 40 inches, how many meters are there in 400 inches?
4. How many centimeters are there in 400 inches?
5. In August 2003, Mars made its closest approach to Earth for the next 50,000 years. At that time, it was only about .373 AU away from Earth. How many km is this?

#### 1.4.1 Map Exercises

One technique that you will use this semester involves measuring a photograph or image with a ruler, and converting the measured number into a real unit of size (or distance). One example of this technique is reading a road map. Figure 1.1 shows a map of the state of New Mexico. Down at the bottom left hand corner of the map is a scale in both miles and kilometers.

Use a ruler to determine (**2 points each**):

6. How many kilometers is it from Las Cruces to Albuquerque?
7. What is the distance in miles from the border with Arizona to the border with Texas if you were to drive along I-40?
8. If you were to drive 100 km/hr (kph), how long would it take you to go from Las Cruces to Albuquerque?
9. If one mile = 1.6 km, how many miles per hour (mph) is 100 kph?

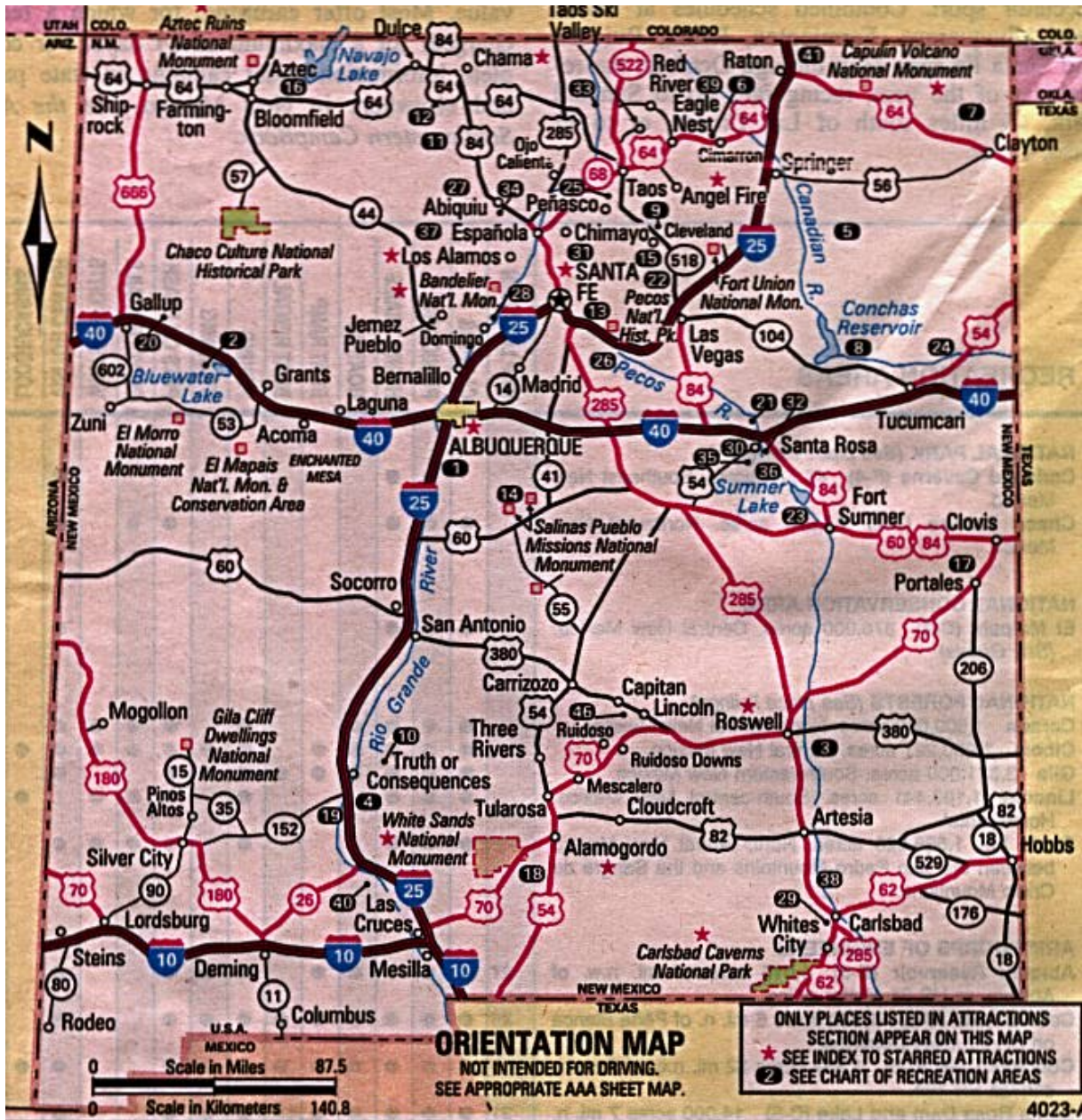


Figure 1.1: Map of New Mexico.

## 1.5 Squares, Square Roots, and Exponents

In several of the labs this semester you will encounter squares, cubes, and square roots. Let us briefly review what is meant by such terms as squares, cubes, square roots and exponents. The square of a number is simply that number times itself:  $3 \times 3 = 3^2 = 9$ . The *exponent* is the little number “2” above the three.  $5^2 = 5 \times 5 = 25$ . The exponent tells you how many times to multiply that number by itself:  $8^4 = 8 \times 8 \times 8 \times 8 = 4096$ . The square of a number simply means the exponent is 2 (three squared =  $3^2$ ), and the cube of a number means the exponent is three (four cubed =  $4^3$ ). Here are some examples:

- $7^2 = 7 \times 7 = 49$
- $7^5 = 7 \times 7 \times 7 \times 7 \times 7 = 16,807$
- The cube of 9 (or “9 cubed”) =  $9^3 = 9 \times 9 \times 9 = 729$
- The exponent of  $12^{16}$  is 16
- $2.56^3 = 2.56 \times 2.56 \times 2.56 = 16.777$

**Your turn (2 points each):**

10.  $6^3 =$

11.  $4^4 =$

12.  $3.1^2 =$

The concept of a square root is fairly easy to understand, but is much harder to calculate (we usually have to use a calculator). The square root of a *number* is that number whose square is the *number*: the square root of  $4 = 2$  because  $2 \times 2 = 4$ . The square root of 9 is 3 ( $9 = 3 \times 3$ ). The mathematical operation of a square root is usually represented by the symbol “ $\sqrt{\quad}$ ”, as in  $\sqrt{9} = 3$ . But mathematicians also represent square roots using a *fractional* exponent of one half:  $9^{1/2} = 3$ . Likewise, the cube root of a number is represented as  $27^{1/3} = 3$  ( $3 \times 3 \times 3 = 27$ ). The fourth root is written as  $16^{1/4} (= 2)$ , and so on. Here are some example problems:

- $\sqrt{100} = 10$
- $10.5^3 = 10.5 \times 10.5 \times 10.5 = 1157.625$
- Verify that the square root of 17 ( $\sqrt{17} = 17^{1/2}$ ) = 4.123

## 1.6 Scientific Notation

The range in numbers encountered in Astronomy is enormous: from the size of subatomic particles, to the size of the entire universe. You are certainly comfortable with numbers like ten, one hundred, three thousand, ten million, a billion, or even a trillion. But what about a number like one million trillion? Or, four thousand one hundred and fifty six million billion? Such numbers are too cumbersome to handle with words. Scientists use something called “Scientific Notation” as a short hand method to represent very large and very small numbers. The system of scientific notation is based on the number 10. For example, the number  $100 = 10 \times 10 = 10^2$ . In scientific notation the number 100 is written as  $1.0 \times 10^2$ . Here are some additional examples:

- Ten =  $10 = 1 \times 10 = 1.0 \times 10^1$
- One hundred =  $100 = 10 \times 10 = 10^2 = 1.0 \times 10^2$
- One thousand =  $1,000 = 10 \times 10 \times 10 = 10^3 = 1.0 \times 10^3$
- One million =  $1,000,000 = 10 \times 10 \times 10 \times 10 \times 10 \times 10 = 10^6 = 1.0 \times 10^6$

Ok, so writing powers of ten is easy, but how do we write 6,563 in scientific notation?  $6,563 = 6563.0 = 6.563 \times 10^3$ . To figure out the exponent on the power of ten, we simply count the numbers to the *left* of the decimal point, but do not include the left-most number. Here are some more examples:

- $1,216 = 1216.0 = 1.216 \times 10^3$
- $8,735,000 = 8735000.0 = 8.735000 \times 10^6$
- $1,345,999,123,456 = 1345999123456.0 = 1.345999123456 \times 10^{12} \approx 1.346 \times 10^{12}$



Note that in the last example above, we were able to eliminate a lot of the “unnecessary” digits in that very large number. While  $1.345999123456 \times 10^{12}$  is technically correct as the scientific notation representation of the number 1,345,999,123,456, we do not need to keep **all** of the digits to the right of the decimal place. We can keep just a few, and approximate that number as  $1.346 \times 10^{12}$ .

**Your turn! Work the following examples (2 points each):**

13.  $121 = 121.0 =$

14.  $735,000 =$

15.  $999,563,982 =$

Now comes the sometimes confusing issue: writing very small numbers. First, let's look at powers of 10, but this time in fractional form. The number  $0.1 = \frac{1}{10}$ . In scientific notation we would write this as  $1 \times 10^{-1}$ . The negative number in the exponent is the way we write the fraction  $\frac{1}{10}$ . How about 0.001? We can rewrite 0.001 as  $\frac{1}{10} \times \frac{1}{10} \times \frac{1}{10} = 0.001 = 1 \times 10^{-3}$ . Do you see where the exponent comes from? Starting at the decimal point, we simply count over to the *right* of the first digit that isn't zero to determine the exponent. Here are some examples:

- $0.121 = 1.21 \times 10^{-1}$

- $0.000735 = 7.35 \times 10^{-4}$

- $0.0000099902 = 9.9902 \times 10^{-6}$

**Your turn (2 points each):**

16.  $0.0121 =$

17.  $0.0000735 =$

18.  $0.000000999 =$

19.  $-0.121 =$

There is one issue we haven't dealt with, and that is *when* to write numbers in scientific notation. It is kind of silly to write the number 23.7 as  $2.37 \times 10^1$ , or 0.5 as  $5.0 \times 10^{-1}$ . You use scientific notation when it is a more compact way to write a number to insure that its value is quickly and easily communicated to someone else. For example, if you tell someone the answer for some measurement is 0.0033 meter, the person receiving that information has to count over the zeros to figure out what that means. It is better to say that the measurement was  $3.3 \times 10^{-3}$  meter. But telling someone the answer is 215 kg, is much easier than saying  $2.15 \times 10^2$  kg. It is common practice that numbers bigger than 10,000 or smaller than 0.01 are best written in scientific notation.

## 1.7 Calculator Issues

Since you will be using calculators in nearly all of the labs this semester, you should become familiar with how to use them for functions beyond simple arithmetic.

### 1.7.1 Scientific Notation on a Calculator

Scientific notation on a calculator is usually designated with an "E." For example, if you see the number 8.778046E11 on your calculator, this is the same as the number  $8.778046 \times 10^{11}$ . Similarly, 1.4672E-05 is equivalent to  $1.4672 \times 10^{-5}$ .

Entering numbers in scientific notation into your calculator depends on layout of your calculator; we cannot tell you which buttons to push without seeing your specific calculator. However, the "E" button described above is often used, so to enter  $6.589 \times 10^7$ , you may need to type 6.589 "E" 7.

Verify that you can enter the following numbers into your calculator:

- $7.99921 \times 10^{21}$
- $2.2951324 \times 10^{-6}$

### 1.7.2 Order of Operations

When performing a complex calculation, the order of operations is extremely important. There are several rules that need to be followed:

- i. Calculations must be done from left to right.
- ii. Calculations in brackets (parenthesis) are done first. When you have more than one set of brackets, do the inner brackets first.

- iii. Exponents (or radicals) must be done next.
- iv. Multiply and divide in the order the operations occur.
- v. Add and subtract in the order the operations occur.

If you are using a calculator to enter a long equation, when in doubt as to whether the calculator will perform operations in the correct order, apply parentheses.

Use your calculator to perform the following calculations (**2 points each**):

20.  $\frac{7+34}{2+23} =$

21.  $(4^2 + 5) - 3 =$

22.  $20 \div (12 - 2) \times 3^2 - 2 =$

## 1.8 Graphing and/or Plotting

Now we want to discuss graphing data. You probably learned about making graphs in high school. Astronomers frequently use graphs to plot data. You have probably seen all sorts of graphs, such as the plot of the performance of the stock market shown in Fig. 1.2. A plot like this shows the history of the stock market versus time. The “x” (horizontal) axis represents time, and the “y” (vertical) axis represents the value of the stock market. Each place on the curve that shows the performance of the stock market is represented by two numbers, the date (x axis), and the value of the index (y axis). For example, on May 10 of 2004, the Dow Jones index stood at 10,000.

Plots like this require two data points to represent each point on the curve or in the plot. For comparing the stock market you need to plot the value of the stocks versus the date. We call data of this type an “ordered pair.” Each data point requires a value for  $x$  (the date) and  $y$  (the value of the Dow Jones index).

Table 1.2 contains data showing how the temperature changes with altitude near the Earth’s surface. As you climb in altitude, the temperature goes down (this is why high mountains can have snow on them year round, even though they are located in warm areas). The data points in this table are plotted in Figure 1.3.

### 1.8.1 The Mechanics of Plotting

When you are asked to plot some data, there are several things to keep in mind.

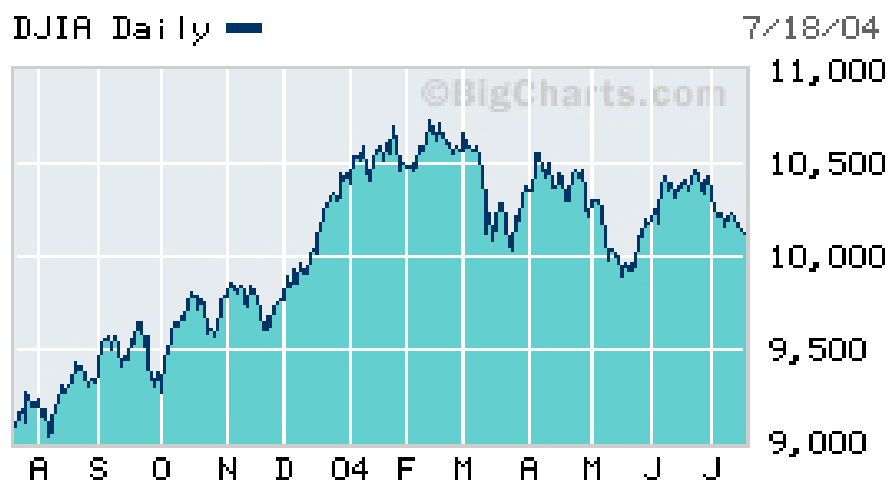


Figure 1.2: The change in the Dow Jones stock index over one year (from April 2003 to July 2004).

Altitude (feet)	Temperature °F
0	59.0
2,000	51.9
4,000	44.7
6,000	37.6
8,000	30.5
10,000	23.3
12,000	16.2
14,000	9.1
16,000	1.9

Table 1.2: Temperature vs. Altitude

First of all, the plot axes **must be labeled**. This will be emphasized throughout the semester. In order to quickly look at a graph and determine what information is being conveyed, it is imperative that both the x-axis and y-axis have labels.

Secondly, if you are creating a plot, choose the numerical range for your axes such that the data fit nicely on the plot. For example, if you were to plot the data shown in Table 1.2, with altitude on the y-axis, you would want to choose your range of y-values to be something like 0 to 18,000. If, for example, you drew your y-axis going from 0 to 100,000, then all of the data would be compressed towards the lower portion of the page. It is important to choose your *ranges* for the x and y axes so they bracket the data points.

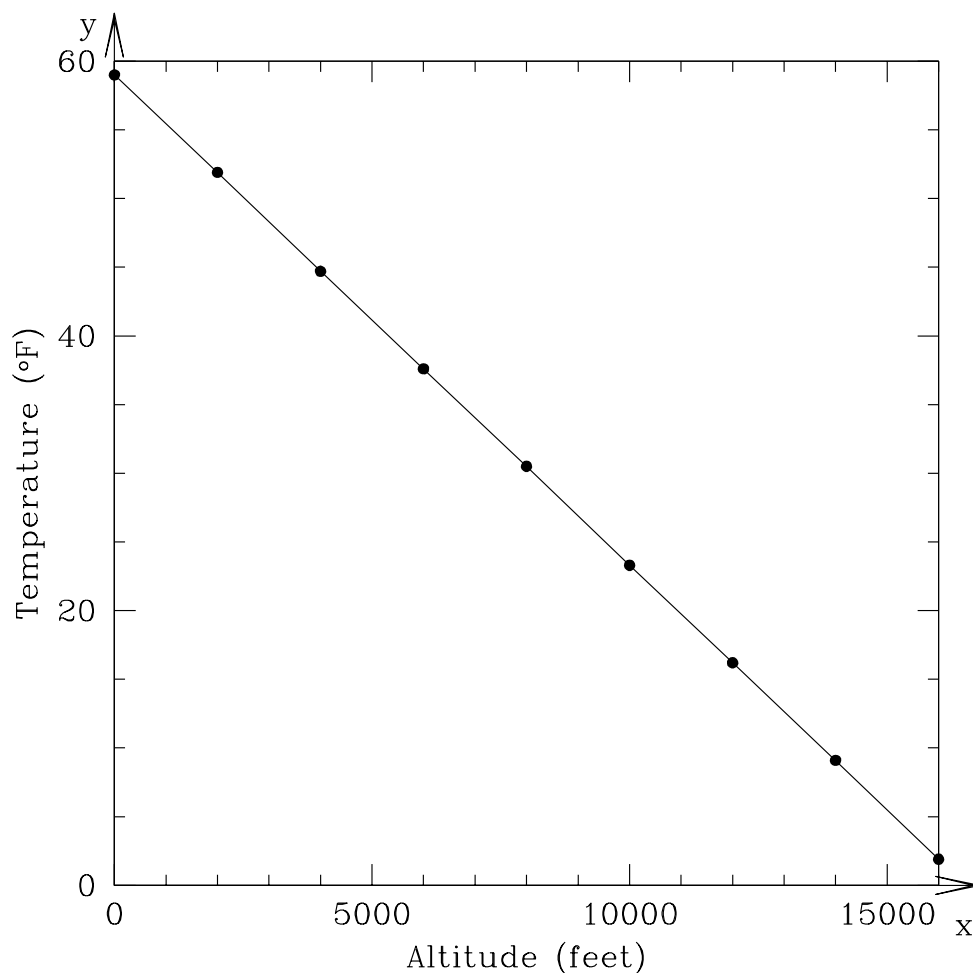


Figure 1.3: The change in temperature as you climb in altitude with the data from Table 1.2. At sea level (0 ft altitude) the surface temperature is 59°F. As you go higher in altitude, the temperature goes down.

### 1.8.2 Plotting and Interpreting a Graph

Table 1.3 contains hourly temperature data on January 19, 2006, for two locations: Tucson and Honolulu.

23. On the blank sheet of graph paper in Figure 1.4, plot the hourly temperatures measured for Tucson and Honolulu on 19 January 2006. **(4 points)**
24. Which city had the highest temperature on 19 January 2006? **(2 points)**
25. Which city had the highest *average* temperature? **(2 points)**

Time hh:mm	Tucson Temp. °F	Honolulu Temp. °F
00:00	49.6	71.1
01:00	47.8	71.1
02:00	46.6	71.1
03:00	45.9	70.0
04:00	45.5	72.0
05:00	45.1	72.0
06:00	46.0	73.0
07:00	45.3	73.0
08:00	45.7	75.0
09:00	46.6	78.1
10:00	51.3	79.0
11:00	56.5	80.1
12:00	59.0	81.0
13:00	60.8	82.0
14:00	60.6	81.0
15:00	61.7	79.0
16:00	61.7	77.0
17:00	61.0	75.0
18:00	59.2	73.0
19:00	55.0	73.0
20:00	53.4	72.0
21:00	51.6	71.1
22:00	49.8	72.0
23:00	48.9	72.0
24:00	47.7	72.0

Table 1.3: Hourly Temperature Data from 19 January 2006

26. Which city heated up the fastest in the morning hours? (**2 points**)

While straight lines and perfect data show up in science from time to time, it is actually quite rare for *real* data to fit perfectly on top of a line. One reason for this is that all measurements have *error*. So even though there might be a perfect relationship between  $x$  and  $y$ , the uncertainty of the measurements introduces small deviations from the line. In other cases, the data are *approximated* by a line. This is sometimes called a *best-fit* relationship for the data.

## 1.9 Does it Make Sense?

This is a question that you should be asking yourself after *every* calculation that you do in this class!



Figure 1.4: Graph paper for plotting the hourly temperatures in Tucson and Honolulu.

One of our primary goals this semester is to help you develop intuition about our solar system. This includes recognizing if an answer that you get “makes sense.” For example, you may be told (or you may eventually know) that Mars is 1.5 AU from Earth. You also know that the Moon is a lot closer to the Earth than Mars is. So if you are asked to calculate the Earth-Moon distance and you get an answer of 4.5 AU, this should alarm you! That would imply that the Moon is **three times** farther away from Earth than Mars is! And you know that’s not right.

Use your intuition to answer the following questions. In addition to just giving your answer, state *why* you gave the answer you did. (**4 points each**)

27. Earth's diameter is 12,756 km. Jupiter's diameter is about 11 times this amount. Which makes more sense: Jupiter's diameter being 19,084 km or 139,822 km?
28. Sound travels through air at roughly 0.331 kilometers per second. If BX 102 suddenly exploded, which would make more sense for when people in Mesilla (almost 5 km away) would hear the blast? About 14.5 seconds later, or about 6.2 minutes later?
29. Water boils at 100 °C. Without knowing anything about the planet Pluto other than the fact that is roughly 40 times farther from the Sun than the Earth is, would you expect the surface temperature of Pluto to be closer to -100° or 50°?

## 1.10 Putting it All Together

We have covered a lot of tools that you will need to become familiar with in order to complete the labs this semester. Now let's see how these concepts can be used to answer real questions about our solar system. *Remember, ask yourself **does this make sense?** for each answer that you get!*

30. To travel from Las Cruces to New York City by car, you would drive 3585 km. What is this distance in AU? (**4 points**)



31. The Earth is 4.5 billion years old. The dinosaurs were killed 65 million years ago due to a giant impact by a comet or asteroid that hit the Earth. If we were to compress the history of the Earth from 4.5 billion years into one 24-hour day, at what time would the dinosaurs have been killed? (**4 points**)
32. The New Horizons spacecraft is traveling at approximately 20 kilometers per second. How long will it take to reach Jupiter, which is roughly 4 AU from Earth? [Hint: see the definition of an AU in Section 1.3 of this lab.] (**4 points**)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2 Scale Model of the Solar System

SUPPLIES: a calculator, Appendix E in your textbook, the football field in Aggie Memorial Stadium, a collection of different sized spherical-shaped objects

The purpose of this lab is to allow us to develop an appreciation for the distances between objects (primarily planets) in our solar system and the sizes of these objects relative to each other and to the distances between them. To achieve this goal, we will use the length of the football field in Aggie Stadium as our distance ‘tool’ for developing a scale model of the Solar System. A Scale Model is simply a tool whereby we can use manageable distances to represent larger distances or sizes. We will properly distribute our planets on the football field (*the length of the football field will represent the distance between the Sun and the planet Pluto*, further described below) and then we will determine what the sizes of our planets should be to appropriately fit on the same scale.

### 2.1 Introduction

The Solar System is large, at least when compared to distances we are familiar with on a day-to-day basis. Consider that for those of you who live here in Las Cruces, you travel 2 kilometers (or 1.2 miles) on average to campus each day. If you go to Albuquerque on weekends, you travel about 375 kilometers (232.5 miles), and if you travel to Disney Land for Spring Break, you travel  $\sim 1,300$  kilometers ( $\sim 800$  miles), where the ‘ $\sim$ ’ symbol means “approximately.” These are all distances we can mentally comprehend.

Now, how large is our sphere-shaped planet, Earth? If you wanted to take a trip to the center of the Earth (the ‘core,’ which we will discuss later in the semester), you would travel 6,378 kilometers (3954 miles) from Las Cruces down through the Earth to its center. If you then continued going another 6,378 kilometers you would ‘pop out’ on the other side of the Earth in the southern part of the Indian Ocean. Thus, the total distance through the Earth, or the **diameter** of the Earth, is 12,756 kilometers ( $\sim 7,900$  miles), or 10 times the Las Cruces-to-Los Angeles distance. This is a large distance, but we’ll go farther still.

Next, we’ll travel to the Moon. The Moon, Earth’s natural satellite, orbits the Earth at a distance of  $\sim 400,000$  kilometers ( $\sim 240,000$  miles), or about 30 times the length of the Earth’s diameter. This means that you could fit roughly 30 Earths end-to-end between here and the Moon. This Earth-Moon distance is  $\sim 200,000$  times the distance you travel to campus each day (if you live in Las Cruces). So you can see, even very near the Earth in our Solar System, it is a long way to Earth’s nearest neighbor (the Moon).

Now let’s travel from the Earth to the Sun. This *Earth-to-Sun average distance*,  $\sim 150$  million kilometers ( $\sim 93$  million miles) is referred to as one **Astronomical Unit**. When we

look at the planets in our Solar System, we can see that the planet Mercury, which orbits nearest to the Sun, has an average distance of 0.4 AU and Pluto, the planet almost always farthest from the Sun, has an average distance of 40 AU. Thus, Earth's distance from the Sun, which we think of as large (75 million times greater than the average distance you commute to campus!) is only 2.5 percent of the distance between the Sun and planet Pluto!! This is a tremendous distance indeed.

**Now, how can we put all these distances into perspective on the field? For our Scale Model, the Sun will be located at the goal line of the North end zone.**

Below you will proceed through a number of steps that will allow for the development of a scale-model of the solar system.

## 2.2 Distance From the Sun

Fill in the first and second columns of Table 2.1. In other words, list, in order of increasing distance from the Sun, the planets in our solar system and their average distances from the Sun in units of Astronomical Units (AU). You can find these numbers in Appendix E of your textbook. **(21 points)**

Planet	Average Distance From Sun	
	AU	Yards
Earth	1	2.5
Pluto	40	100

Table 2.1: Planets' average distances from Sun.

Determine the SCALED orbital semi-major axes of the planets, based upon the assumption that the Sun-to-Pluto average distance in Astronomical Units (which you have written down above) is represented by 100 yards, or goal-line to goal-line, on the football field. To determine similar scalings for each of the planets, use the following equation:

**Distance of the planet from the Sun's goal line (in units of yards) = (Planet's average distance in AU)  $\times$  (100 yards / 40 AU )**

Write these values on the lines provided in Table 2.1 (fill in the third column).

## 2.3 Sizes of Planets

You have just determined where on the football field the planets are located (how far from the Sun they are located in our scale model). Now it is time to determine how large (or small) the planets themselves are on the **same** scale.

We have already indicated above that the diameter of the Earth is 12,756 kilometers, while the distance from the Sun to Earth (1 AU) is equal to 150,000,000 km. We already determined above that in our scale model, 1 AU is represented by 2.5 yards (90 inches).

We will start here by using the largest object in the solar system as our ‘tool’ for determining how large the objects will be in our scale model.

The *Sun* is the largest single object in the Solar System. It has a diameter of  $\sim 1,400,000$  (1.4 million) kilometers. [Note that the Sun’s diameter is  $\sim 100$  times greater than the Earth’s diameter!!] Since in our scaled model 150,000,000 kilometers (1 AU) is equivalent to 90 inches, how many inches will correspond to 1,400,000 kilometers (the Sun’s actual diameter)? This can be determined by the following calculation:

$$\text{Sun's scaled diameter (inches)} = \text{Sun's true diameter (km)} \times \frac{(90 \text{ in.})}{(150,000,000 \text{ km})}$$

$$\text{Sun's scaled diameter} = 0.84 \text{ inches}$$

So, on the scale of our football field solar system, the *scaled Sun* has a diameter of only 0.84 inches!!

Now that we have established the scaled Sun’s size (0.84 inch diameter), let’s proceed through a similar exercise for each of the nine planets, and the Moon (diameter = 3476 kilometers), using the following formula:

$$\text{Scaled diameter (inches)} = \text{actual diameter (km)} \times \frac{(90 \text{ in.})}{(150,000,000 \text{ km})}$$

Fill in the values in Table 2.2 (**8 points**).

<b>Object</b>	<b>Actual Diameter (km)</b>	<b>Scaled Diameter (inches)</b>
Sun	~ 1,400,000	0.84
Mercury	4,878	
Venus	12,104	
Earth	12,756	0.0075
Moon	3,476	
Mars	6,794	
Jupiter	142,800	
Saturn	120,540	
Uranus	51,200	
Neptune	49,500	
Pluto	2,200	0.0013

Table 2.2: Planets' diameters in a football field scale model.

Now you have all the information required to create your scale model of the Solar System.

Use any of the items listed in Table 2.3 (spheres of different diameter) to select your scaled planets, Sun and Moon. NOTE: Some of the items are not the appropriate size for this scale model!!

<b>Object</b>	<b>Diameter (inches)</b>
Basketball	15
Tennis ball	2.5
Golf ball	1.625
Marble	0.5
Sesame seed	0.07
Poppy seed	0.04
Ground flour	0.001

Table 2.3: Everyday objects that could represent the planets.

Designate one person for each planet, one person for the Sun, and one person for the Earth's Moon. Each person should choose the model object which represents their solar system object, and then walk (or run) to that object's scaled orbital semi-major axis on the football field. The Sun will be on the goal line of the North end zone (towards the Pan Am Center) and Pluto will be on the south goal line.

## 2.4 Questions About the Football Field Model

When the planets/people are in place, pay attention to the relative spacing between the planets, and the size of the planets relative to these spacings. Is this spacing and planet size distribution what you expected when you first began thinking about this lab today? Why or why not? **(10 points)**

Answer the following questions using the information you have gained from this lab and your own intuition **(20 points)**:

1. Which planet would you expect to have the warmest surface temperature? Why?
2. Which planet would you expect to have the coolest surface temperature? Why?
3. Which planet would you expect to have the greatest mass? Why?
4. Which planet would you expect to have the longest orbital period? Why?

5. Which planet would you expect to have the shortest orbital period? Why?

## 2.5 Take-Home Questions

Now you will work out the numbers for a scale model of the Solar System for which the size of New Mexico along Interstate Highway 25 will be the scale.

Interstate Highway 25 begins in Las Cruces, just southeast of campus, and continues north through Albuquerque, all the way to the border with Colorado. The total distance of I-25 in New Mexico is 455 miles. Using this distance to represent the Sun to Pluto distance (40 AU), and assuming that the Sun is located at the start of I-25 here in Las Cruces and Pluto is located along the Colorado-New Mexico border, you will determine:

- the scaled locations of each of the planets in the Solar System; that is, you will determine the city along the highway (I-25) each planet will be located nearest to, and how far north or south of this city the planet will be located. If more than one planet is located within a given city, identify which street or exit the city is nearest to.
- the size of the Solar system objects (the Sun, each of the planets) on this same scale, for which 455 miles ( $\sim 730$  kilometers) corresponds to 40 AU. Determine how large each of these scaled objects will be (probably best to use feet; there are 5280 feet per mile), and suggest a real object which well represents this size. Thus, if one of the scaled Solar System objects has a diameter of 1 foot, you could suggest a soccer ball as a representative object.

**If you have questions, this is a good time to ask!!!!!!**



1. List the planets in our solar system and their average distances from the Sun in units of Astronomical Units (AU). Then, using a scale of 40 AU = 455 miles (1 AU = 11.375 miles), determine the scaled planet-Sun distances and the city near the location of this planet's scaled average distance from the Sun. Insert these values into Table 2.4, and draw on your map of New Mexico (on the next page) the locations of the solar system objects. **(22 points)**

Planet	Average Distance from Sun		City
	in AU	in Miles	
Earth	1	11.375	
Pluto	40	455	3 miles north of Raton

Table 2.4: Planets' average distances from Sun.

2. Determine the scaled size (diameter) of objects in the Solar System for a scale in which 40 AU = 455 miles, or 1 AU = 11.375 miles). Insert these values into Table 2.5. **(19 points)**

$$\text{Scaled diameter (feet)} = \text{actual diameter (km)} \times \frac{(11.4 \text{ mi.} \times 5280 \text{ ft/mile})}{150,000,000 \text{ km}}$$

Object	Actual Diameter (km)	Scaled Diameter (feet)	Object
Sun	~ 1,400,000	561.7	
Mercury	4,878		
Venus	12,104		
Earth	12,756	5.1	height of 12 year old
Moon	3,476		
Mars	6,794		
Jupiter	142,800		
Saturn	120,540		
Uranus	51,200		
Neptune	49,500		
Pluto	2,200		

Table 2.5: Planets' diameters in a New Mexico scale model.







Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 3 Phases of the Moon

### 3.1 Introduction

You will need the following materials for this lab:

- small spheres (representing the Moon), with two different colored hemispheres. The **dark** hemisphere represents the portion of the Moon not illuminated by the Sun.
- flashlight (representing the Sun)
- yourself (representing the Earth, with your nose representing the location of Las Cruces)

### Work in Groups of Three People!

The objective of this lab is to improve your understanding of the Moon phases [a topic that you **WILL** see on future exams!]. This concept, the phases of the Moon, involves

1. the position of the Moon in its orbit around the Earth,
2. the illuminated portion of the Moon that is visible from here in Las Cruces, and
3. the time of day that a given Moon phase is at the highest point in the sky as seen from Las Cruces.

For this lab, you will **finish** by demonstrating to your instructor that you do clearly understand the concept of Moon phases, including an understanding of

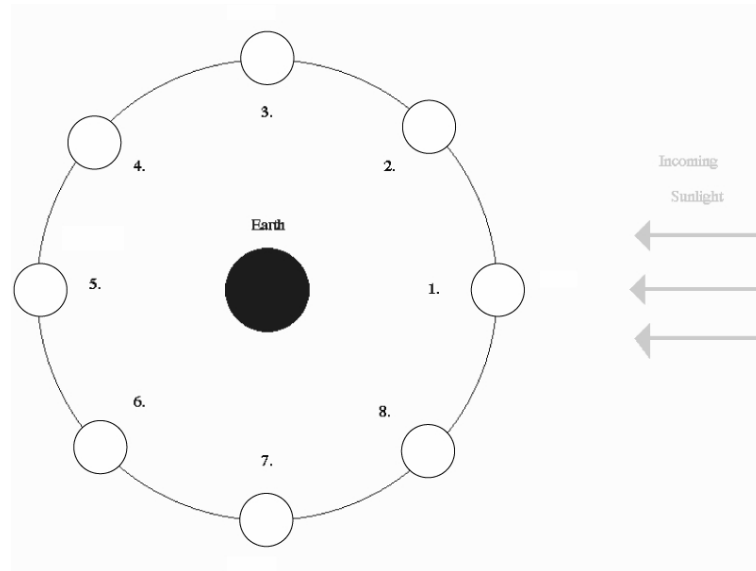
- which direction the Moon travels around the Earth
- how the Moon phases progress from day-to-day
- at what time of the day the Moon is highest in the sky at each phase

You will use the colored sphere and flashlight as props for this demonstration. Carefully read and thoroughly answer the questions associated with each of the five Exercises on the following pages. [Don't be concerned about eclipses as you answer the questions in these Exercises]. Using the dual-colored sphere to represent the Moon, the flashlight to represent the Sun, and a member of the group to represent the Earth (with that person's nose representing Las Cruces' location), 'walk through' and 'rotate through' the positions indicated in the Exercise figures to fully understand the situation presented.

**Each Exercise is worth 10 points.** There are additional questions at the end.

### 3.2 Exercise 1

The figure below shows a “top view” of the Sun, Earth, and eight different positions (1-8) of the Moon during one orbit of the Earth. Note that the distances shown are **not** drawn to scale.



**Ranking Instructions:** Rank (from *greatest* to *least*) the amount of the Moon’s **entire surface** that is illuminated for the eight positions (1-8) shown.

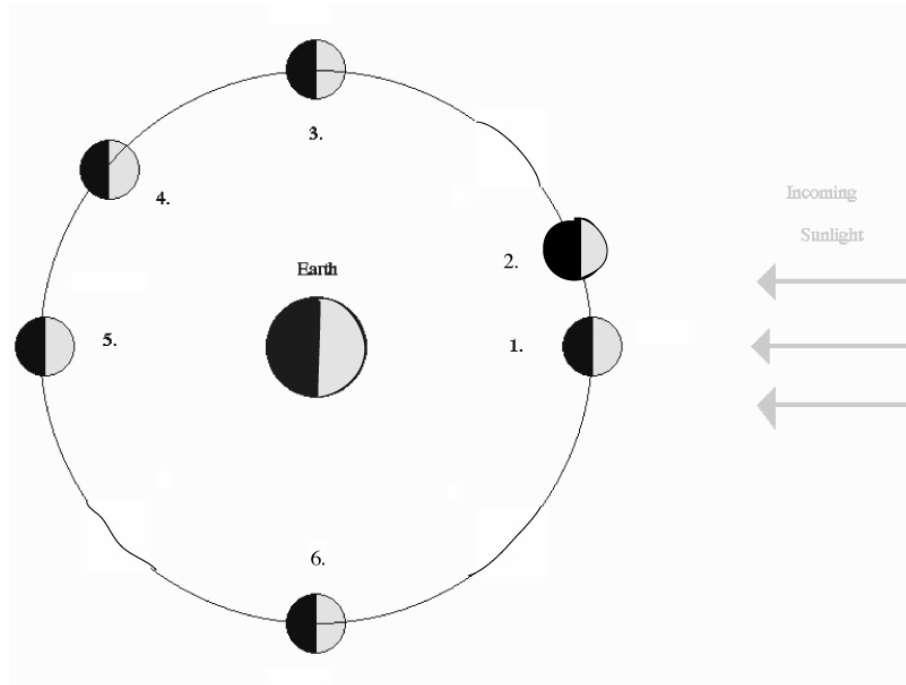
**Ranking Order:** Greatest A \_\_\_\_ B \_\_\_\_ C \_\_\_\_ D \_\_\_\_ E \_\_\_\_ F \_\_\_\_ G \_\_\_\_ H \_\_\_\_ Least

Or, the amount of the entire surface of the Moon illuminated by sunlight is the same at all the positions. \_\_\_\_\_ (indicate with a check mark).

**Carefully explain** your reasoning for ranking this way:

### 3.3 Exercise 2

The figure below shows a “top view” of the Sun, Earth, and six different positions (1-6) of the Moon during one orbit of the Earth. Note that the distances shown are **not** drawn to scale.



**Ranking Instructions:** Rank (from *greatest* to *least*) the amount of the Moon’s illuminated surface that is **visible from Earth** for the six positions (1-6) shown.

**Ranking Order:** Greatest A \_\_\_\_\_ B \_\_\_\_\_ C \_\_\_\_\_ D \_\_\_\_\_ E \_\_\_\_\_ F \_\_\_\_\_ Least

Or, the amount of the Moon’s illuminated surface visible from Earth is the same at all the positions. \_\_\_\_\_ (indicate with a check mark).

**Carefully explain** your reasoning for ranking this way:

### 3.4 Exercise 3

Shown below are different phases of the Moon as seen by an observer in the Northern Hemisphere.



A

B

C

D

E

**Ranking Instructions:** Beginning with the *waning gibbous* phase of the Moon, rank the moon phases shown below in the order that the observer would see them over the next four weeks.







**Ranking Order:**

First phase following waning gibbous phase 1 \_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_ Last phase seen

Or, all of these phases would be visible at the same time. \_\_\_\_\_ (indicate with a check mark).

### 3.5 Exercise 4







In the set of figures below, the Moon is shown in the first quarter phase at different times of the day (or night). Assume that sunset occurs at 6 p.m. and that sunrise occurs at 6 a.m.

 <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 0;"> <span>EAST</span> <span>SOUTH</span> <span>WEST</span> </div> <p><b>Time:</b> _____</p> </div>	 <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 0;"> <span>EAST</span> <span>SOUTH</span> <span>WEST</span> </div> <p><b>Time:</b> _____</p> </div>
 <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 0;"> <span>EAST</span> <span>SOUTH</span> <span>WEST</span> </div> <p><b>Time:</b> _____</p> </div>	 <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 0;"> <span>EAST</span> <span>SOUTH</span> <span>WEST</span> </div> <p><b>Time:</b> _____</p> </div>
 <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 0;"> <span>EAST</span> <span>SOUTH</span> <span>WEST</span> </div> <p><b>Time:</b> _____</p> </div>	 <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 0;"> <span>EAST</span> <span>SOUTH</span> <span>WEST</span> </div> <p><b>Time:</b> _____</p> </div>

**Instructions:** Determine the time at which each view of the Moon would have been seen, and write it on each panel of the figure.

### 3.6 Exercise 5

In the set of figures below, the Moon is shown overhead, at its highest point in the sky, but in different phases. Assume that sunset occurs at 6 p.m. and that sunrise occurs at 6 a.m.







  <div>EAST      SOUTH      WEST</div> <b>Time:</b> _____	  <div>EAST      SOUTH      WEST</div> <b>Time:</b> _____
  <div>EAST      SOUTH      WEST</div> <b>Time:</b> _____	  <div>EAST      SOUTH      WEST</div> <b>Time:</b> _____
  <div>EAST      SOUTH      WEST</div> <b>Time:</b> _____	  <div>EAST      SOUTH      WEST</div> <b>Time:</b> _____

**Instructions:** Determine the time at which each view of the Moon would have been seen, and write it on each panel of the figure.



### 3.7 Exercise 6

In the two sets of figures below, the Moon is shown in different parts of the sky and in different phases. Assume that sunset occurs at 6 p.m. and that sunrise occurs at 6 a.m.

 <div style="text-align: center;">             EAST      SOUTH      WEST           </div> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Time:</b> _____</p>	 <div style="text-align: center;">             EAST      SOUTH      WEST           </div> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Time:</b> _____</p>
 <div style="text-align: center;">             EAST      SOUTH      WEST           </div> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Time:</b> _____</p>	 <div style="text-align: center;">             EAST      SOUTH      WEST           </div> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Time:</b> _____</p>
 <div style="text-align: center;">             EAST      SOUTH      WEST           </div> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Time:</b> _____</p>	 <div style="text-align: center;">             EAST      SOUTH      WEST           </div> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Time:</b> _____</p>

**Instructions:** Determine the time at which each view of the Moon would have been seen, and write it on each panel of the figure.

### 3.8 Additional Question

After you have completed the six Exercises and are comfortable with Moon phases, and how they relate to the Moon's orbital position and the time of day that a particular Moon phase is highest in the sky, you will be verbally quizzed by your instructor (*without the Exercises available*) on these topics. You will use the dual-colored sphere, and the flashlight, and a person representing the Earth to illustrate a specified Moon phase (appearance of the Moon in the sky). You will do this for three different phases. **(18 points)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3.9 Take-Home Questions

The following questions are worth **11 points** each.

1. If the Earth was one-half as massive as it actually is, how would the time interval (number of days) from one Full Moon to the next in this ‘small Earth mass’ situation compare to the actual time interval of 29.5 days between successive Full Moons? Assume that all other aspects of the Earth and Moon system, including the Moon’s orbital semi-major axis, the Earth’s rotation rate, etc. do not change from their current values.
2. If you were on Earth looking up at a Full Moon at midnight, and you saw an astronaut at the center of the Moon’s disk, what phase would the astronaut be seeing the Earth in? **Draw a diagram to support your answer.**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 4 Kepler's Laws

### 4.1 Introduction

Throughout human history, the motion of the planets in the sky was a mystery: why did some planets move quickly across the sky, while other planets moved very slowly? Even two thousand years ago it was apparent that the motion of the planets was very complex. For example, Mercury and Venus never strayed very far from the Sun, while the Sun, the Moon, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn generally moved from the west to the east against the background stars (at this point in history, both the Moon and the Sun were considered “planets”). The Sun appeared to take one year to go around the Earth, while the Moon only took about 30 days. The other planets moved much more slowly. In addition to this rather slow movement against the background stars was, of course, the daily rising and setting of these objects. How could all of these motions occur? Because these objects were important to the cultures of the time, even foretelling the future using astrology, being able to predict their motion was considered vital.

The ancient Greeks had developed a model for the Universe in which all of the planets and the stars were each embedded in perfect crystalline spheres that revolved around the Earth at uniform, but slightly different speeds. This is the “geocentric”, or Earth-centered model. But this model did not work very well—the speed of the planet across the sky changed. Sometimes, a planet even moved backwards! It was left to the Egyptian astronomer Ptolemy (85 – 165 AD) to develop a model for the motion of the planets (you can read more about the details of the Ptolemaic model in your textbook). Ptolemy developed a complicated system to explain the motion of the planets, including “epicycles” and “equants”, that in the end worked so well, that no other models for the motions of the planets were considered for 1500 years! While Ptolemy’s model worked well, the philosophers of the time did not like this model—their Universe was perfect, and Ptolemy’s model suggested that the planets moved in peculiar, imperfect ways.

In the 1540’s Nicholas Copernicus (1473 – 1543) published his work suggesting that it was much easier to explain the complicated motion of the planets if the Earth revolved around the Sun, and that the orbits of the planets were circular. While Copernicus was not the first person to suggest this idea, the timing of his publication coincided with attempts to revise the calendar and to fix a large number of errors in Ptolemy’s model that had shown up over the 1500 years since the model was first introduced. But the “heliocentric” (Sun-centered) model of Copernicus was slow to win acceptance, since it did not work as well as the geocentric model of Ptolemy.

Johannes Kepler (1571 – 1630) was the first person to truly understand how the planets in our solar system moved. Using the highly precise observations by Tycho Brahe (1546 – 1601) of the motions of the planets against the background stars, Kepler was able to formulate three laws that described how the planets moved. With these laws, he was able to predict the future motion of these planets to a higher precision than was previously possible.

Many credit Kepler with the origin of modern physics, as his discoveries were what led Isaac Newton (1643 – 1727) to formulate the law of gravity. Today we will investigate Kepler’s laws and the law of gravity.

## 4.2 Gravity

Gravity is the fundamental force governing the motions of astronomical objects. No other force is as strong over as great a distance. Gravity influences your everyday life (ever drop a glass?), and keeps the planets, moons, and satellites orbiting smoothly. Gravity affects everything in the Universe including the largest structures like super clusters of galaxies down to the smallest atoms and molecules. Experimenting with gravity is difficult to do. You can’t just go around in space making extremely massive objects and throwing them together from great distances. But you can model a variety of interesting systems very easily using a computer. By using a computer to model the interactions of massive objects like planets, stars and galaxies, we can study what would happen in just about any situation. All we have to know are the equations which predict the gravitational interactions of the objects.

The orbits of the planets are governed by a single equation formulated by Newton:

$$F_{gravity} = \frac{GM_1M_2}{R^2} \quad (1)$$

A diagram detailing the quantities in this equation is shown in Fig. 14.1. Here  $F_{gravity}$  is the gravitational attractive force between two objects whose masses are  $M_1$  and  $M_2$ . The distance between the two objects is “ $R$ ”. The gravitational constant  $G$  is just a small number that scales the size of the force. **The most important thing about gravity is that the force depends only on the masses of the two objects and the distance between them.** This law is called an Inverse Square Law because the distance between the objects is *squared*, and is in the denominator of the fraction. There are several laws like this in physics and astronomy.

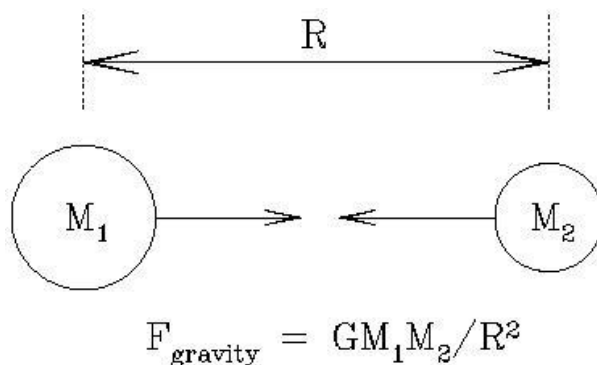


Figure 4.1: The force of gravity depends on the masses of the two objects ( $M_1$ ,  $M_2$ ), and the distance between them ( $R$ ).

Today you will be using a computer program called “Planets and Satellites” by Eugene Butikov to explore Kepler’s laws, and how planets, double stars, and planets in double star

systems move. This program uses the law of gravity to simulate how celestial objects move.

- *Goals:* to understand Kepler's three laws and use them in conjunction with the computer program "Planets and Satellites" to explain the orbits of objects in our solar system and beyond
- *Materials:* *Planets and Satellites* program, a ruler, and a calculator

### 4.3 Kepler's Laws

Before you begin the lab, it is important to recall Kepler's three laws, the basic description of how the planets in our Solar System move. Kepler formulated his three laws in the early 1600's, when he finally solved the mystery of how planets moved in our Solar System. These three (empirical) laws are:

- I. "The orbits of the planets are ellipses with the Sun at one focus."
- II. "A line from the planet to the Sun sweeps out equal areas in equal intervals of time."
- III. "A planet's orbital period squared is proportional to its average distance from the Sun cubed:  $P^2 \propto a^3$ "

Let's look at the first law, and talk about the nature of an ellipse. What is an ellipse? An ellipse is one of the special curves called a "conic section". If we slice a plane through a cone, four different types of curves can be made: circles, ellipses, parabolas, and hyperbolas. This process, and how these curves are created is shown in Fig. 14.2.

Before we describe an ellipse, let's examine a circle, as it is a simple form of an ellipse. As you are aware, the circumference of a circle is simply  $2\pi R$ . The radius,  $R$ , is the distance between the center of the circle and any point on the circle itself. In mathematical terms, the center of the circle is called the "focus". An ellipse, as shown in Fig. 14.3, is like a flattened circle, with one large diameter (the "major" axis) and one small diameter (the "minor" axis). A circle is simply an ellipse that has identical major and minor axes. Inside of an ellipse, there are two special locations, called "foci" (foci is the plural of focus, it is pronounced "fo-sigh"). The foci are special in that the sum of the distances between the foci and any points on the ellipse are always equal. Fig. 14.4 is an ellipse with the two foci identified, " $F_1$ " and " $F_2$ ".

**Exercise #1:** On the ellipse in Fig. 14.4 are two X's. Confirm that that sum of the distances between the two foci to any point on the ellipse is always the same by measuring the distances between the foci, and the two spots identified with X's. Show your work. (2 points)

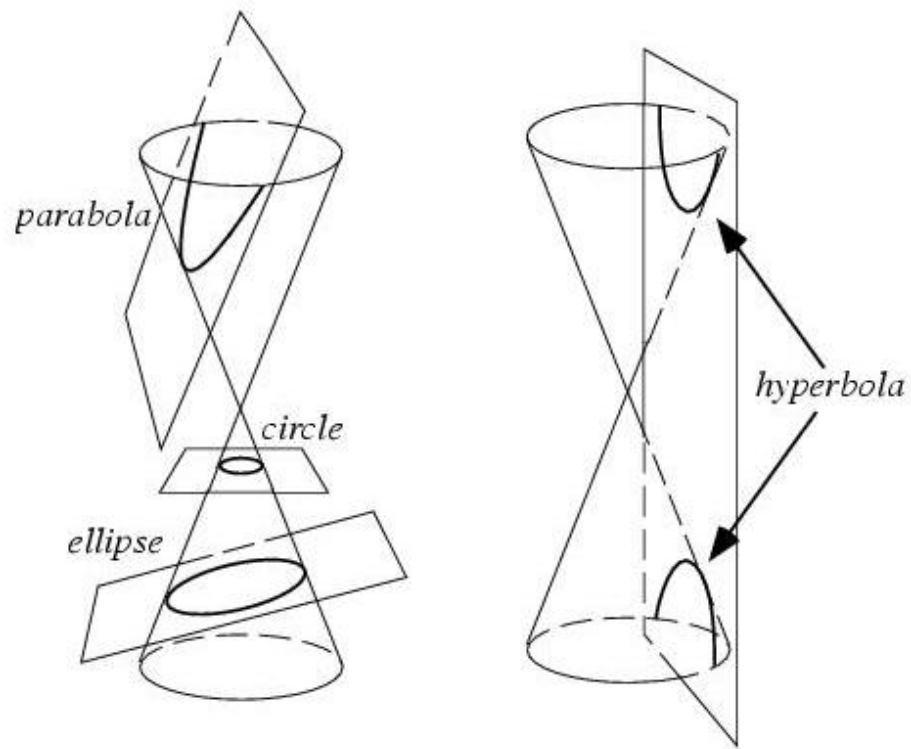


Figure 4.2: Four types of curves can be generated by slicing a cone with a plane: a circle, an ellipse, a parabola, and a hyperbola. Strangely, these four curves are also the allowed shapes of the orbits of planets, asteroids, comets and satellites!

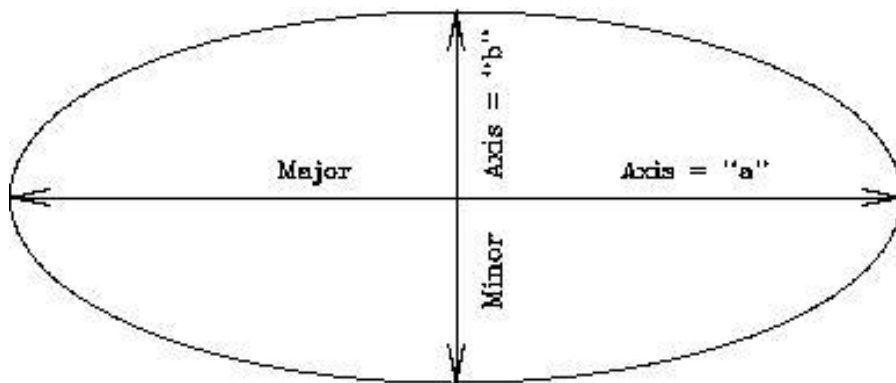


Figure 4.3: An ellipse with the major and minor axes identified.



**Exercise #2:** In the ellipse shown in Fig. 14.5, two points (“ $P_1$ ” and “ $P_2$ ”) are identified that are not located at the true positions of the foci. Repeat exercise #1, but confirm that  $P_1$  and  $P_2$  are not the foci of this ellipse. (2 points)

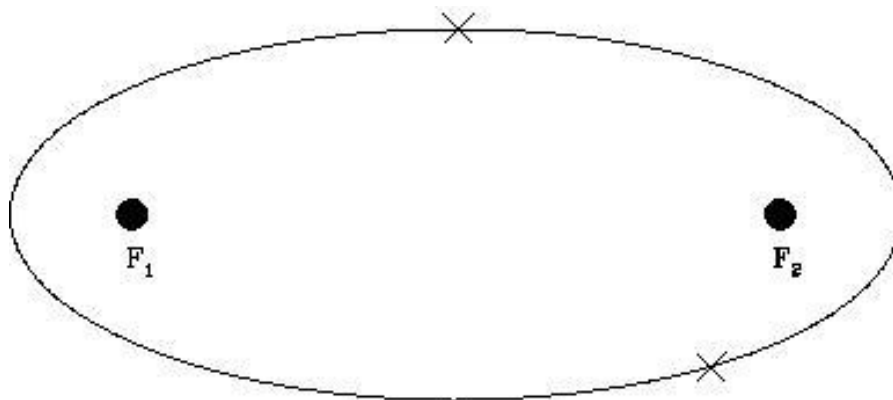


Figure 4.4: An ellipse with the two foci identified.

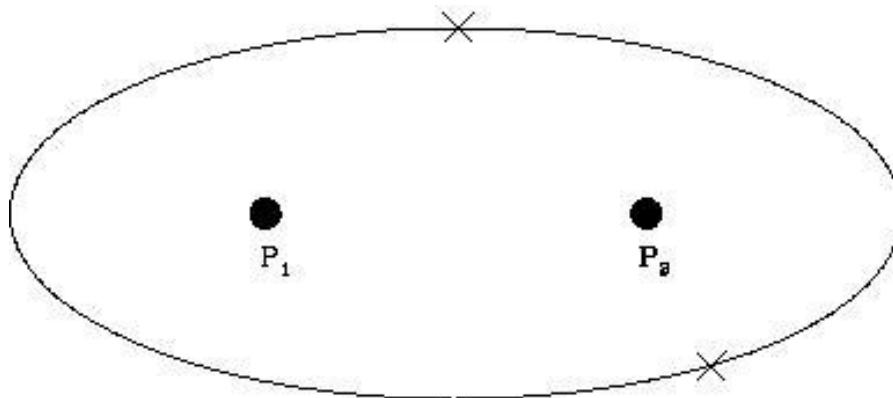


Figure 4.5: An ellipse with two non-foci points identified.

Now we will use the **Planets and Satellites** program to examine Kepler’s laws. It is possible that the program will already be running when you get to your computer. If not, however, you will have to start it up. If your TA gave you a CDROM, then you need to insert the CDROM into the CDROM drive on your computer, and open that device. On that CDROM will be an icon with the program name. It is also possible that Planets and Satellites has been installed on the computer you are using. Look on the desktop for an icon, or use the start menu. Start-up the program, and you should see a title page window, with four boxes/buttons (“Getting Started”, “Tutorial”, “Simulations”, and “Exit”). Click

on the “Simulations” button. We will be returning to this level of the program to change simulations. Note that there are help screens and other sources of information about each of the simulations we will be running—do not hesitate to explore those options.

**Exercise #3:** Kepler’s first law. Click on the “Kepler’s Law button” and then the “First Law” button inside the Kepler’s Law box. A window with two panels opens up. The panel on the left will trace the motion of the planet around the Sun, while the panel on the right sums the distances of the planet from the foci. Remember, Kepler’s first law states “the orbit of a planet is an ellipse with the Sun at one focus”. The Sun in this simulation sits at one focus, while the other focus is empty (but whose location will be obvious once the simulation is run!).

At the top of the panel is the program control bar. For now, simply hit the “Go” button. You can clear and restart the simulation by hitting “Restart” (do this as often as you wish). After hitting Go, note that the planet executes an orbit along the ellipse. The program draws the “vectors” from each focus to 25 different positions of the planet in its orbit. It draws a blue vector from the Sun to the planet, and a yellow vector from the other focus to the planet. The right hand panel sums the blue and yellow vectors. [Note: if your computer runs the simulation too quickly, or too slowly, simply adjust the “Slow down/Speed Up” slider for a better speed.]

Describe the results that are displayed in the right hand panel for this first simulation. (2 points).

Now we want to explore another ellipse. In the extreme left hand side of the control bar is a slider to control the “Initial Velocity”. At start-up it is set to “1.2”. Slide it up to the maximum value of 1.35 and hit Go.

Describe what the ellipse looks like at 1.35 vs. that at 1.2. Does the sum of the vectors (right hand panel) still add up to a constant? (3 points)

Now let's put the Initial Velocity down to a value of 1.0. Run the simulation. What is happening here? The orbit is now a circle. Where are the two foci located? In this case, what is the distance between the focus and the orbit equivalent to? (4 points)

The point in the orbit where the planet is closest to the Sun is called "perihelion", and that point where the planet is furthest from the Sun is called "aphelion". For a circular orbit, the aphelion is the same as the perihelion, and can be defined to be anywhere! Exit this simulation (click on "File" and "Exit").

**Exercise #4:** Kepler's Second Law: "A line from a planet to the Sun sweeps out equal areas in equal intervals of time." From the simulation window, click on the "Second Law" after entering the Kepler's Law window. Move the Initial Velocity slide bar to a value of 1.2. Hit Go.

Describe what is happening here. Does this confirm Kepler's second law? How? When the planet is at perihelion, is it moving slowly or quickly? Why do you think this happens? (4 points)

Look back to the equation for the force of gravity. You know from personal experience that the harder you hit a ball, the faster it moves. The act of hitting a ball is the act of applying a force to the ball. The larger the force, the faster the ball moves (and, generally, the farther it travels). In the equation for the force of gravity, the amount of force generated depends on the masses of the two objects, and the distance between them. But note that it depends on one over the square of the distance:  $1/R^2$ . Let's explore this "inverse square law" with some calculations.

- If  $R = 1$ , what does  $1/R^2 =$  \_\_\_\_\_?
- If  $R = 2$ , what does  $1/R^2 =$  \_\_\_\_\_?
- If  $R = 4$ , what does  $1/R^2 =$  \_\_\_\_\_?

What is happening here? As  $R$  gets bigger, what happens to  $1/R^2$ ? Does  $1/R^2$  decrease/increase quickly or slowly? (2 points)

The equation for the force of gravity has a  $1/R^2$  in it, so as  $R$  increases (that is, the two objects get further apart), does the force of gravity *felt* by the body get larger, or smaller? Is the force of gravity stronger at perihelion, or aphelion? Newton showed that the speed of a planet in its orbit depends on the force of gravity through this equation:

$$V = \sqrt{(G(M_{\text{sun}} + M_{\text{planet}})(2/r - 1/a))} \quad (2)$$

where "r" is the radial distance of the planet from the Sun, and "a" is the mean orbital radius (the semi-major axis). Do you think the planet will move faster, or slower when it is closest to the Sun? Test this by assuming that  $r = 0.5a$  at perihelion, and  $r = 1.5a$  at aphelion, and that  $a=1$ ! [Hint, simply set  $G(M_{\text{sun}} + M_{\text{planet}}) = 1$  to make this comparison very easy!] Does this explain Kepler's second law? (4 points)

What do you think the motion of a planet in a circular orbit looks like? Is there a definable perihelion and aphelion? Make a prediction for what the motion is going to look like—how are the triangular areas seen for elliptical orbits going to change as the planet orbits the Sun in a circular orbit? Why? (3 points)

Now let's run a simulation for a circular orbit by setting the Initial Velocity to 1.0. What happened? Were your predictions correct? (3 points)

Exit out of the Second Law, and start-up the Third Law simulation.

**Exercise 4:** Kepler's Third Law: "A planet's orbital period squared is proportional to its average distance from the Sun cubed:  $P^2 \propto a^3$ ". As we have just learned, the law of gravity states that the further away an object is, the weaker the force. We have already found that at aphelion, when the planet is far from the Sun, it moves more slowly than at perihelion. Kepler's third law is merely a reflection of this fact—the further a planet is from the Sun ("a"), the more slowly it will move. The more slowly it moves, the longer it takes to go around the Sun ("P"). The relation is  $P^2 \propto a^3$ , where P is the orbital period in years, while  $a$  is the average distance of the planet from the Sun, and the mathematical symbol for proportional is represented by " $\propto$ ". To turn the proportion sign into an equal sign requires the multiplication of the  $a^3$  side of the equation by a constant:  $P^2 = C \times a^3$ . But we can get rid of this constant, "C", by making a ratio. We will do this below.

In the next simulation, there will be two planets: one in a smaller orbit, which will represent the Earth (and has  $a = 1$ ), and a planet in a larger orbit (where  $a$  is adjustable).

Start-up the Third Law simulation and hit Go. You will see that the inner planet moves around more quickly, while the planet in the larger ellipse moves more slowly. Let's set-up the math to better understand Kepler's Third Law. We begin by constructing the ratio of the Third Law equation ( $P^2 = C \times a^3$ ) for an arbitrary planet divided by the Third Law equation for the Earth:

$$\frac{P_P^2}{P_E^2} = \frac{C \times a_P^3}{C \times a_E^3} \quad (3)$$

In this equation, the planet's orbital period and average distance are denoted by  $P_P$  and  $a_P$ , while the orbital period of the Earth and its average distance from the Sun are  $P_E$  and  $a_E$ . As you know from your high school math, any quantity that appears on both the top and bottom of a fraction can be canceled out. So, we can get rid of the pesky constant "C", and Kepler's Third Law equation becomes:

$$\frac{P_P^2}{P_E^2} = \frac{a_P^3}{a_E^3} \quad (4)$$

But we can make this equation even simpler by noting that if we use years for the orbital period ( $P_E = 1$ ), and Astronomical Units for the average distance of the Earth to the Sun ( $a_E = 1$ ), we get:

$$\frac{P_P^2}{1} = \frac{a_P^3}{1} \quad \text{or} \quad P_P^2 = a_P^3 \quad (5)$$

(Remember that the cube of 1, and the square of 1 are both 1!)

Let's use equation (5) to make some predictions. If the average distance of Jupiter from the Sun is about 5 AU, what is its orbital period? Set-up the equation:

$$P_J^2 = a_J^3 = 5^3 = 5 \times 5 \times 5 = 125 \quad (6)$$

So, for Jupiter,  $P^2 = 125$ . How do we figure out what  $P$  is? We have to take the square root of both sides of the equation:

$$\sqrt{P^2} = P = \sqrt{125} = 11.2 \text{ years} \quad (7)$$

The orbital period of Jupiter is approximately 11.2 years. Your turn:

If an asteroid has an average distance from the Sun of 4 AU, what is its orbital period? Show your work. (2 points)

In the Third Law simulation, there is a slide bar to set the average distance from the Sun for any hypothetical solar system body. At start-up, it is set to 4 AU. Run the simulation, and confirm the answer you just calculated. Note that for each orbit of the inner planet, a small red circle is drawn on the outer planet's orbit. Count up these red circles to figure out how many times the Earth revolved around the Sun during a single orbit of the asteroid. Did your calculation agree with the simulation? Describe your results. (2 points)

If you were observant, you noticed that the program calculated the number of orbits that the Earth executed for you (in the “Time” window), and you do not actually have to count up the little red circles. Let's now explore the orbits of the nine planets in our solar system. In the following table are the semi-major axes of the nine planets. Note that the “average distance to the Sun” ( $a$ ) that we have been using above is actually a quantity astronomers call the “semi-major axis” of a planet.  $a$  is simply one half the major axis of the orbit ellipse. Fill in the missing orbital periods of the planets by running the Third Law simulator for each of them. (3 points)

Table 4.1: The Orbital Periods of the Planets

Planet	$a$ (AU)	P (yr)
Mercury	0.387	0.24
Venus	0.72	
Earth	1.000	1.000
Mars	1.52	
Jupiter	5.20	
Saturn	9.54	29.5
Uranus	19.22	84.3
Neptune	30.06	164.8
Pluto	39.5	248.3

Notice that the further the planet is from the Sun, the slower it moves, and the longer it takes to complete one orbit around the Sun (its “year”). Neptune was discovered in 1846, and Pluto was discovered in 1930 (by Clyde Tombaugh, a former professor at NMSU). How

many orbits (or what fraction of an orbit) have Neptune and Pluto completed since their discovery? (3 points)

## 4.4 Going Beyond the Solar System

One of the basic tenets of physics is that all natural laws, such as gravity, are the same everywhere in the Universe. Thus, when Newton used Kepler's laws to figure out how gravity worked in the solar system, we suddenly had the tools to understand how stars interact, and how galaxies, which are large groups of billions of stars, behave: the law of gravity works the same way for a planet orbiting a star that is billions of light years from Earth, as it does for the planets in our solar system. Therefore, we can use the law of gravity to construct simulations for all types of situations—even how the Universe itself evolves with time! For the remainder of the lab we will investigate binary stars, and planets in binary star systems.

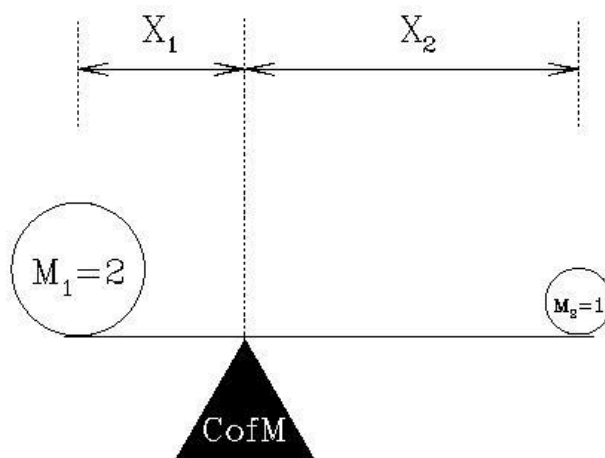
First, what is a binary star? Astronomers believe that about one half of all stars that form, end up in binary star systems. That is, instead of a single star like the Sun, being orbited by planets, a pair of stars are formed that orbit around each other. Binary stars come in a great variety of sizes and shapes. Some stars orbit around each other very slowly, with periods exceeding a million years, while there is one binary system containing two white dwarfs (a white dwarf is the end product of the life of a star like the Sun) that has an orbital period of 5 minutes!

To get to the simulations for this part of the lab, exit the Third Law simulation (if you haven't already done so), and click on button "7", the "Two-Body and Many-Body" simulations. We will start with the "Double Star" simulation. Click Go.

In this simulation there are two stars in orbit around each other, a massive one (the blue one) and a less massive one (the red one). Note how the two stars move. Notice that the line connecting them at each point in the orbit passes through one spot—this is the location of something called the "center of mass". In Fig. 14.6 is a diagram explaining the center of mass. If you think of a teeter-totter, or a simple balance, the center of mass is the point where the balance between both sides occurs. If both objects have the same mass, this point is halfway between them. If one is more massive than the other, the center of mass/balance point is closer to the more massive object.

Most binary star systems have stars with similar masses ( $M_1 \approx M_2$ ), but this is not always the case. In the first (default) binary star simulation,  $M_1 = 2M_2$ . The "mass ratio" ("q") in this case is 0.5, where mass ratio is defined to be  $q = M_2/M_1$ . Here,  $M_2 = 1$ , and  $M_1 = 2$ , so  $q = M_2/M_1 = 1/2 = 0.5$ . This is the number that appears in the "Mass Ratio"





$$M_1X_1 = M_2X_2$$

Figure 4.6: A diagram of the definition of the center of mass. Here, object one ( $M_1$ ) is twice as massive as object two ( $M_2$ ). Therefore,  $M_1$  is closer to the center of mass than is  $M_2$ . In the case shown here,  $X_2 = 2X_1$ .

window of the simulation.

**Exercise 5:** Binary Star systems. We now want to set-up some special binary star orbits to help you visualize how gravity works. This requires us to access the “Input” window on the control bar of the simulation window to enter in data for each simulation. Clicking on Input brings up a menu with the following parameters: Mass Ratio, “Transverse Velocity”, “Velocity (magnitude)”, and “Direction”. Use the slide bars (or type in the numbers) to set Transverse Velocity = 1.0, Velocity (magnitude) = 0.0, and Direction = 0.0. For now, we simply want to play with the mass ratio.

Use the slide bar so that Mass Ratio = 1.0. Click “Ok”. This now sets up your new simulation. Click Run. Describe the simulation. What are the shapes of the two orbits? Where is the center of mass located relative to the orbits? What does  $q = 1.0$  mean? Describe what is going on here. (4 points)

Ok, now we want to run a simulation where only the mass ratio is going to be changed. Go back to Input and enter in the correct mass ratio for a binary star system with  $M_1 = 4.0$ , and  $M_2 = 1.0$ . Run the simulation. Describe what is happening in this simulation. How are the stars located with respect to the center of mass? Why? [Hint: see Fig. 14.6.] (4 points)

Finally, we want to move away from circular orbits, and make the orbit as elliptical as possible. You may have noticed from the Kepler's law simulations that the Transverse Velocity affected whether the orbit was round or elliptical. When the Transverse Velocity = 1.0, the orbit is a circle. Transverse Velocity is simply how fast the planet in an elliptical orbit is moving *at perihelion* relative to a planet in a circular orbit of the same orbital period. The maximum this number can be is about 1.3. If it goes much faster, the ellipse then extends to infinity and the orbit becomes a parabola. Go back to Input and now set the Transverse Velocity = 1.3. Run the simulation. Describe what is happening. When do the stars move the fastest? The slowest? Does this make sense? Why/why not? (4 points)

The final exercise explores what it would be like to live on a planet in a binary star system—not so fun! In the “Two-Body and Many-Body” simulations window, click on the

“Dbl. Star and a Planet” button. Here we simulate the motion of a planet going around the less massive star in a binary system. Click Go. Describe the simulation—what happened to the planet? Why do you think this happened? (4 points)

In this simulation, two more windows opened up to the right of the main one. These are what the simulation looks like if you were to sit on the surface of the two stars in the binary. For a while the planet orbits one star, and then goes away to orbit the other one, and then returns. So, sitting on these stars gives you a different viewpoint than sitting high above the orbit. Let’s see if you can keep the planet from wandering away from its parent star. Click on the “Settings” window. As you can tell, now that we have three bodies in the system, there are lots of parameters to play with. But let’s confine ourselves to two of them: “Ratio of Stars Masses” and “Planet–Star Distance”. The first of these is simply the  $q$  we encountered above, while the second changes the size of the planet’s orbit. The default values of both at the start-up are  $q = 0.5$ , and Planet–Star Distance = 0.24. Run simulations with  $q = 0.4$  and 0.6. Compare them to the simulations with  $q = 0.5$ . What happens as  $q$  gets larger, and larger? What is increasing? How does this increase affect the force of gravity between the star and its planet? (4 points)

See if you can find the value of  $q$  at which larger values cause the planet to “stay home”, while smaller values cause it to (eventually) crash into one of the stars (stepping up/down by 0.01 should be adequate). (2 points)

Ok, reset  $q = 0.5$ , and now let’s adjust the Planet–Star Distance. In the Settings window, set the Planet–Star Distance = 0.1 and run a simulation. Note the outcome of this simulation. Now set Planet–Star Distance = 0.3. Run a simulation. What happened? Did the planet wander away from its parent star? Are you surprised? (4 points)

Astronomers call orbits where the planet stays home, “stable orbits”. Obviously, when the Planet–Star Distance = 0.24, the orbit is unstable. The orbital parameters are just right that the gravity of the parent star is not able to hold on to the planet. But some orbits, even though the parent’s hold on the planet is weaker, are stable—the force of gravity exerted by the two stars is balanced just right, and the planet can happily orbit around its parent and never leave. Over time, objects in unstable orbits are swept up by one of the two stars in the binary. This can even happen in the solar system. In the Comet lab, you can find some images where a comet ran into Jupiter. The orbits of comets are very long ellipses, and when they come close to the Sun, their orbits can get changed by passing close to a major planet. The gravitational pull of the planet changes the shape of the comet’s orbit, it speeds up, or slows down the comet. This can cause the comet to crash into the Sun, or into a planet, or

cause it to be ejected completely out of the solar system. (You can see an example of the latter process by changing the Planet–Star Distance = 0.4 in the current simulation.)

## 4.5 Summary

(35 points) Please summarize the important concepts of this lab. Your summary should include:

- Describe the Law of Gravity and what happens to the gravitational force as *a*) as the masses increase, and *b*) the distance between the two objects increases
- Describe Kepler’s three laws *in your own words*, and describe how you tested each one of them.
- Mention some of the things which you have learned from this lab
- Astronomers think that finding life on planets in binary systems is unlikely. Why do they think that? Use your simulation results to strengthen your argument.

Use complete sentences, and proofread your summary before handing in the lab.

## 4.6 Extra Credit

Derive Kepler’s third law ( $P^2 = C \times a^3$ ) for a circular orbit. First, what is the circumference of a circle of radius  $a$ ? If a planet moves at a constant speed “ $v$ ” in its orbit, how long does it take to go once around the circumference of a circular orbit of radius  $a$ ? [This is simply the orbital period “ $P$ ”.] Write down the relationship that exists between the orbital period “ $P$ ”, and “ $a$ ” and “ $v$ ”. Now, if we only knew what the velocity ( $v$ ) for an orbiting planet was, we would have Kepler’s third law. In fact, deriving the velocity of a planet in an orbit is quite simple with just a tiny bit of physics (go to this page to see how it is done: <http://www.go.ednet.ns.ca/~larry/orbits/kepler.html>). Here we will simply tell you that the speed of a planet in its orbit is  $v = (GM/a)^{1/2}$ , where “ $G$ ” is the gravitational constant mentioned earlier, “ $M$ ” is the mass of the Sun, and  $a$  is the radius of the orbit. Rewrite your orbital period equation, substituting for  $v$ . Now, one side of this equation has a square root in it—get rid of this by squaring both sides of the equation and then simplifying the result. Did you get  $P^2 = C \times a^3$ ? What does the constant “ $C$ ” have to equal to get Kepler’s third law? (5 points)

## 4.7 Possible Quiz Questions

- 1) Briefly describe the contributions of the following people to understanding planetary motion: Tycho Brahe, Johannes Kepler, Isaac Newton.
- 2) What is an ellipse?
- 3) What is a “focus”?
- 4) What is a binary star?
- 5) Describe what is meant by an “inverse square law”.
- 6) What is the definition of “semi-major axis”?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 5 Density

### 5.1 Introduction

In this lab we will consider how to determine the average **density** of irregular shapes and what that density can tell us about the internal composition and structure of the material within the object of interest.

The average density is defined as the *mass* of the object divided by the *volume*. We will use grams (g) for mass and cubic centimeters ( $\text{cm}^3$ ) for volume. What will the units of density be?

The *mass* of an object is a measure of how many protons and neutrons (atomic nuclei particles) the object contains. Denser materials (such as lead) possess many more protons and neutrons within a cubic centimeter than do less dense materials (such as water).

The *weight* of an object is a measure of the *force* exerted upon that object by the gravitational attraction (gravitational ‘pull’) of the Earth or some other large, massive body. An object here on Earth’s surface with a *mass* of 454 grams (grams and kilograms are a measure of the mass of an object) has a weight of one pound. If we do not remove or add any protons or neutrons to this object, its mass and density will not change if we move the object around. However, if we move this object to a location in the Solar System where the gravitational attraction is different than what it is at the Earth’s surface, then the *weight* of this object will be different. It is these concepts that we will address with this lab.

### 5.2 Exercise

You will determine the densities of five different objects and compare these values with each object’s appearance to convince yourself of the uses and limitations of determining average density in an effort to understand the internal structure and composition of objects. We use a similar technique to make first-guess estimates of the composition of various solar system bodies.

- The volume of an object may be determined by measuring how much water it displaces. Apply this technique, realized long ago by Archimedes, to determine the volumes of the irregularly shaped objects. Enter these values in Table 4.1. (**5 points**)
- The masses of the various objects can be determined using the balance. Measure the masses and record the numbers in Table 4.1. (**5 points**)
- When you have completed these measurements, calculate the density of each of the objects. Use units of cubic centimeters and grams. You may recall from your past

scientific experience that a volume of one cubic centimeter is the same as one milliliter (one-thousandth of a liter); see Figure 4.1. Record the density values you calculate in Table 4.1. **(5 points)**

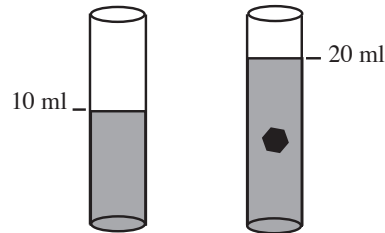


Figure 5.1: The black object displaces 10 ml of water. Therefore, it has a volume of 10 ml = 10 cm<sup>3</sup>.

Object	Volume (cm <sup>3</sup> )	Mass (g)	Density (g/cm <sup>3</sup> )
1. golf ball			
2. Sierra Blanca rock			
3. vesicular lava			
4. shiny weight			
5. Piñon meteorite			

Table 5.2: Density calculations based on masses and volumes of different objects.

To answer the following questions, you will need to refer to Table 4.2, which contains density values for different materials.

1. Consider the average densities of objects 1, 2, and 3. Do the values indicate whether the metal content of any one of the three could be greater than for the others? Explain your answer. **(10 points)**

Material	Density (g/cm <sup>3</sup> )
Gold	19.3
Lead	11.4
Iron	7.9
Aluminum	2.7
Rock (typical)	2.5
Liquid Water	1.0
Wood (typical)	0.8
Insulating foam	0.1
Silica Gel	0.02
Air (dry, at sea level)	0.0012
Helium	0.0001785

Table 5.3: Densities of different materials.

2. Compare the density of the shiny weight with the densities listed in Table 4.2. What do you suspect this object is made of? Why do you think this? **(10 points)**
3. Compare the densities of 3, 4, and 5 and consider Table 4.2. Do you agree that the Piñon meteorite could be rich in iron? Why? **(10 points)**
4. Referring only to Table 4.2, what material (or combination of materials) would you guess the golf ball to be composed of? Is this a reasonable composition for a golf ball? What does this suggest about the use of *average density information* **only** when we make ‘guestimates’ about what materials solar system bodies might be composed of? **(10 points)**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### 5.3 Take-Home Questions

1. Some scientists have measured the density of a substance to be  $3.1 \text{ g/cm}^3$ . Based on what you have learned so far, is the substance more likely to be a solid, a liquid, or a gas? **(5 points)**
2. A solid cylinder of plastic has a density of  $1.6 \text{ g/cm}^3$ . It is then cut exactly in half. What is the density of each of the pieces now? Explain your answer. **(5 points)**
3. Liquid A has a density of  $0.90 \text{ g/cm}^3$ , liquid B has a density of  $1.15 \text{ g/cm}^3$ , and liquid C has a density of  $0.65 \text{ g/cm}^3$ . They are poured into a graduated cylinder and allowed to sit overnight. Assuming that the liquids do not mix into one another, which liquid will be on the bottom, in the middle, and at the top of the graduated cylinder? *Draw a picture to illustrate this scenario.* **(5 points)**
4. Use your textbook (Appendix E) or information on-line to fill in the following table **(12 points)**:



Comment on the difference between *mass* and *density*. Does the most massive planet also need to be the densest? (**4 points**)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 6 Reflectance Spectroscopy

### 6.1 Introduction

With this lab, we will look at the wavelength dependence of the visible reflectance of various objects, and learn what this can tell us about the composition of those objects. This is one technique by which we determine the composition of various solar system objects (*e.g.* Martian rocks, asteroids, clouds on Jupiter). We will specifically apply this method of investigation, using a hand-held reflectance spectrometer, to the reflectance characteristics of several different colored sheets of construction paper. We will then use these known spectra for different colors to identify some “mystery” objects for which we know only their reflectance as a function of wavelength.

We will use an ALTA reflectance spectrometer for this lab. This is an instrument that can quantitatively measure the reflectance in nine wavelength channels covering visible and near infrared wavelengths. The ALTA reflectance spectrometer provides measurements in units of millivolts. As the intensity of the measured (reflected) light changes, the displayed number (voltage) will change in the same proportion. That is, if the intensity of measured reflected light decreases by a factor of two, the displayed value will also decrease by a factor of two. What we will ultimately be interested in for each wavelength and for each object is the percentage of incident light that is reflected. That is, if all the light of a particular wavelength is reflected, that object has a 100% reflectance at that wavelength. If none of the incident light is reflected (it is all absorbed), the object has a zero-percent reflectance at that wavelength.

When we apply reflectance spectroscopy to solar system objects, the Sun is the source of the light that is reflected. Thus, if we know the spectral characteristics (intensity as a function of wavelength) of the Sun, we can measure the intensity of reflectance at our chosen wavelengths accurately. With the ALTA reflectance spectrometer, we do not use sunlight as our ‘source’. Rather, the spectrometer itself has nine bulbs (arranged in a circular pattern) that emit light of specified wavelengths (indicated on the buttons on the front of the instrument) and one detector which measures reflected radiation. The emitted light reflects off the object of interest and is measured by the detector located at the center of the circular pattern of bulbs. By proceeding through the nine wavelengths, we obtain the intensity of reflected light at each wavelength, and from this we can determine the reflectance spectrum of our objects of interest.

### 6.2 Exercises

Start by pressing one of the wavelength buttons on the front of the spectrometer and while depressing this button, turn the spectrometer over. You should see one of the bulbs ar-

ranged in a circular pattern illuminated (unless you are pressing one of the two near-infrared wavelength buttons). Release the button you are holding and press a different button; you should now see a different bulb illuminated. Remember, the ‘bulb’ at the center is actually the detector, which measures the reflected light.

1. Our first order of business is to determine what the instrument signal is when no light is available. This is called the *dark voltage* value and must be subtracted from all subsequent measurements with the spectrometer. Turn the spectrometer on and set it down on the table; the value currently in the display area is the dark voltage. Write this number down, as it will be subtracted from all subsequent measured values. Also write the unit number or letter of the spectrometer. **(5 points)**

**DARK VOLTAGE READING = \_\_\_\_\_**  
**SPECTROMETER # or Letter = \_\_\_\_\_**  
 (located in the upper right corner on the front of the spectrometer)

2. Now, since our spectrometer is not calibrated (we do not know what millivolt values to expect for 100 percent reflection, and there is no reason why this value must be the same for each wavelength), we will use a piece of white poster board to determine the ‘standard’ against which our reflectance spectra of several colored papers will be compared. In order to do this, we will measure the value (in millivolts) of reflected light from the white poster board for each of the nine wavelength channels of the spectrometer. Do this by:

- Placing the spectrometer onto the white poster board
- Sequentially pressing the nine wavelength buttons on the spectrometer
- While pressing each button, note the millivolt value that appears in the display and write this value down in Measured Value column of Table 5.1 for the appropriate wavelength

Remember, we are measuring the intensity of the light that has been: a) emitted by the spectrometer bulb, then b) reflected off the poster board, and then finally, c) measured by the spectrometer.

Since it is a white surface that we are measuring the reflectance from, we will expect that the reflectance (percent of light reflected) will not vary too much among the nine wavelengths (since ‘white’ is the combination of all wavelengths). We will assume that each wavelength is 100 percent reflected from the white surface. After determining the measured ‘calibration’ values for each wavelength, subtract the ‘Dark Voltage’ value from these calibration values to obtain the ‘standard’ value for each wavelength, and write these values in the right-hand column of Table 5.1. **(9 points)**

Wavelength (nanometers)	Measured Value (millivolts)	Standard (Measured - Dark Voltage)
470		
555		
585		
605		
635		
660		
695		
880		
940		

Table 6.1: White poster board calibration determination. (Recall that 1 nanometer =  $10^{-9}$  m = 1 billionth of a meter.)

3. Rather than comparing the reflectance spectra of rocks on Mars, as the Mars Pathfinder camera did, or clouds on Jupiter (as the Voyager and Galileo spacecraft have done), you will obtain and compare the reflectance spectra of several different colors of construction paper. When you have measured the spectra of the three pieces of colored paper, you will plot their spectra.

For each piece of colored paper,

- Measure the reflectance of that piece of paper at each wavelength in the same manner as you determined the spectrometer's 'Measured Value' above, writing the corresponding millivolt value for each wavelength in the Meas. column in Table 5.2.
- For each wavelength for each piece of paper, calculate the Measured minus Dark Voltage value. To do this, subtract your instrument's Dark Voltage value from the Meas. column value at each wavelength for each colored piece of paper.
- Determine the Reflectance value of each colored sheet of paper at each wavelength using the formula below, in which 'STANDARD Value' is the value in the right-most column of Table 5.1 at the appropriate wavelength. The REFLECTANCE values you arrive at should have values between 0 and 1. Write your calculated reflectance values in the "Reflect." columns of Table 5.2 for the appropriate colored piece of paper. **(20 points)**

$$\text{Reflectance} = \frac{\text{Measured Value} - \text{Dark Value}}{\text{STANDARD Value}}$$

4. On the sheets of graph paper at the end of this lab, plot the Reflectance values [column 3 Reflect. values in Table 5.2] you have calculated for each of the 3 colored pieces of paper. For each piece of colored paper and the calculated Reflectance values, draw a dot at the appropriate Reflectance value (y-axis) and appropriate wavelength point (x-axis). After you have drawn all 9 dots for a single sheet of colored paper, connect the

$\lambda$	Red Paper			Green Paper			Blue Paper		
(nm)	Meas.	Meas.-Dark	Reflect.	Meas.	Meas.-Dark	Reflect.	Meas.	Meas.-Dark	Reflect.
470									
555									
585									
605									
635									
660									
695									
880									
940									

Table 6.2: ALTA Reflectance Spectrometer Values (millivolts)

dots. This curve you have drawn is a **Reflectance Spectrum**. Repeat this procedure for your Reflectance results for the other two sheets of colored paper. Clearly label your three resulting curves. **(21 points)**

- Compare your three curves (reflectance spectra of the colored sheets of paper) with the spectra of the two mystery objects (A and B). The two mystery curves are the spectra for two separate objects. These objects are included among those listed below. Using your knowledge of the color of the objects in the list below, a) determine which object each of the mystery spectra corresponds to, and b) describe below how you have made this determination. You may find it useful to refer to Figure 6.6 on page 157 of your text to relate wavelength to color. **(6 points each)**

Tomato	blade of grass	White Paper
Black Paper	Eggplant	Navel Orange
Pink Flamingo	Neptune (page 215 of text)	Lemon

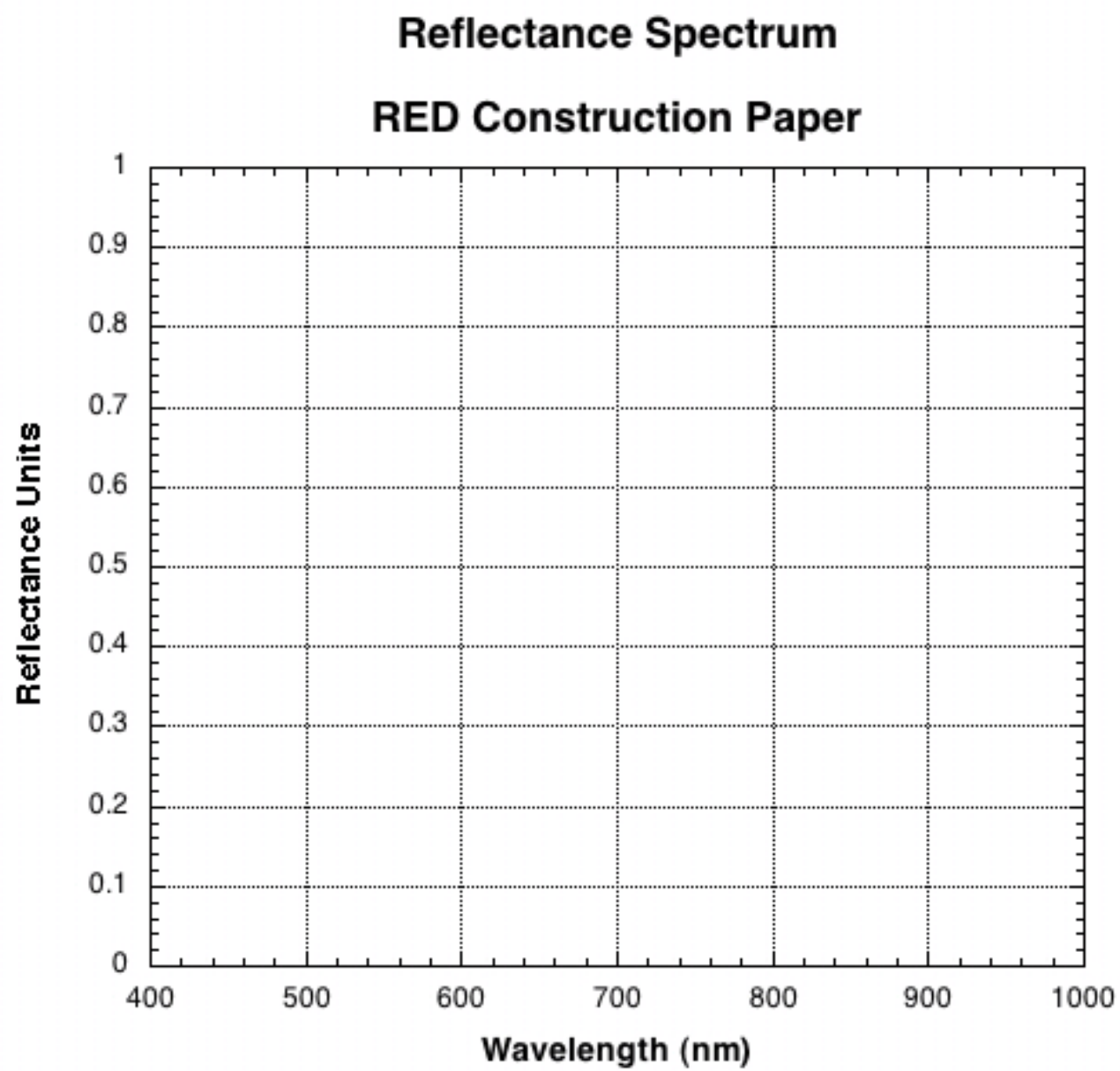
Object #            :

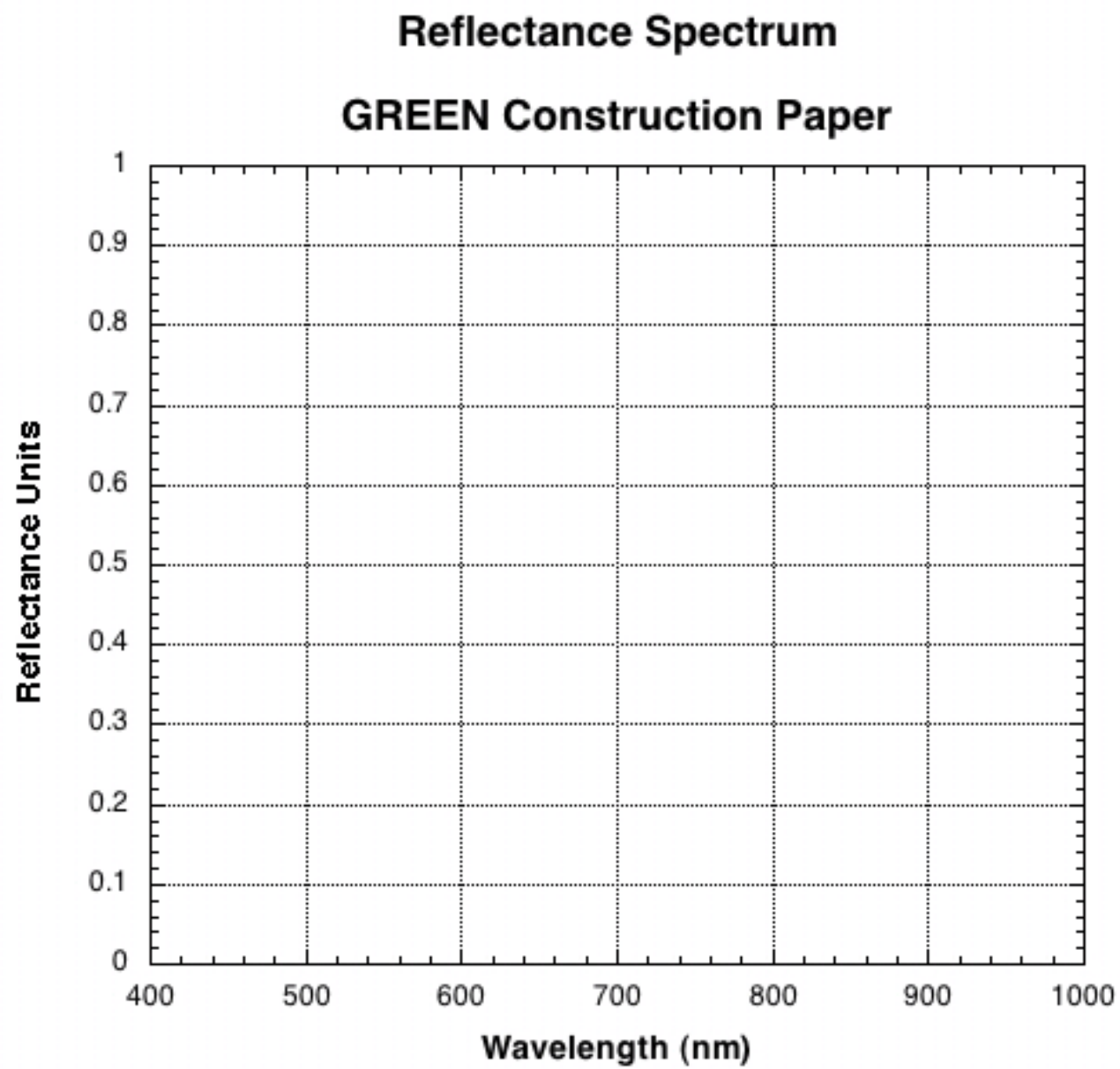
Object #            :

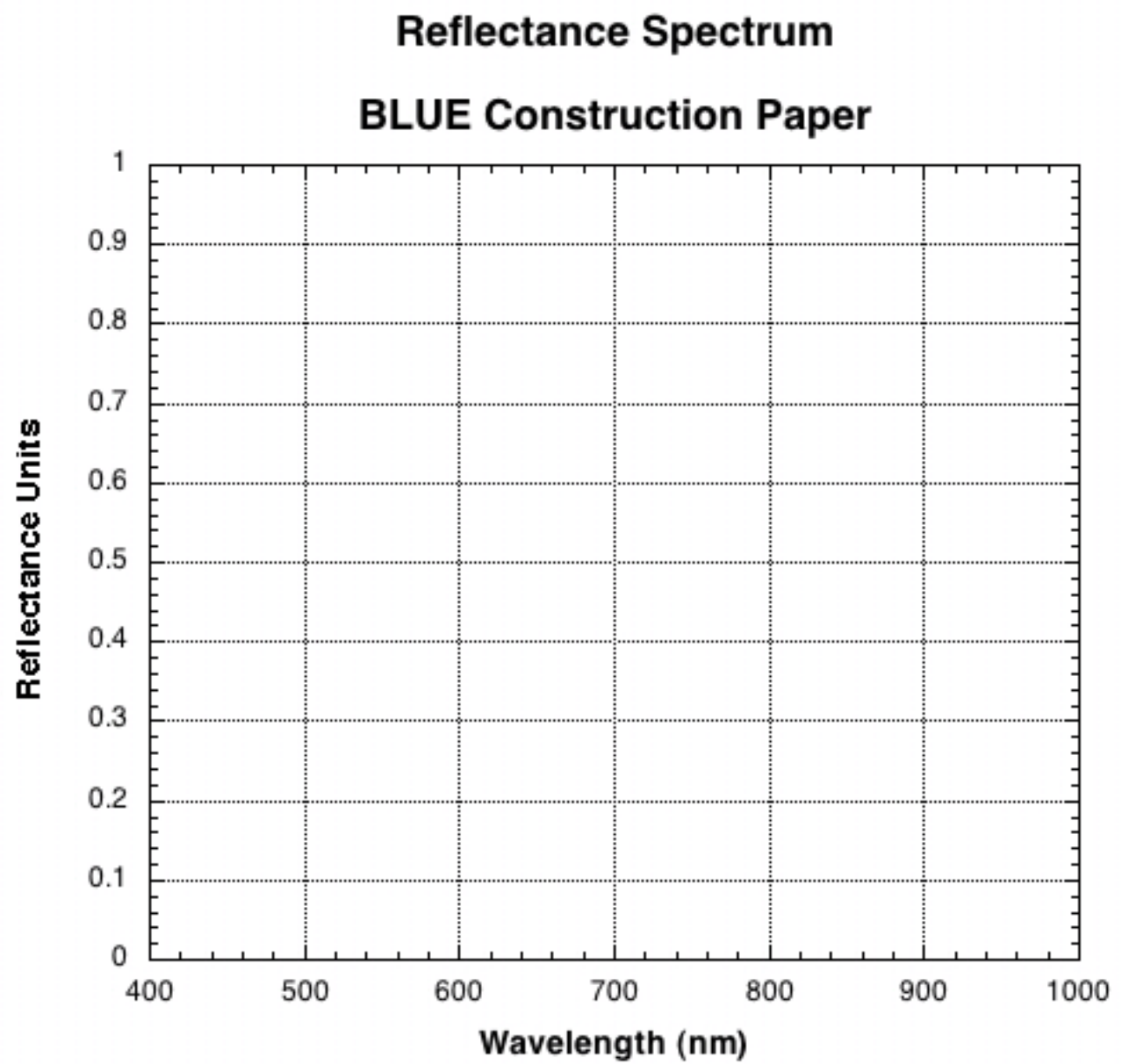
**Mystery Planet:**

The last graph in this lab shows a reflectance spectrum for a newly discovered planet that was just visited by a NASA spacecraft. Does this planet have vegetation on its surface? Justify your answer. **(8 points)**

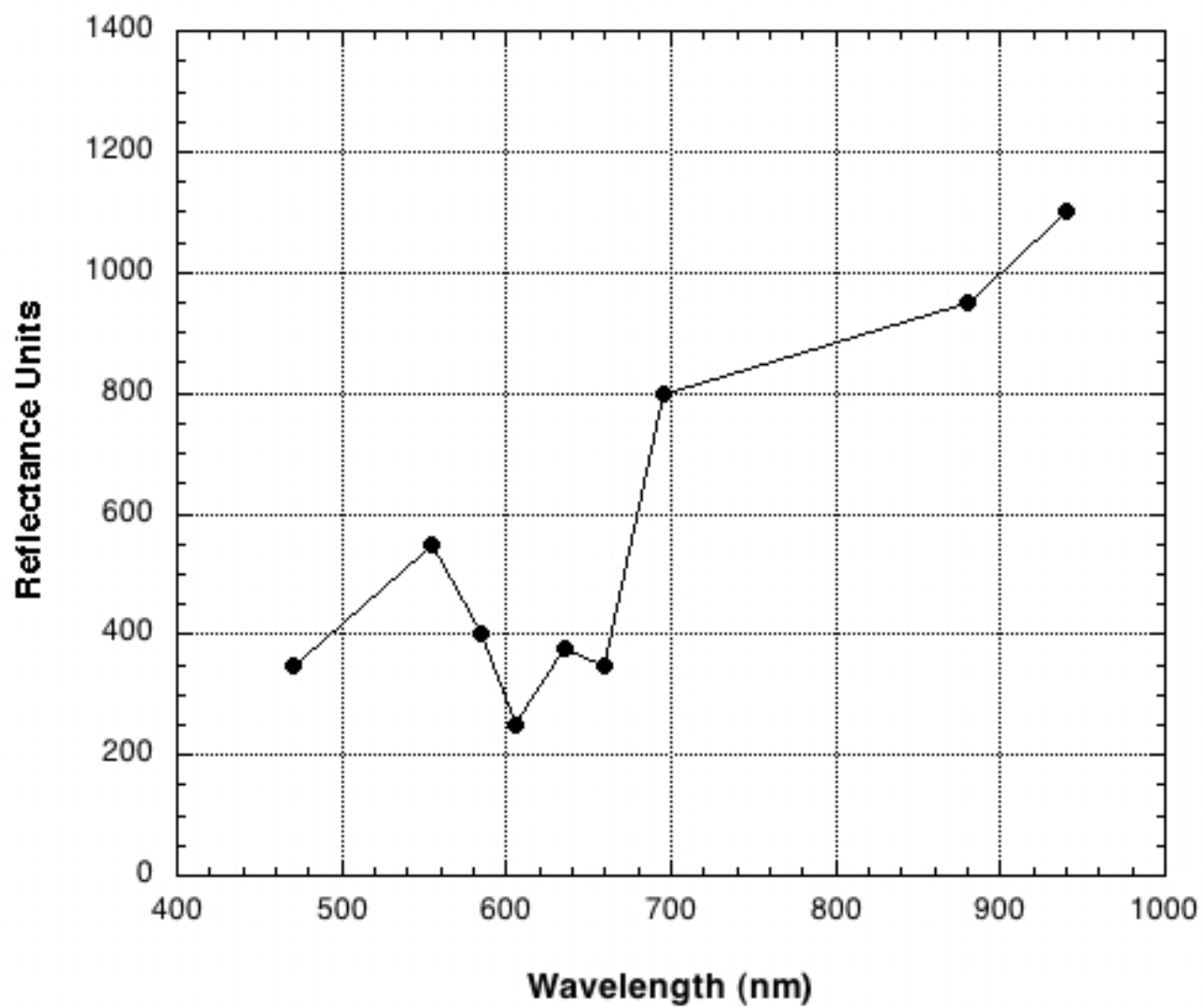








**Mystery Planet Reflectance Spectrum**





Date:\_\_\_\_\_

6. Why does the planet Jupiter appear brighter in the night sky than Mars, even though Mars is much closer to Earth than Jupiter? [Hint: the third column in Table 8.1 on page 200 of your textbook might be helpful.] (**5 points**)
7. Imagine that the colored lightbulbs in the Alta reflectance spectrometers emitted twice as much light as they actually do. In this brighter bulb situation, would you determine Reflect. values that are the same as those you have written in Table 5.2, or would you determine different (larger, smaller) Reflect. values with these brighter bulbs? Why? (**5 points**)
8. Clearly describe a concept you have learned in this lab, or last week in class, during our discussions about radiation. Describe something that you have not already addressed by answering other questions in this lab. (**15 points**)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 7 Locating Earthquakes

### 7.1 Introduction

Because of convective motions in the mantle of the Earth, which are driven by heat transfer from the hotter interior regions up through the cooler crust, stresses build up in the outer rigid crust. Sometimes these stresses are relieved by abrupt slippages, or *earthquakes*, that generate shock waves that propagate outward from the quake site. Earthquakes can result in loss of lives and considerable damage to buildings as well as transportation and communication systems.

The actual slippage in Earth's crust usually occurs miles below the surface. The exact site is called the *focus* of the earthquake. The point on the Earth's surface directly above the focus is called the *epicenter*.

The shock waves generated by the quake are called *seismic* waves (from the Greek word "seismos," which means to shake). There are three types of waves. The first type is called **L waves**, which travel only on the Earth's surface and are similar to water waves on the ocean. Next are **P waves**, which are compressional wave, and can travel through gases, liquids or solids. The motion associated with **S waves**, which are shear waves, is perpendicular to the direction of motion. The S waves dissipate quickly in liquids and gases.

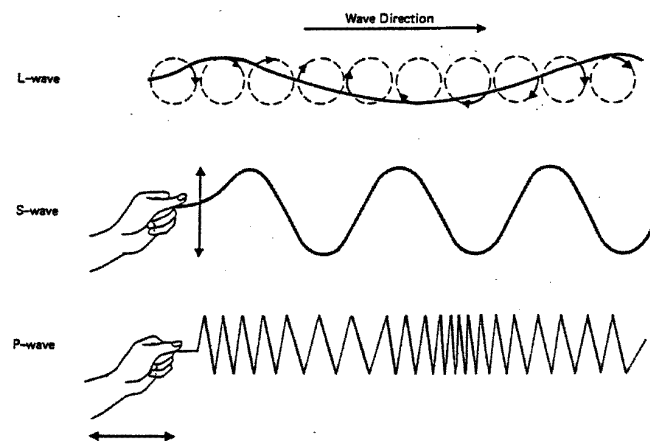


Figure 6-17. *Three Types of Waves.* Earthquakes produce three types of waves. L-waves travel on the earth's surface. S-waves and P-waves travel through the earth.

Figure 7.1: Different types of waves.

The P waves travel almost twice as fast as S waves, thus the P wave shock will arrive at a



remote station before the S wave shock will. A *seismometer* is an instrument that consists of a massive base and a detector that picks up seismic waves. If the speed of the waves through the local crust is known and you have a seismometer so you can record the shocks, then at any single station you can determine how far you are from the focus of the quake.

Use the following graph to determine the average speed of the P and S waves for a typical Earth crust. Assume that we are going to be dealing with *shallow earthquakes* in the state of New Mexico, *i.e.*, those that have depths of 20 km or less. Put the wave speed values you read off of Figure 6.2 into Table 6.1. (6 points)

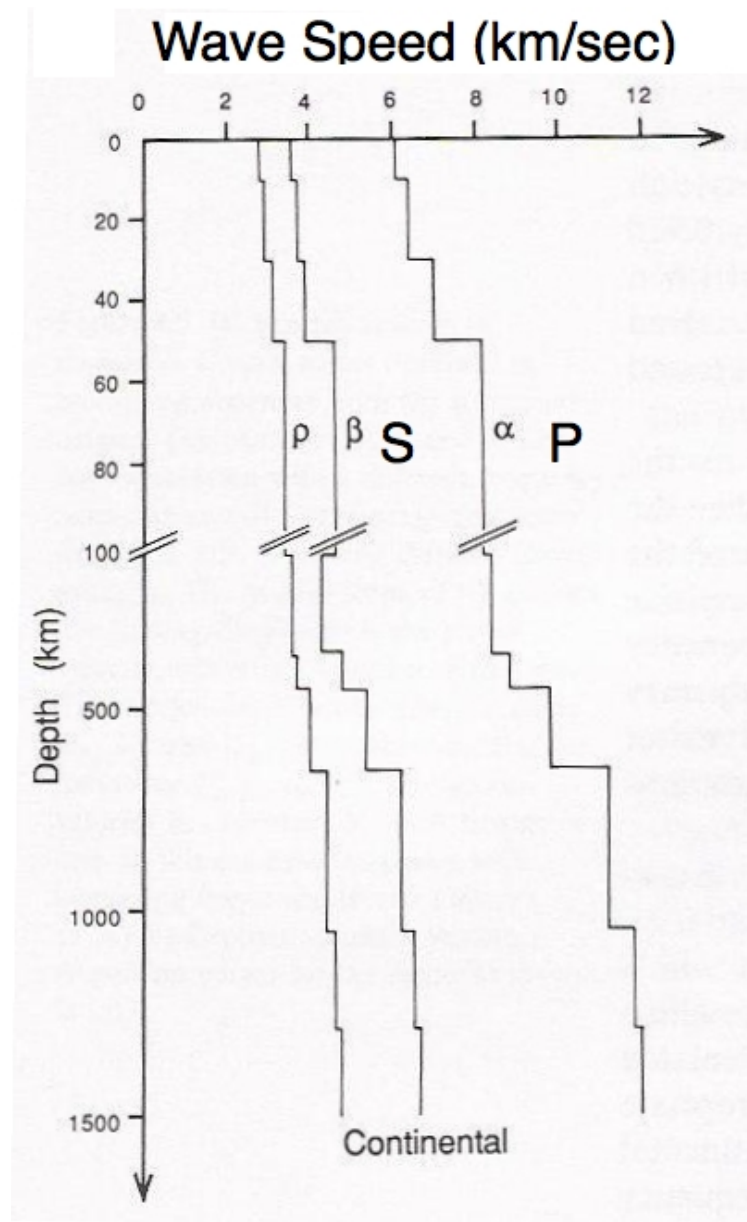


Figure 7.2: Wave speeds as a function of depth.

Type of Wave	Speed of Wave (km/sec)
P Wave	
S Wave	

Table 7.1: Comparison of P and S wave travel times.

## 7.2 Locating an Earthquake

### 7.2.1 Finding the Distances

Consider the problem of locating a small local quake. We will use real earthquake data, which you will receive on a separate sheet of paper, from seismic stations in Alamogordo, Albuquerque, El Paso, Las Cruces, Santa Fe, and Socorro. Write down which earthquake you are analyzing (numbers 1-5) in the space below:

**Earthquake #:** \_\_\_\_\_

Copy the P and S wave onset times from your data sheet for your earthquake into Table 6.2.

Station	Onset of P wave	Onset of S wave	$\delta t$ (sec)	dist. to focus (km)
Alamogordo				
Albuquerque				
El Paso				
Las Cruces				
Santa Fe				
Socorro, NM				

Table 7.2: P and S wave arrival times at six seismic stations.

$\delta t$  is the difference between the arrival time of a P wave and the arrival time of an S wave at any given seismic station. Calculate  $\delta t$  for each of the six stations and place these values in Table 6.2. **(6 points)**

Now we must calculate the distance that the wave traveled from the earthquake's focus to each recording station. If  $X$  is the distance between the focus and the seismograph and  $v_P = \text{speed of P wave}$  and  $v_S = \text{speed of S wave}$ , then:

$$\frac{X}{v_P} = t_P = \text{time of travel for } P \text{ wave} \quad (8)$$

and

$$\frac{X}{v_S} = t_S = \text{time of travel for } S \text{ wave}. \quad (9)$$

Since  $\delta t = t_S - t_P$ , substituting from Equations (1) and (2) above gives us

$$\delta t = \frac{X}{v_S} - \frac{X}{v_P}. \quad (10)$$

Equation (3) can be rewritten as

$$\delta t = \frac{(v_P \times X) - (v_S \times X)}{v_S \times v_P} \quad (11)$$

If we factor out  $X$ , multiply both sides by  $v_P \times v_S$ , and divide by  $v_S - v_P$ , we find that the distance between the earthquake focus and any given seismic station is

$$X = \delta t \times \frac{v_P \times v_S}{v_P - v_S} \quad (12)$$

Compute the distances to the six stations using Equation (5) and insert these values into Table 6.2 (**12 points**).

### 7.2.2 Determining the Location

Now you will use the map to determine the site of the quake. First, figure out the number of centimeters that correspond to 1 km by measuring the scale bar on your map (lower left corner of map) with a ruler.

140.8 km = \_\_\_\_\_ cm

1 km = the above number / 140.8, = \_\_\_\_\_ cm =  $S$ , the scale factor

Copy the distances from Table 6.2 into the second column of Table 6.3. Then convert the true distances in Table 6.3 from km to *scaled distances* in cm:

scaled distance = true distance  $\times S$

Insert these numbers into Table 6.3 (**6 points**).

Set the compass for each scaled distance and place the point of the compass at the station and draw an arc on the map located at the end of the lab (**10 points**). When you are done, you will use your results in conjunction with the information on the last page of the lab regarding the geology of New Mexico to answer the following questions.

Station	Dist. to focus (km)	Scaled Dist. to focus (cm)
Alamogordo		
Albuquerque		
El Paso		
Las Cruces		
Santa Fe		
Socorro, NM		

Table 7.3: Distance from each seismic station to earthquake focus.

### 7.3 In-Lab Questions

1. What was the site of this local quake? What might be the cause of small quakes in this region? (**10 points**)
2. What is your best estimate of the time the quake occurred? (**5 points**)
3. Based on the size of the intersecting region of your diagram, what can you say about the depth of the quake? (**5 points**)

Date:\_\_\_\_\_

4. When large earthquakes occur, stations within a few thousand km of the focus detect both P and S waves. On the opposite side of the Earth only P waves are detected. Review the nature of the P and S waves and argue that there is a molten region at about 3500 km from the center of the Earth (compared to the Earth's 6378 km radius). [A figure will be helpful here.] How might you detect a smaller solid central core if there were one? (**20 points**)

5. a) Clearly describe how you would design a spacecraft mission to Mars to determine whether or not Mars has molten metal in its core, including what properties of Mars you would want to measure. b) Would you want one or more than one lander? c) If you could only have an orbiter mission to Mars (no landers), what measurements would you want it to make to help you determine whether or not Mars has a molten metal core. [Hint: the measurement will *not* be the reflected sunlight or blackbody radiation.] (**20 points**)





*This Geological summary is from the 1990 New Mexico Magazine Vacation Guide.*

## Geology

New Mexico's geology is as diverse and colorful as its culture, history and people. From the low-lying flatlands of the south to the soaring peaks of the northern mountains, the state's terrain climbs 10,000 feet in altitude creating a landscape of dramatic contrasts.

The creation of New Mexico's present landscape began some 70 million years ago during the Cenozoic era. About this time the Rocky Mountains were born during the Laramide Revolution, a general uplifting of the Earth's crust.

The ancient seas that covered most of New Mexico in earlier times slowly disappeared, and along with them went the dinosaurs and abundant marine life of the Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous periods.

Volcanic activity has played an integral role in shaping New Mexico's terrain. Evidence of centuries of volcanism is apparent across the state. Rising well over 1,700 feet above the surrounding land, Shiprock is a volcanic neck—the core of all that remains of a long-eroded volcano.

Valle Grande, located in the center of the Jemez Mountains, is one of the world's largest calderas. The violent eruption that created it released over 75 cubic miles of molten rock, which slowly cooled as it flowed over the land. Today the crater contains 176 square miles of meadow land where wildflowers bloom and cattle graze peacefully.

To the south, Little Black Peak in Valley of Fires State Park erupted barely 1,000 years ago, emitting what is now 44 miles of ropey pa hoe hoe lava flows, more than 150 feet thick in some places. As it spread and cooled, the lava formed domes, tubes, caves and fissures. This area is among the most recent and best preserved examples of such lava flows in the continental U.S.

Seismic activity continues to alter the land. Tension in the Earth's crust along a pair of parallel fault lines running down the center of New Mexico has resulted in the formation of the great Rio Grande Rift Valley. This huge trough, which contains the Rio Grande, is 30 miles across at Albuquerque and widens considerably to the south.

Many of the state's mountains, including the Sandia, Manzano and Sacramento ranges, were formed from fault blocks that were tilted and raised as the Earth's crust was uplifted.

In New Mexico's arid environment, water is a scarce and precious resource that is, nevertheless, a powerful force in the sculpting of geological features.

Circulating underground water dissolves salt, gypsum and limestone deposits to form subterranean realms such as Carlsbad Caverns, one of the largest cave systems in the world.

When the roofs of such caverns collapse, sink holes are formed and lakes develop. Bottomless Lakes State Park near Roswell plays on a harmless exaggeration of the depth of these unique features, the deepest of which is about 90 feet.

Winds blowing in from gypsiferous Lake Lucero have built up what is now White Sands National Monument. Here, sparkling snow-white sand crests in dunes up to 50 feet high. The 275 square-mile monument contains more than 8 billion tons of gypsum and is the largest dune field of its kind in the world.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 8 Surface of the Moon

### 8.1 Introduction

One can learn a lot about the Moon by looking at the lunar surface. Even before astronauts landed on the Moon, scientists had enough data to formulate theories about the formation and evolution of the Earth's only natural satellite. However, since the Moon rotates once for every time it orbits around the Earth, we can only see one side of the Moon from the surface of the Earth. Until spacecraft were sent to orbit the Moon, we only knew half the story.

The type of orbit our Moon makes around the Earth is called a synchronous orbit. This phenomenon is shown graphically in Figure 7.1 below. If we imagine that there is one large mountain on the hemisphere facing the Earth (denoted by the small triangle on the Moon), then this mountain is always visible to us no matter where the Moon is in its orbit. As the Moon orbits around the Earth, it turns slightly so we always see the same hemisphere.

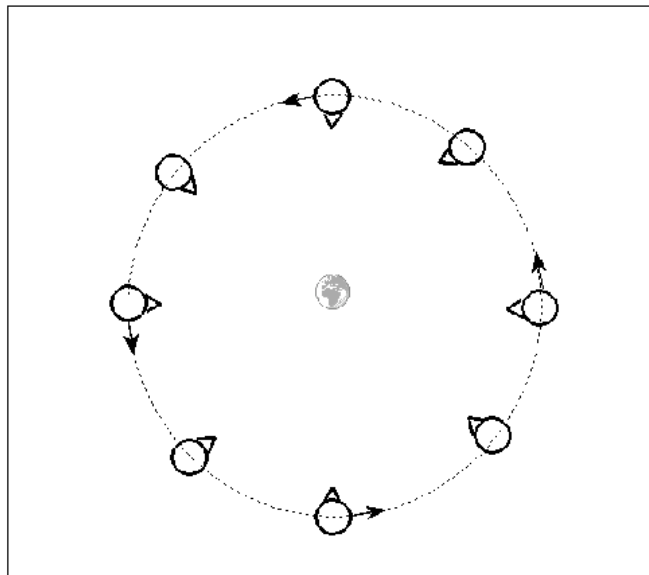


Figure 8.1: The Moon's synchronous orbit. (Not drawn to scale.)

On the Moon, there are extensive lava flows, rugged highlands and many impact craters of all sizes. The overlapping of these features implies relative ages. Because of the lack of ongoing mountain building processes, or weathering by wind and water, the accumulation of volcanic processes and impact cratering is readily visible. Thus by looking at the images of the Moon, one can trace the history of the lunar surface.



- Lab Goals: to discuss the Moon's terrain, craters, and the theory of relative ages; to use pictures of the Moon to deduce relative ages and formation processes of surface features
- Materials: Moon pictures, ruler, calculator

## 8.2 Craters and Maria

A crater is formed when a meteor from space strikes the lunar surface. The force of the impact obliterates the meteorite and displaces part of the Moon's surface, pushing the edges of the crater up higher than the surrounding rock. At the same time, more displaced material shoots outward from the crater, creating *rays* of ejecta. These rays of material can be seen as radial streaks centered on some of the craters in some of the pictures you will be using for your lab today. As shown in Figure 7.2, some of the material from the blast “flows” back towards the center of the crater, creating a mountain peak. Some of the craters in the photos you will examine today have these “central peaks”. Figure 7.2 also shows that the rock beneath the crater becomes fractured (full of cracks).

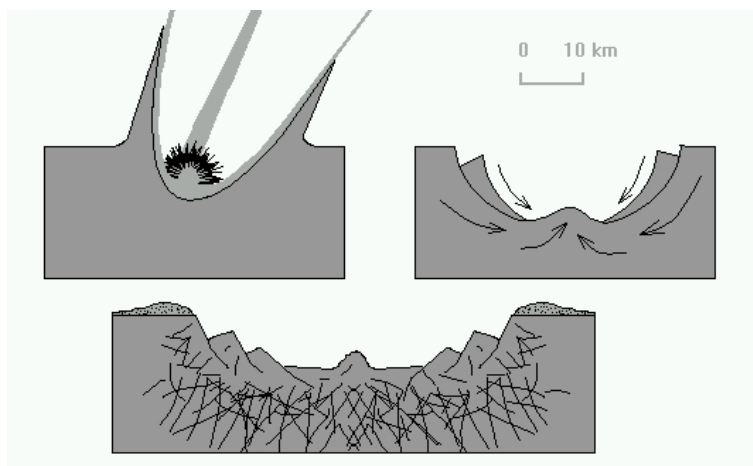


Figure 8.2: Formation of an impact crater.

Soon after the Moon formed, its interior was mostly liquid. It was continually being hit by meteors, and the energy (heat) from this period of intense cratering was enough to liquefy the Moon's interior. Every so often, a very large meteor would strike the surface, and *crack the Moon's crust*. The over-pressured “lava” from the Moon's molten mantle then flowed up through the cracks made by the impact. The lava filled in the crater, creating a dark, smooth “sea”. Such a sea is called a *mare* (plural: *maria*). Sometimes the amount of lava that came out could overflow the crater. In those cases, it spilled out over the crater's edges and could fill in other craters as well as cover the bases of the *highlands*, the rugged, rocky peaks on the surface of the Moon.

### 8.3 Relative Ages on the Moon

Since the Moon does not have rain or wind erosion, astronomers can determine which features on the Moon are older than others. It all comes down to counting the number of craters a feature has. Since there is nothing on the Moon that can erase the presence of a crater, the more craters something has, the longer it must have been around to get hit. For example, if you have two large craters, and the first crater has 10 smaller craters in it, while the second one has only 2 craters in it, we know that the first crater is older since it has been there long enough to have been hit 10 times. If we look at the highlands, we see that they are covered with lots and lots of craters. This tells us that in general, the highlands are older than the maria, which have less craters. We also know that if we see a crater on top of a mare, the mare is older. It had to be there in the first place to get hit by the meteor. Crater counting can tell us which features on the Moon are older than other features, but it can not tell us the absolute age of the feature. To determine this, we need to use radioactive dating or some other technique.

### 8.4 Lab Stations

In this lab you will “visit” several stations that will have several black and white images of the Moon (or Earth) and a few questions. At some stations we present data comparing the Moon to the Earth or Mars. Using your understanding of simple physical processes here on Earth and information from the class lecture and your reading, you will make observations and draw logical conclusions in much the same way that a planetary geologist would.

You should work in groups of 2–4 people, with one binder for each group. The binders contain separate sections, or “stations,” with the photographs and/or images for each specific exercise. Each group must go through all the stations, and consider and discuss each question and come to a conclusion. **Remember to back up your answers with reasonable explanations, and be sure to answer *all* of the questions.** While you should discuss the questions as a group, be sure to write down one group answer on the lab. The take-home questions must be done on your own. **Answers for the take-home questions that are exact duplicates of those of other members of your group will not be acceptable.**

**Station 1:** Our first photograph (**#1**) is that of the full Moon. It is obvious that the Moon has dark regions, and bright regions. The largest dark regions are the “maria,” while the brighter regions are the “highlands.” In **image #2**, the largest features of the full Moon are labeled. The largest of the maria on the Moon is Mare Imbrium (the “Sea of Showers”), and it is easily located in the upper left quadrant of image #2. Locate Mare Imbrium. Let us take a closer look at Mare Imbrium.

Image #3 is from the Lunar Orbiter IV. Before the Apollo missions landed humans on the Moon, NASA sent several missions to the Moon to map its surface, and to make sure we could safely land there. Lunar Orbiter IV imaged the Moon during May of 1967. The tech-

nology of the time was primitive compared to today, and the photographs were built up by making small imaging scans/slices of the surface (the horizontal striping can be seen in the images), then adding them all together to make a larger photograph. **Image #3** is one of these images of Mare Imbrium seen from almost overhead.

1. Approximately how many craters can you see inside the dark circular region that defines Mare Imbrium? Compare the number of craters in Mare Imbrium to the brighter regions to the North (above) of Mare Imbrium. (**5 points**)

**Images #4 and #5** are close-ups of small sections of Mare Imbrium. In image #4, the largest crater (in the lower left corner) is “Le Verrier” (named after the French mathematician who predicted the correct position for the planet Neptune). Le Verrier is 20 km in diameter. In image #5, the two largest craters are named Piazzi Smyth (just left of center) and Kirch (below and left of Piazzi Smyth). Piazzi Smyth has a diameter of 13 km, while Kirch has a diameter of 11 km.

2. Using the diameters for the large craters noted above, and a ruler, what is the approximate diameter of the smallest crater you can make out in images #4 and #5? If the NMSU campus is about 1 km in diameter, compare the smallest crater you can see to the size of our campus. (**5 points**)

In image #5 there is an isolated mountain (Mons Piton) located near Piazzi Smyth. It is likely that Mons Piton is related to the range of mountains to its upper right.

3. Roughly how much area (in  $\text{km}^2$ ) does Mons Piton cover? Compare it to the Organ Mountains (by estimating their coverage). How do you think such an isolated mountain came to exist? [Hint: In the introduction to the lab exercises, the process of maria formation was described. Using this idea, how might Mons Piton become so isolated

from the mountain range to the northeast?] (**5 points**)

**Station 2:** Now let's move to the "highlands". In **image #6** (which is identical to image #2), the crater Clavius can be seen on the bottom edge—it is the bottom-most labeled feature on this map. **Image #7** shows a close-up picture of Clavius (just below center) taken from the ground through a small telescope (this is similar to what you would see at the campus observatory). Clavius is one of the largest craters on the Moon, with a diameter of 225 km. In the upper right hand corner is one of the best known craters on the Moon, "Tycho." In image #1 you can identify Tycho by the large number of bright "rays" that emanate from this crater. Tycho is a very young crater, and the ejecta blasted out of the lunar surface spread very far from the impact site.

**Images #8 and #9** are two high resolution images of Clavius and nearby regions taken by Lunar Orbiter IV (note the slightly different orientations from the ground-based picture).

4. Compare the region around Clavius to Mare Imbrium. Scientists now know that the lunar highlands are older than the maria. What evidence do you have (using these photographs) that supports this idea? [Hint: review section 7.3 of the introduction.] (**5 points**)

**Station 3:** Comparing Apollo landing sites. **Images #10 and #11** are close-ups of the Apollo 11 landing site in Mare Tranquillitatis (the "Sea of Tranquility"). The actual spot where the "Eagle" landed on July 20, 1969, is marked by the small cross in image 11 (note that three small craters near the landing site have been named for the crew of this mission: Aldrin, Armstrong and Collins). [There are also quite a number of photographic defects in these pictures, especially the white circular blobs near the

center of the image to the North of the landing site.] The landing sites of two other NASA spacecraft, Ranger 8 and Surveyor 5, are also labeled in image #11. NASA made sure that this was a safe place to explore!

**Images #12 and #13** show the landing site of the last Apollo mission, #17. Apollo 17 landed on the Moon on December 11th, 1972. Compare the two landing sites.

5. Describe the logic that NASA used in choosing the two landing sites—why did they choose the Tranquillitatis site for the first lunar landing? What do you think led them to choose the Apollo 17 site? **(5 points)**

The next two sets of images show photographs taken by the astronauts while on the Moon. The first three photographs (**#14, #15, and #16**) are scenes from the Apollo 11 site, while the next three (**#17, #18, and #19**) were taken at the Apollo 17 landing site.

6. Do the photographs from the actual landing sites back-up your answer to why NASA chose these two sites? How? Explain your reasoning. **(5 points)**

**Station 4:** On the northern-most edge of Mare Imbrium sits the crater Plato (labeled in images #2 and #6). **Image #20** is a close-up of Plato.

7. Do you agree with the theory that the crater floor has been recently flooded? Is the maria that forms the floor of this crater younger, older, or approximately the same age as the nearby region of Mare Imbrium located just to the South (below) of Plato? Explain your reasoning. **(5 points)**

**Station 5: Images #21 and #22** are “topographical” maps of the Earth and of the Moon. A topographical map shows the *elevation* of surface features. On the Earth we set “sea level” as the zero point of elevation. Continents, like North America, are above sea level. The ocean floors are below sea level. In the topographical map of the Earth, you can make out the United States. The Eastern part of the US is lower than the Western part. In topographical maps like these, different colors indicate different heights. Blue and dark blue areas are below sea level, while green areas are just above sea level. The highest mountains are colored in red (note that Greenland and Antarctica are both colored in red—they have high elevations due to very thick ice sheets). We can use the same technique to map elevations on the Moon. Obviously, the Moon does not have oceans to define “sea level.” Thus, the definition of zero elevation is more arbitrary. For the Moon, sea level is defined by the *average* elevation of the lunar surface.

Image #22 is a topographical map for the Moon, showing the highlands (orange, red, and pink areas), and the lowlands (green, blue, and purple). [Grey and black areas have no data.] The scale is shown at the top. The lowest points on the Moon are 10 km below sea level, while the highest points are about 10 km above sea level. On the left hand edge (the “y-axis”) is a scale showing the latitude.  $0^\circ$  latitude is the equator, just like on the Earth. Like the Earth, the North pole of the Moon has a latitude of  $+90^\circ$ , and the south pole is at  $-90^\circ$ . On the x-axis is the *longitude* of the Moon. Longitude runs from  $0^\circ$  to  $360^\circ$ . The point at  $0^\circ$  latitude *and* longitude of the Moon is the point on the lunar surface that is closest to the Earth.

It is hard to recognize features on the topographical map of the Moon because of the complex surface (when compared to the Earth’s large smooth areas). But let’s go ahead and try to find the objects we have been studying. First, see if you can find Plato. The latitude of Plato is  $+52^\circ$  N, and its longitude is  $351^\circ$ . You can clearly see the outline of Plato if you look closely.

8. Is Plato located in a high region, or a low region? Is Plato lower than Mare Imbrium (centered at  $32^\circ$ N,  $344^\circ$ )? [Remember that Plato is on the Northern edge of Mare Imbrium.](5 points)

As described in the introduction, the Moon keeps the same face pointed towards Earth at all times. We can only see the “far-side” of the Moon from a spacecraft. In image #22, the *hemisphere* of the Moon that we can see runs from a longitude of  $270^\circ$ , passing through  $0^\circ$ , and going all the way to  $90^\circ$  (remember, 0 is located at the center of the

Moon as seen from Earth). **Image #23** is a more conventional topographical map of the Moon, showing the two hemispheres: near side, and far side.

9. Compare the average elevation of the near-side of the Moon to that of the far-side. Are they different? Can you make out the maria? Compare the number of maria on the far side to the number on the near side. **(5 points)**

[Why the far side of the Moon is so different from the near side remains a mystery!]

**Station 6:** With the surface of the Moon now familiar to you, and your perception of the surface of the Earth in mind, compare the Earth's surface to the surface of the Moon. Does the Earth's surface have more craters or fewer craters than the surface of the Moon? Discuss two differences between the Earth and the Moon that could explain this. **(5 points)**

## 8.5 The Chemical Composition of the Moon: Keys to its Origin

**Station 7:** Now we want to examine the chemical composition of the Moon to reveal its history and origin. The formation of planets (and other large bodies in the solar system like the Moon) is a violent process. Planets grow through the process of “accretion:” the gravity of the young planet pulls on nearby material, and this material crashes into the young planet, heating it, and creating large craters. In the earliest days of the solar system, so much material was being accreted by the planets that they were completely *molten*. That is, they were in the form of liquid rock, like the lava you see flowing from some volcanoes on the Earth. Just as with water, heavier objects in molten rock sink to the bottom more quickly than lighter material. This is also true for chemical elements. Iron is one of the heaviest of the common elements, and it sinks

toward the center of a planet more quickly than elements like silicon, aluminum, or magnesium. Thus, near the Earth's surface, rocks composed of these lighter elements dominate. In lava, however, we are seeing molten rock from deeper in the Earth coming to the surface, and thus lava and other volcanic (or "igneous") rock can be rich in iron, nickel, titanium, and other high-density elements.

**Images #24 and 25** present two unique views of the Moon obtained by the spacecraft *Clementine*. Using special sensors, *Clementine* could make maps of the surface composition of the Moon. Image #24 is a map of the amount of iron on the surface of the Moon ("hotter" colors mean more iron than cooler colors). Image #25 is the same type of map, but for titanium.

10. Compare the distribution of iron and titanium to the surface features of the Moon (using images #1, #2 or #6, or the topographical map in image #23). Where are the highest concentrations of iron and titanium found? **(5 points)**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
11. If the heavy elements like iron and titanium sank towards the center of the Moon soon after it formed, what does the presence of large amounts of iron and titanium in the maria suggest? [Hint: do you remember how maria are formed?] **(5 points)**

The structure of the Earth is shown in the Figure 7.3. There are three main structures: the crust (where we live), the mantle, and the core. The crust is cool and brittle, the mantle is hotter and "plastic" (it flows), and the core is very hot and very dense. As you may recall from the Density lab, the density of a material is simply its mass (in grams or kilograms) divided by its volume (in cubic centimeters or meters). Water has a density of  $1 \text{ gm/cm}^3$ . The density of the Earth's crust is about  $3 \text{ gm/cm}^3$ , while the mantle has a density of  $4.5 \text{ gm/cm}^3$ . The core is very dense:  $14 \text{ gm/cm}^3$  (this is partly due to its composition, and partly due to the great pressure exerted by the mass



located above the core). The core of the Earth is almost pure iron, while the mantle is a mixture of magnesium, silicon, iron and oxygen. The average density of the Earth is  $5.5 \text{ gm/cm}^3$ .

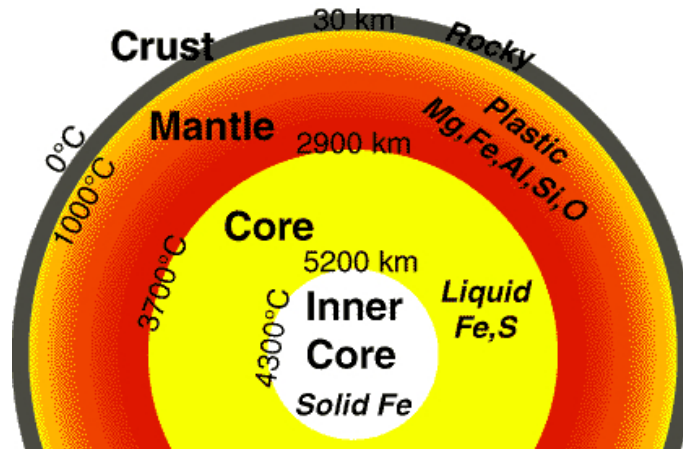


Figure 8.3: The internal structure of the Earth, showing the dimensions of the crust, mantle and core, as well as their composition and temperatures.

Before the astronauts brought back rocks from the Moon, we did not have a good theory about its formation. All we knew was that the Moon had an average density of  $3.34 \text{ gm/cm}^3$ . If the Moon formed from the same material as the Earth, their compositions would be nearly identical, as would their average densities. In Table 7.1, we present a comparison of the compositions of the Moon and the Earth. The data for the Moon comes from analysis of the rocks brought back by the Apollo astronauts.

Element	Earth	Moon
Iron	34.6%	3.5%
Oxygen	29.5%	60.0%
Silicon	15.2%	16.5%
Magnesium	12.7%	3.5%
Titanium	0.05%	1.0%

Table 8.1: Composition of the Earth & Moon.

12. Is the Moon composed of the same mixture of elements as the Earth? What are the biggest differences? Does this support a model where the Moon formed out of the same material as the Earth? (5 points)

As you will learn in lecture, the terrestrial planets in our solar system (Mercury, Venus, Earth and Mars) have higher densities than the jovian planets (Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune). One theory for the formation of the Moon is that it formed near Mars, and “migrated” inwards to be captured by the Earth. This theory arose because the density of Mars,  $3.9 \text{ gm/cm}^3$ , is similar to that of the Moon. But Mars is rich in iron and magnesium: 17% of Mars is iron, and more than 15% is magnesium.

13. Given this information, do you think it is likely that the Moon formed out near Mars? Why? **(5 points)**

The currently accepted theory for the formation of the Moon is called the “Giant Impact” theory. In this model, a large body (about the size of Mars) collided with the Earth, and the resulting explosion sent a large amount of material into space. This material eventually collapsed (coalesced) to form the Moon. Most of the ejected material would have come from the crust and the mantle of the Earth, since it is the material closest to the Earth’s surface. Table 7.2 shows the composition of the Earth’s crust and mantle compared to that of the Moon.

Element	Earth’s Crust and Mantle	Moon
Iron	5.0%	3.5%
Oxygen	46.6%	60.0%
Silicon	27.7%	16.5%
Magnesium	2.1%	3.5%
Calcium	3.6%	4.0%

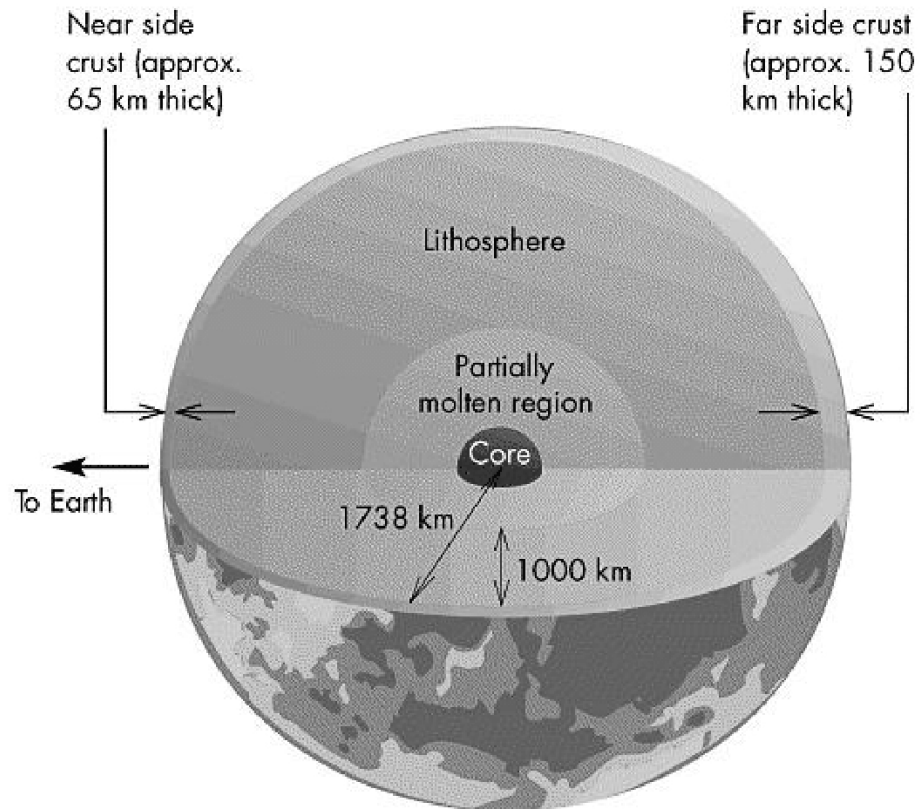
Table 8.2: Chemical Composition of the Earth (crust and mantle) and Moon.

14. Given the data in Table 7.2, present an argument for why the giant impact theory probably is now the favorite theory for the formation of the Moon. Can you think of a reason why the compositions might not be *exactly* the same? **(5 points)**

Date:\_\_\_\_\_

15. What are the maria, and how were they formed? (**5 points**)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
16. Explain how you would assign relative (“this is older than that”) ages to features on the Moon or on any other surface in the solar system. (**5 points**)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
17. How can the Earth be older than the Moon, as suggested by the Giant Impact Theory of the Moon’s formation, but the Moon’s surface is older than the Earth’s surface? What do we mean by ‘old’ in this context? (**5 points**)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
18. The maria are present on the Earthward-facing portion of the Moon and not on the Moon’s far side. Since there is no reason to suspect that the impact history of the

near side of the Moon is substantially different from that experienced by the far side, suggest another possible reason why the maria are present on the Earth-facing side only, using the below figure as a guide. (10 points)





Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 9 Heating and Cooling of Planets AND Daytime Observations

### 9.1 Heating and Cooling Introduction

With this lab exercise we will investigate the ability of the radiant energy from the Sun to heat an object (planet, sidewalk, water-filled can). How rapidly, or how much, an object warms is dependent upon several factors, which are discussed below. The knowledge you should gain from this lab includes how the rate of warming depends upon the reflectivity of an object, and how effectively an object (surface of a planet, for example) can cool via emission of radiant energy.

The local temperature at a given location on a planet, including the air temperature near the ground, is dependent upon a number of important factors. Global factors include the tilt of the planet's rotational axis relative to its path around the Sun and the eccentricity of the planet's orbit. Naturally, local factors can also affect the local temperature.

Several global and local factors that affect a planet's globally-averaged temperature and also the local temperature are as follows:

- The length of daylight hours, dependent upon the rotation rate of a planet, determines the ratio of solar heating during the day and infrared cooling (emitted to space) during both the day and night.
- The slant angle of the incoming sunlight affects the local sunlight intensity and explains why sloped parts of your face such as your nose sunburn more easily than the more vertical regions. This effect is a function of latitude and season on those planets that have a non-zero axial tilt.
- The degree of ellipticity of a planet's orbit can affect the seasonal changes or can induce sunlight intensity variations that are similar to axially-induced seasonal variations. This has a major impact for Mercury and Pluto and somewhat less for Mars. For the Earth it only causes about  $\pm 3\%$  variations in incoming solar intensity throughout a year.
- The degree to which the atmosphere serves as an insulating blanket (including greenhouse effects) can affect the daily averaged temperature and the range of temperature between the coldest and warmest times of a day.
- For the terrestrial planets, the albedo (percent reflectivity) of the local clouds and surface can also greatly affect short term temperature variations as well as the planet's globally averaged temperature. See Figure 8.1.

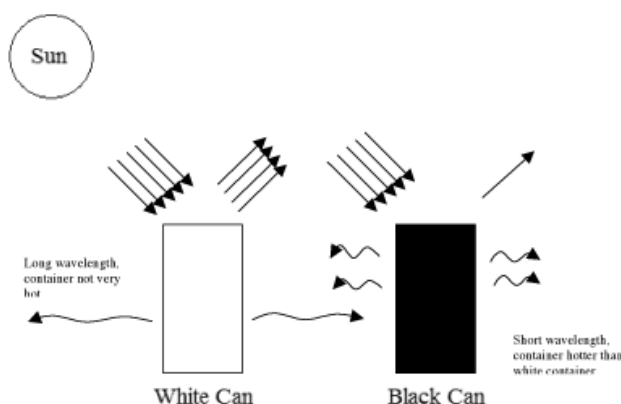


Figure 9.1: The white can has a high albedo and reflects most of the light (80% in this case). The black can has a low albedo and absorbs most of the light (only 20% reflected here), and this can will be more likely to heat.

## 9.2 Heating and Cooling Rates

Divide into groups of 3–4 people. Each of these groups will be provided one soft drink can that has been painted white and two additional cans that have been painted black. Each group will also be provided with three thermometers, one for each can. Additionally, each group will be provided with two pieces of ‘insulating’ cardboard.

Working in the shade of the observatory domes, place your three cans on one of the pieces of cardboard provided (this will insulate the cans from the cold, or hot, ground). Add 200 milliliters of cold water (colder than the local air temperature) to each of your 3 cans. When the cans are filled, place a thermometer in each of the cans. The thermometers will have been in the cold water prior to this, so they will already be at the approximate water temperature. Allow the thermometers to equilibrate with the water in the cans for 3 minutes or so.

Now take the cans and place them in the sunlight on the piece of insulating cardboard. Record the temperatures of these three sunlit cans in Table 8.1. (Be sure to keep track of which black can is which). Also, record in Table 8.2 the temperatures of the shaded white and black cans. *These two cans, which all four groups will use, will be located on the north side of the open telescope dome. Each group will record data for the two shaded cans, plus their three cans, for a total of five cans.*

At five minute intervals (use a watch with a second hand or its equivalent), record in the tables the temperatures indicated on each of the five thermometers (again, taking care to not mix up the two black sunlit cans). Continue this process through 25 minutes. This will give you one temperature at time ‘zero’ and 5 subsequent temperature readings.

After 25 minutes have passed and you have tabulated the minute 25 temperature, place the ‘can-cozy’ (insulator) on one of the black cans and move your three sunlit cans into the shade. Continue to measure the temperatures of all five cans at 5-minute intervals through 45 minutes.

Time	Temp. of White Can	Temp. of Black Can 1	Temp. of Black Can 2
0			
5			
10			
15			
20			
25			
30			
35			
40			
45			

Table 9.1: The effect of albedo on local heating and cooling rates. Times 0-25 are during the sunlit heating phase, and times 30-45 are during the shaded cooling phase. **(10 points)**

Time	Temp. of White Can	Temp. of Black Can
0		
5		
10		
15		
20		
25		
30		
35		
40		
45		

Table 9.2: Heating and cooling rates in the shade. These cans remain in the shade throughout the course of the entire experiment. **(10 points)**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### 9.3 Heating and Cooling Questions

1. Plot the values of each of the five temperatures versus time *using five different line styles or symbols* on the graph paper provided. Be sure to label each of the curves. (10 points)

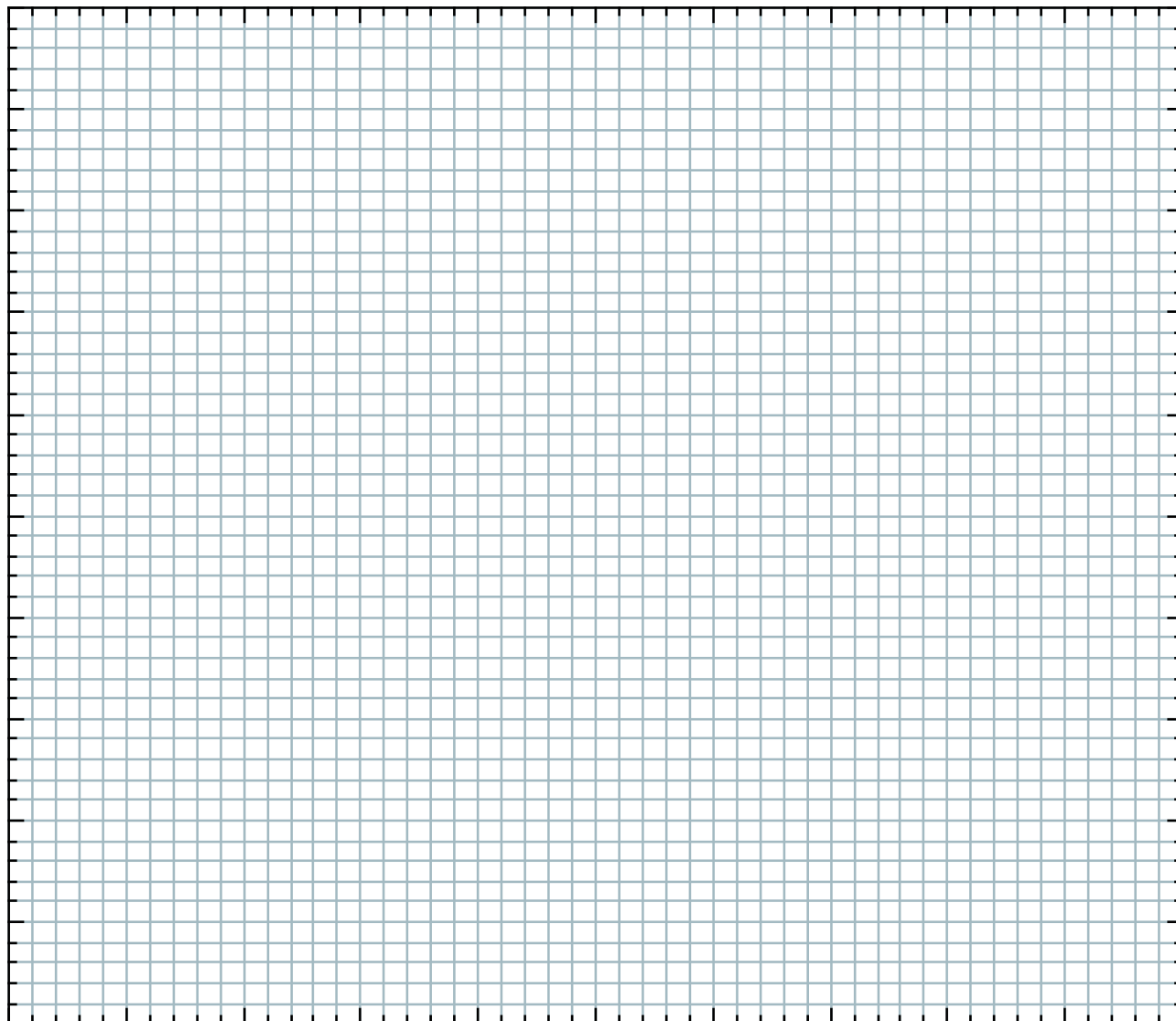


Figure 9.2: Plot of temperature ( $^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) vs. time (minutes) for all five cans.

2. For each can, calculate the average heating rate, using the equation given below, during the initial 25 minutes of the experiment (the time interval during which the three cans were in the sunlight). The calculated values will be in units of degrees Centigrade per

minute. Insert your calculated heating rates into Table 8.3. **(5 points)**

$$\text{Heating Rate} = \frac{(\text{Temperature after 25 min.} - \text{Initial Temperature})}{25 \text{ minutes}} \quad (13)$$

Can	Heating Rate (°C/min)
White can (in sunlight)	
Black can 1 (in sunlight)	
Black can 2 (in sunlight)	
White can (in shade)	
Black can (in shade)	

Table 9.3: Heating rate values for different cans.

- Which color can (black or white) has the largest heating rate when in the sunlight? Did you expect this result? Why or why not? Can you think of any other processes, in addition to radiative heating, that might have played a role in heating the water in these sunlit cans? **(5 points)**
- What do you think was the process responsible for any warming or cooling experienced by the two shaded cans? Is there a color dependence to this temperature change in the shade? Did you expect this? Why or why not? **(5 points)**
- Subtract the heating rate you calculated for the shaded white can from the heating rate you calculated for the sunlit white can, and write this value below:

White can: **sunlit heating rate – shaded heating rate** = \_\_\_\_\_

Subtract the heating rate you calculated for the shaded black can from the heating rate you calculated for each of the two sunlit black cans:

Black can Number 1: **sunlit heating rate** – **shaded heating rate** = \_\_\_\_\_

Black can Number 2: **sunlit heating rate** – **shaded heating rate** = \_\_\_\_\_

How do these ‘corrected’ radiative heating rates, which account for other processes than radiative heating, compare between the one white and two black sunlit cans? Is this in better or worse agreement with your expectations? (**5 points**)

6. Let’s examine the cooling rates, as indicated by the temperatures measured after minute 25 of the experiment. Calculate the averaged cooling rates for **each** of the five cans, using the minute 45 and 25 temperatures and the twenty minute interval:

$$\text{Averaged Cooling Rate} = \frac{(\text{Temp. after 25 min.} - \text{Temp. after 45 min.})}{20 \text{ minutes}} \quad (14)$$

White can (sunlit) : averaged cooling rate = \_\_\_\_\_

Black can (insulated): averaged cooling rate = \_\_\_\_\_

Black can (bare) : averaged cooling rate = \_\_\_\_\_

White can (shaded) : averaged cooling rate = \_\_\_\_\_

Black can (shaded) : averaged cooling rate = \_\_\_\_\_

Of the three cans that originally spent 25 minutes in the sunlight, which had the smallest cooling rate (cooled most slowly)? Why do you think this is the situation? Did you expect this? Why or why not? (**5 points**)

7. Of the three sunlit cans, which had the **greatest** cooling rate (cooled most rapidly)? What processes do you believe are responsible for the cooling of this can? Do these processes also play a role in the cooling of the other cans? (**5 points**)

## 9.4 Daytime Observing Introduction

Venus is the Earth's closest planetary neighbor. It has been viewed by civilizations of people on Earth for centuries, for it shines brightly in the morning or evening sky, earning the name "morning star" or "evening star." [At one time, it was thought to be two different objects, one that appeared in the evening sky and another that appeared in the morning sky.] Venus shines so brightly in our sky in part because of its proximity to Earth, and in part due to its highly reflective cloud layers, which completely surround the planet and hide the surface from our view.

Venus has also played a key role in our understanding of the universe around us. For centuries, it was believed that the Sun, the Moon, all of the known planets, and the stars in the sky revolved around the Earth. This belief was known as the *geocentric model* of the universe, which placed the Earth at the center of it all. However, it was telescopic observations of Venus that changed our view of the universe. Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) was the first person to use a telescope to observe Venus. Over time, he noted that Venus, like the Moon, exhibited phases, changing from a small, disk-like object to a large crescent shaped object.

Galileo was aware of a new model that described the universe, the Sun-centered, or *heliocentric model* developed by Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543). This model was extremely controversial because it removed the Earth from its privileged position at the center of the

universe. Nevertheless, Galileo found that the heliocentric model could completely explain the observed phases of Venus.

In this lab, you will observe Venus through a telescope, as Galileo did, and deduce information about Venus' relative distance from Earth throughout its orbit and its motion around the Sun. You will also observe Mercury, weather permitting, since it will also be visible during the daytime.

## 9.5 Telescopic Observations

Observe Venus and Mercury through the telescope at the Tombaugh Campus Observatory and draw and label what you see on the observation log at the end of this lab. Comment in the space below on what you saw. What shape were they? Were they what you expected? Were they disappointing? Did they appear to be a certain color? **The more descriptive you can be, the better. (5 points)**

## 9.6 Phases of Venus

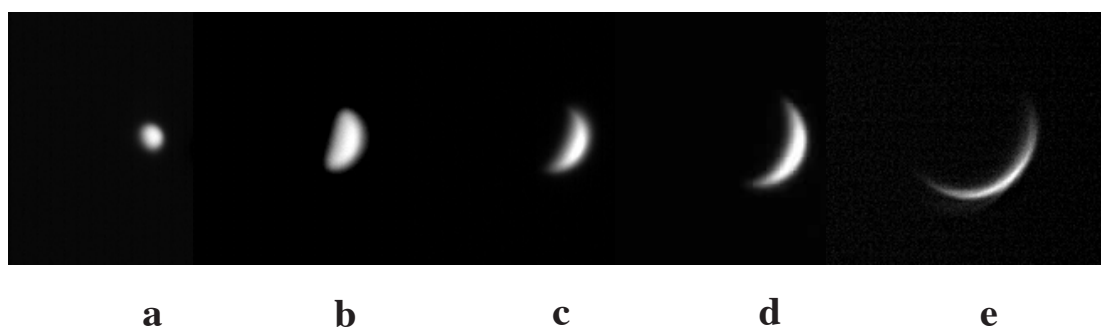


Figure 9.3: Phases of Venus as recorded through a 16" telescope (like the one at the Tombaugh Campus Observatory) at Calvin College. These images came from their web page: <http://www.calvin.edu/academic/phys/observatory/venus.html>.

Figure 8.3 shows five telescopic observations of Venus. Using your knowledge of the phases of the Moon, fill in Table 8.4 with the *name* of the phase shown in each panel of Fig. 8.3. [More than one panel can show the same phase.] **(5 points)**

Panel	Phase
a	
b	
c	
d	
e	

Table 9.4: Phases of Venus corresponding to Figure 8.3.

## 9.7 Heliocentric Model

Figure 8.4 shows a schematic of the orbits of the Earth and Venus in the heliocentric model. Using Fig. 8.4, label the various Venus circles, labeling each one with the letter corresponding to the phases seen in panels of Fig. 8.3 (**a**, **b**, **c**, **d**, and **e**). In other words, match the pictures of Venus in Figure 8.3 with the orbital locations in Figure 8.4. Shade in one half of Venus in each location to illustrate which side is receiving sunlight. **(5 points)**

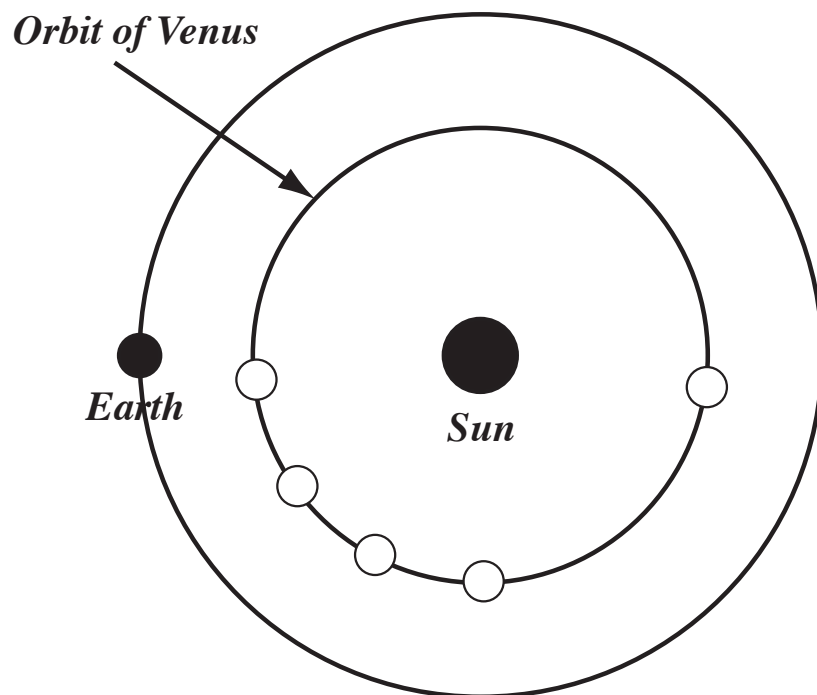


Figure 9.4: Orbit of Venus around the Sun.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 9.8 Take-Home Questions

### 9.8.1 Heating and Cooling

1. What relationship is there between the ‘can cozy’ and some planetary characteristic of Venus, or Earth, or Mars? (**5 points**)
2. If you had conducted this experiment in July, how might your results differ from those we have obtained during mid-March? What if you had conducted this experiment in mid-September? (**5 points**)

### 9.8.2 Daytime Observations

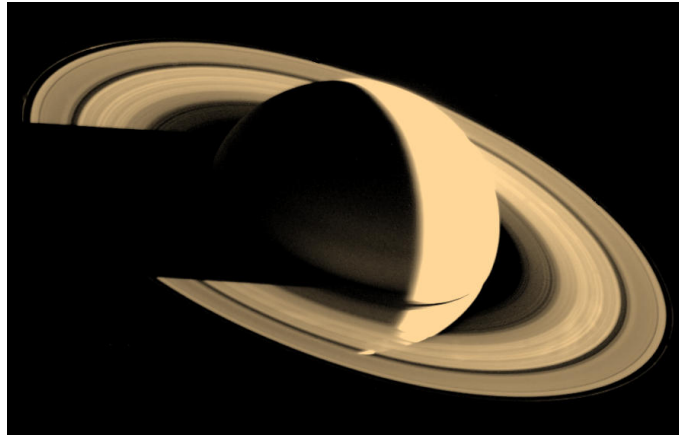
3. It takes Venus approximately 7 months to complete one orbit around the Sun. However, we observe Venus through a full set of phases in slightly less than that time. What other motion needs to be accounted for when predicting when we will see a particular phase of Venus from Earth? (**5 points**)



4. Comment on the role that the telescope played in changing our view of the universe in the 1600's. Do you think this role still continues today? Please give an example to support your viewpoint. (**5 points**)
5. Summarize the difference between the geocentric and heliocentric models of the universe and discuss how Galileo's observations of Venus influenced this debate. (**5 points**)

### 9.9 Extra Credit (10 points)

Consider the image of a crescent Saturn below, taken by the Voyager 1 spacecraft on November 16, 1980.

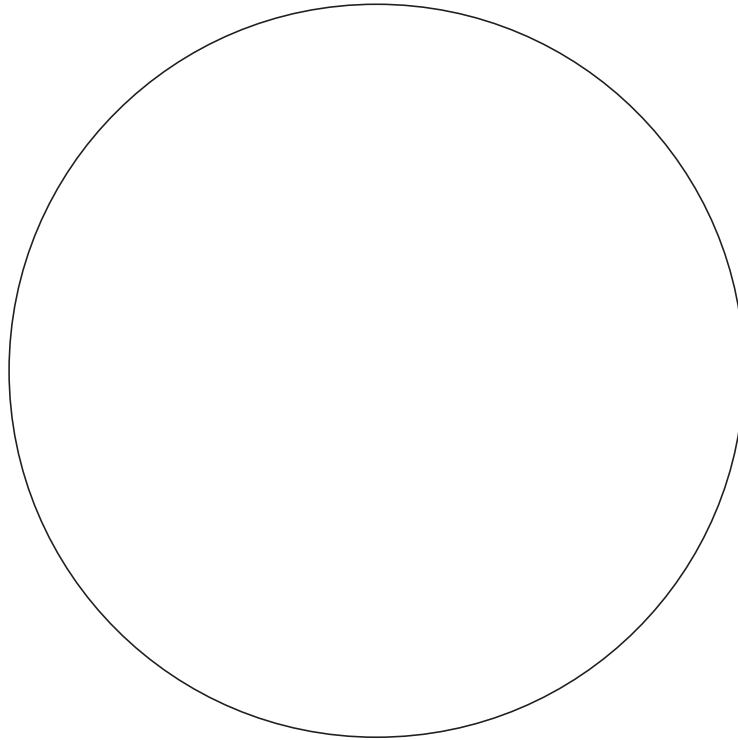


Remember that Saturn is about 9.5 AU from the Sun. With a good enough telescope, would you ever be able to see a similar view of Saturn (that is, in the crescent phase) from Earth? **(5 points)**

If so, sketch a diagram similar to Figure 8.4 in the lab, showing a possible arrangement of the Sun, Earth, and Saturn that would allow you to see a crescent Saturn. **(5 points)**

If not, explain why we are sometimes able to see a crescent Venus but never a crescent Saturn. Drawing a diagram may help. **(5 points)**

Name:  
Date:  
Object:  
Telescope:



**Draw the object as it looks to you through the telescope**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 10 Surface Water Flow Features on Mars

### 10.1 Introduction

In this lab you will be making measurements of some valleys and channels on Mars. The main goal of this lab is to be able to distinguish the different surface features left by small, slow flowing streams and large, rapid outflows. You will calculate the volumes of water required to carve these features, and consider how this volume compares with other bodies of water. Be sure to write down and turn in all of your measurements and work. **Write your name on all transparencies and staple them to your lab.**

### 10.2 Warrego Valles

*The first three questions refer to the two images of Warrego Valles. One image is a close-up, the other a wider view. First, look at the close-up view and find the valley system. Look at the impact craters and determine which direction the sunlight is coming from. Warrego Valles is located in Mars' southern hemisphere; its location is identified on the Mars globe and map we have available for you to look at.*

1. By looking at the morphology, or shape, of the valley, geologists can tell how the valley was formed. **Does this valley system has a dendritic pattern (like the veins in a leaf) or an anastomosing pattern (like an intertwined rope)? (2 points)**

Overlay a transparency film onto the close-up image and tape or paperclip the photo and transparency together so that the transparency does not shift. Trace the valley pattern onto the transparency (be sure to attach your transparency to your lab). **Does the shape of this valley point to slow formation over time or to fast formation from a localized water source? Why do you say this? (3 points)**

2. Now look at the second, wider view image of this valley system. Can you find Warrego Valles in this image? In this area there are two terrain types, heavily-cratered uplands and smooth plains. Study the wide view so that you can follow the boundary between the two terrain types and can identify this boundary in the close-up photo. **Trace the boundary between the uplands and plains on your close-up overlay (the transparency sheet) and label the UPLANDS and the PLAINS.** (Again, be sure to attach your transparency.) **Is Warrego located in the uplands or on the plains?** (5 points)

Which terrain is older? Recall that we can use crater counting to help determine the age of a surface, so let's do some crater counting. Attach a transparency sheet to the wide-view image. Pick out two square regions on the wide view image, each  $3\text{ cm} \times 3\text{ cm}$ . One region should cover the smooth plains and the other should cover the cratered region. Draw these two squares on the transparency sheet. **Count all the impact craters greater than 1 millimeter in diameter within each of the two squares you have outlined. Write these numbers below, with identification. Which region is older? What does this exercise tell you about approximately (or relatively) when Warrego formed?** (5 points)

3. To figure out how much water was required to form this valley, we first need to estimate its volume. The volume of a rectangular solid (like a shoebox) is equal to  $\ell \times w \times h$ , where  $\ell$  is the length of the box,  $h$  is the height of the box, and  $w$  is the width. We will approximate the shape of the valley as one long shoebox and focus only on the main valley system. Use the close-up image for this purpose.

First, we need to add up the total length of all the branches of the valley. Measure the length, in millimeters, of each branch and the main trunk. Be careful not to count the same length twice. Sometimes it is hard to tell where each branch ends. You need to use your own judgment and be consistent in the way you measure each branch.

Now add up all your measurements and convert the sum to kilometers. In this image  $1 \text{ mm} = 2 \text{ km}$ . **What is the total length  $\ell$  of the valley system in kilometers? Show your work. (5 points)**

Second, we need to find the average width of the valley. Carefully measure the width of the valley (in millimeters) in several places. **What is the average width? Convert this to kilometers. Again, show all of your work. (5 points)**

Finally, we need to know the depth. It is hard to measure depths from photographs, so we will just guess. From other evidence that we will not discuss here, the depth of typical Martian valleys is about 200 meters. **Convert this to kilometers. (5 points)**

Now find the total valley volume in  $\text{km}^3$ , using the relation  $V = \ell \times w \times h$ . This is the amount of sediment and rocks that was removed by water erosion to form this valley. We do not know for sure how much water was required to remove each cubic kilometer, but we can guess. Let's assume that  $100 \text{ km}^3$  of water was required to erode  $1 \text{ km}^3$  of Mars. **How much water was required to form Warrego Valles? (5 points)**

### 10.3 Ares and Tiu Valles

*The remaining questions refer to Ares and Tiu Valles. On the wide scale image, Ares is on the right and Tiu is on the left (your instructor will show you which way to hold the images). The Mars Pathfinder spacecraft landed in the top left region of this image in 1997. Can you guess why that particular spot was chosen? Again, look at the impact craters to get an idea of where the Sun is.*

4. First, which way did the water flow that carved these channels? The way to tell is to look at streamlined islands, like those on the second print. When flowing water erodes an island, it leaves a shape that has the smallest amount of drag possible. This same shape is used in things like cars and airplane wings. Think about these every-day shapes. **In the close-up photo, did water flow south-to-north or north-to-south? (5 points)**

Find these same two islands in the large scale print (they are close to the top, left of center). Find other islands with the same shape elsewhere in the channel. Tape or clip a transparency to your photo and make a sketch of the pattern of these channels. **Now add arrows to show the path and direction the flowing water took.** Look at pattern of these channels. **Are they dendritic or anastomosing? (5 points)**

Can you identify locations where the ground seems to have collapsed and the ground water poured out? These are called “chaos” regions because the ground surface appears to be a chaotic jumble. **Label these regions on your sketch and attach it to your work. (5 points)**

5. Now we want to get an idea of the volume of water required to form Ares (the right hand) Valles. Measure the length of the channel from near the Pathfinder landing site to the bottom right corner of the image. Also, measure the length of any tributaries that you see. In this image, 1 mm = 10 km. **How long is the channel in km? (5 points)**

Measure the channel width in several places and find the average width. **On average, how wide is the channel in km? (5 points)**

The average depth is about 700 m. **How much is that in km? (5 points)**

Now multiply your answers (in units of km) to find the volume of the channel in  $\text{km}^3$ . Use the same ratio of water volume to channel volume that we used in Question 3 to find the volume of water required to form the channel. **How does the volume of water required to form Ares Valles compare to the volume of water required to form Warrego Valles? (5 points)**

6. You have now studied Warrego and Ares Valles up close. **Compare and contrast the two different varieties of fluvial (water-carved) landforms in as many ways as you can think of (at least three!). Do you think they formed the same way? (10 points)**





Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 10.4 Take-Home Question

Answer the following question on a separate sheet of paper, and turn it in with the rest of your lab.

7. What happened to all of the water that carved these valley systems? We do not see any water on the surface of Mars when we look at present-day images of the planet, but if our interpretation of these features is correct, and your calculated water volumes are correct (which they probably are), then where has all of the water gone? Discuss two possible (probable?) fates that the water might have experienced. Think about discussions we have had in class about planets' atmospheres and what their fates have been. Also think about how Earth compares to Mars and how the water abundances on the two planets now differ. **If you have questions, please ask! (20 points)**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 11 Heat Loss from Io

### 11.1 Introduction

With this lab, we will explore two concepts we have discussed in class. Jupiter's moon Io is the most volcanically active body in the Solar System, due to the intense tidal 'stretching' it experiences because of its proximity to Jupiter and its orbital characteristics related to the orbits of Europa and Ganymede. The regions of the surface where molten lava from the interior comes up from below are very hot, but in general the surface is quite cold since Io is 5.2 AU from the Sun. These regions of different surface temperatures emit different amounts of thermal (blackbody) radiation, since the quantity of energy emitted is proportional to the temperature raised to the 4th power ( $T^4$ ). We will use observations, obtained with the Voyager spacecraft in the late 1970's, of the quantity of energy emitted by various locations on Io's surface to determine the temperatures of these surfaces. This is the reverse of what we have generally discussed this semester, where we know the temperature and determine something about how much radiation is emitted. By knowing the temperature of the lava/molten material, we can make a good guess as to the composition of the lava.

Supplies:

1. One wide-angle view and one close-up image of Io's surface obtained with the Voyager 1 spacecraft in 1979
2. A map of Io's western hemisphere with various features identified by name
3. A transparency sheet with circles of different diameters drawn on it

### 11.2 Blackbody Radiation Review

Io's surface is covered with volcanoes and the deposits erupted by these volcanoes. The white regions on Io's surface show spectral absorption features (visible wavelengths at which Io does not reflect much sunlight) of sulfur dioxide ( $\text{SO}_2$ ). Sulfur dioxide is white when solid, and when heated enough it changes to gas (just like water, though the freezing/evaporating temperatures for  $\text{SO}_2$  will be different than for water).

The surface colors on Io are consistent with sulfur volcanism. When sulfur is heated, it changes from pale yellow to orange to brown to black as the temperature increases. Laboratory studies indicate that the blackest structures on Io should be hottest, assuming they are sulfur. We will test this prediction today.

For this lab, we are going to look at data returned by an instrument on the *Voyager* spacecraft, which flew by Jupiter and its moons in 1979. The Infrared Spectrometer and Radiometer (IRIS) was mounted on the same part of the spacecraft (the instrument platform) as the

visible light camera. This means that both instruments had the same view of Io's surface at any given time. While the camera took images using the sunlight **reflected** by the surface (just like when you take a snapshot), the IRIS measured the thermal infrared radiation **emitted** by the surface. We will use this information to learn about the temperature of the surface of Io.

First, we need to review the properties of **blackbody radiation**. A blackbody is an object that exactly satisfies the Stefan-Boltzmann law and Wien's law. While generally real objects do not exactly satisfy these laws, many objects come very close and in general we assume that most solar system objects (including Io's surface) are blackbodies. Answer the following questions to re-familiarize yourself with these laws.

1. How does the total amount of radiant energy (or flux) emitted by a blackbody depend on its temperature ? How does the wavelength at which most of the energy is emitted depend on its temperature? (**5 points**)

One rule that was briefly discussed in class is that **the flux of energy at all wavelengths emitted by a black body at temperature  $T$  is proportional to the fourth power of its temperature**, which can be written as:

$$F \propto T^4. \quad (1)$$

Here  $F$  (flux) is the energy emitted by each square meter of the object each second. Using equation (1), let's compare the flux emitted by each square meter of the surface of two different objects, A and B. We will construct the ratio:

$$\frac{Flux_A}{Flux_B} = \frac{T_A^4}{T_B^4} = \left(\frac{T_A}{T_B}\right)^4 \quad (2)$$

2. Assume that  $T_A$ , the surface temperature of Object A, is 200 K, and  $T_B$ , the surface temperature of Object B, is 100 K. How many times greater is the flux from A compared to the flux from B? (**5 points**)

3. Now, assume that we receive 81 times more flux from Object X than from Object Y. How many times hotter is the surface of X compared to the surface of Y? (**5 points**)

### 11.3 Temperature of Io's Volcanoes

As indicated above, we can suitably approximate the surface of a planet or a moon as a blackbody. Using the above equations and temperature determination techniques, and IRIS observations, we can determine the temperatures of some of the volcanoes on Io's surface. You will be filling **Table 10.1** as you go along.

Within your lab package you will find two *Voyager* camera images of a region on Io's surface. One of these images is a wide-angle view (covers a large area) in which you can see several dark regions, and the other image is a close-up in which you can see two features, one dark and one bright, that are readily apparent in the wide-angle image.

4. Determine the location, in the wide-angle view image, of the two features you can see in the close-up view. [You should have the GREEN corner of each image in the lower left as you look at them]. The black feature in the close-up image is called *Mihr Patera* (Patera means pancake). Find Mihr Patera on the map provided along with the images and write down its latitude and longitude on Io. (**5 points**)

As Voyager's visible camera was taking the images you have in front of you, its infrared-sensitive instrument, IRIS, was also looking at the same location on Io's surface. However, IRIS had much lower spatial resolution than the imaging camera. It only measured the total amount of energy emitted from a large circular region each second.

Overlay your transparency sheet on the wide-angle image. Match the green edges on your wide-view photo and on your transparency, and point the arrow upwards, to determine which circular Areas (A, B, C, D, E) correspond to the various features on the wide-angle image. The circles on the transparency show the IRIS field of view

(“footprints”) over the same area as the photograph.

Now, let's determine how hot the surfaces are within these circular areas. We assume that area A is completely covered with ice composed of sulfur, and that all regions within this circular area are at the same temperature. The amount of emitted energy received from Area A by IRIS corresponds to a surface temperature of  $\sim 125$  Kelvin. [If we calculate a surface temperature for Io based upon the reflectivity of the ice, distance from the Sun, etc., we arrive at a temperature of  $\sim 125$  K, so the IRIS measurements are very reasonable.]

5. Looking at just the Energy values in Column 2 of Table 10.1, which areas do you conclude contain warmer surface temperatures than the surface temperatures within Area A? Why do you conclude this? What distinguishes these areas, at visible wavelengths, from their neighbors in the wide-angle image? **(10 points)**

To determine the temperatures of these regions, we will make the following assumption: *for those regions that contain both bright and dark regions, we will assume all the emitted energy IRIS received came from the dark regions.* We can safely make this assumption because of the  $T^4$  dependence of energy emission, and since through our knowledge of the surface composition (sulfur), we are quite confident that darker regions will be warmer than brighter regions.

We now want to determine how much (maybe all?) of the area within a circular field-of-view is producing the flux received by IRIS. We will do this by counting squares (picture elements, or pixels). For circular regions containing both bright and dark pixels, count up the number of dark pixels. For regions of uniform brightness (*e.g.*, Area E), assume the entire circular area produces the flux measured and count the total number of pixels contained within the circle.

Thus, for Area B, we will count the number of pixels that the dark circular feature covers. For Area C, count the pixels that cover the large dark feature, for Area D count the pixels covering the dark portions, and for Area E assume that the surface is equally bright everywhere. Write the number of pixels you count for each area in Column 3 of Table 10.1. **(6 points)**

Now we know i) the relative amount of energy coming from each circular area, and ii) how many pixels of area generated the flux that was measured. In Column 4 of Table 10.1, write down the ratio of the number of pixels you measured for that Area divided by the number of pixels in Area A. This RATIO number indicates what percentage of the circular regions are producing the fluxes measured by IRIS (again, assuming that dark regions within a circle produce all of the emitted energy that is measured).

We can now calculate temperatures (finally). We know that the amount of energy emitted is proportional to  $T^4$ . We will use the following equation:

$$\left(\frac{T_x}{T_A}\right)^4 = \left(\frac{E_x}{E_A}\right) \times \left(\frac{Pixels_A}{Pixels_x}\right) \quad (3)$$

Here  $E_A$  is the energy measured at site A,  $Pixels_A$  is the number of pixels that cover site A, and  $T_A$  is the temperature measured at site A. The 'x' subscript corresponds to areas B, C, D, or E.

- Use Equation (3) and the values in Columns 2 and 3 from Table 10.1 to calculate the ratio (raised to the 4th power) of the surface temperature in the area of interest to the surface temperature in Area A. Place these values in Column 4 of Table 10.1. **(8 points)**
- Take the square root TWICE of the values you just place in Column 4 to obtain the ratio of the surface temperature of the area of interest to the surface temperature within Area A. Place these values in Column 5 of Table 10.1. **(8 points)**
- Multiply the values you just placed in Column 5 by the temperature of Area A, and you will have determined the surface temperature within the areas of interest. Place these values in Column 6 of Table 10.1. **(8 points)**
- To put these temperatures into units that you are more familiar with, convert the temperatures you just calculated from Kelvins to degrees Fahrenheit using the following formula, where  $F$  the temperature in Fahrenheit and  $K$  is the temperature in Kelvins:

$$F = ((K - 273.15) \times 1.8) + 32 \quad (4)$$

Place these new temperature values in Column 7 of Table 10.1. **(5 points)**

Additional workspace – SHOW ALL OF YOUR WORK HERE:



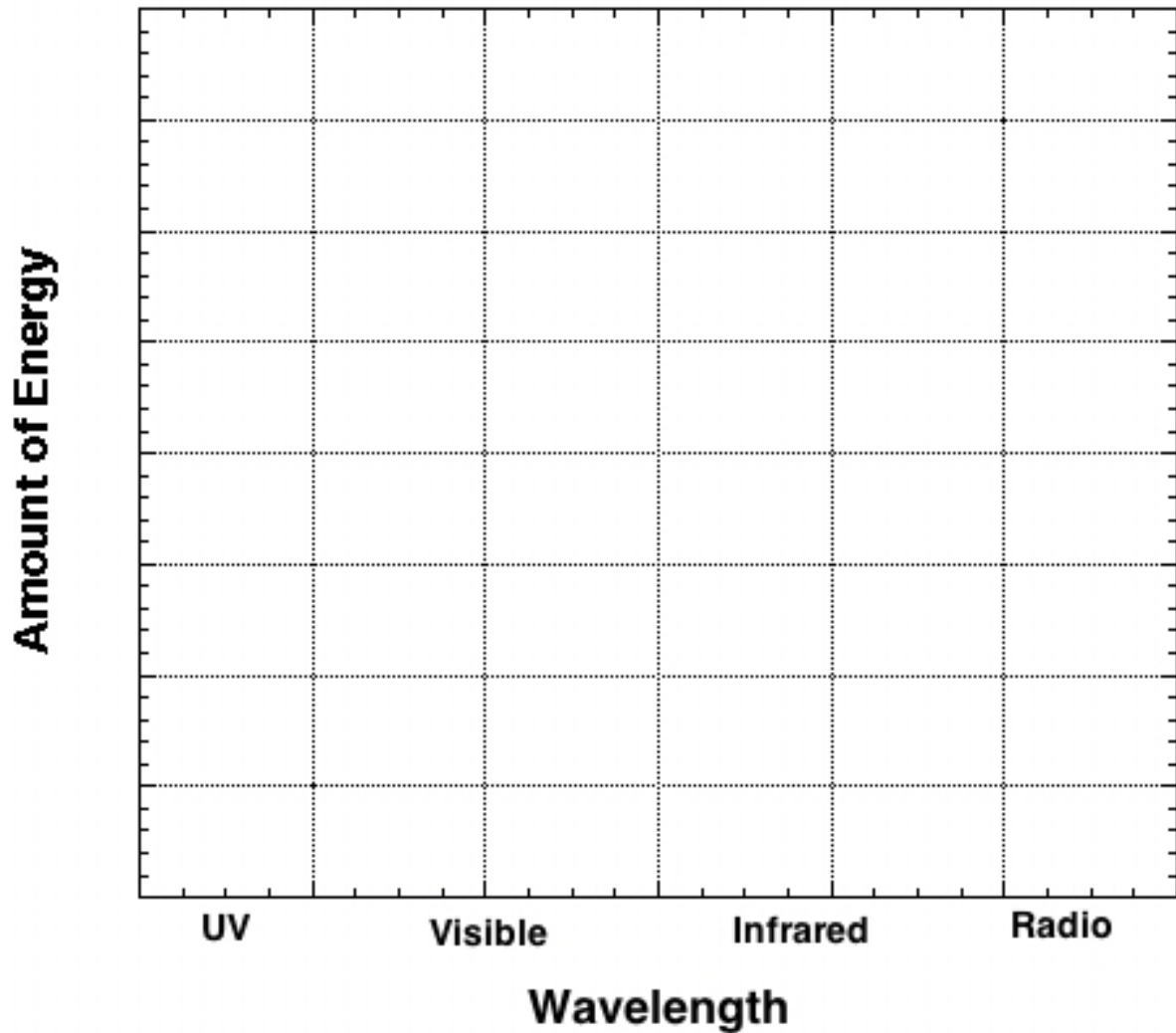
Area	Energy	Area (# pixels)	$(T_x/T_A)^4$	$T_x/T_A$	$T_x$ (K)	$T_x$ (°F)
A	1.000	132	1.000	1.000	125	
B	4.833	33				
C	4.523					
D	3.560					
E	0.983					

Table 11.1: Energy Emitted and Temperature of Io's Surface.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 11.4 Take-Home Questions

6. On the graph axes below, draw two curves indicating the blackbody curves (energy as a function of wavelength) emitted by i) Area A, and ii) Area B. Use Wien's Law to calculate the peak wavelengths of these curves, and refer to Figure 6.6 in your textbook (or the lecture notes) to determine what portion of the electromagnetic spectrum the peaks occur in. You will be graded on the *relative positions* of these two curves with respect to one another (in other words, which one – A or B – is hotter vs. cooler, and which one has more vs. less energy at the peak). **Be sure to label both curves!** (10 points)



7. If Jupiter's average distance from the Sun was 10 AU instead of its actual value of 5.2 AU, and if Europa, Ganymede, and Callisto were farther from Jupiter, would you still expect Io to experience volcanism? Explain. **(5 points)**
8. The volcanic features we have studied in this lab involve the chemical element sulfur. It is not expected that molten sulfur gets any hotter than  $\sim 350$  Kelvin or so on Io's surface. However, some spots on Io's surface have been determined to possess temperatures as hot as 1800 Kelvin. It is believed that such regions consist of molten rock (like lava here on Earth) and not molten sulfur.
- a) How many times greater would the flux from such a rock-lava region be compared to the flux emitted by Area A in this lab? **(5 points)**
- b) Which type of region would you expect you would have a better chance of seeing at visible wavelengths on the night side of Io (not illuminated by the Sun) if you were orbiting overhead? Explain. **(5 points)**
9. How would you change the orbit of the Moon to have it experience tidal heating similar

to the kind Io experiences? Explain your reasoning. (**5 points**)

10. Jupiter has several moons that are much smaller than Io and that are closer to Jupiter than Io is. Give a brief explanation of why you think these moons do NOT show evidence of volcanism. (**5 points**)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 12 Building a Comet

### 12.1 Introduction

Comets represent some of the earliest material left over from the formation of the solar system, and are therefore of great interest to planetary astronomers. They are also beautiful objects to observe in the night sky, unlike their darker and less spectacular cousins, asteroids, and therefore capture the attention of the public. The objective of this lab is to teach you more about these fascinating objects.

- *Goals:* to discuss the composition, components, and types of comets; to build a comet and test its strength and reaction to light
- *Materials:* trash bag, bucket, spoon, towel, mallet, light source, a rock, water, sand, ammonia, corn syrup, dry ice

### 12.2 Composition and Components of a Comet

Comets are composed of ices (water ice and other kinds of ices), gases (water, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, hydrogen, hydroxyl, oxygen, carbon, silicon, and so on), and dust particles. The dust particles are smaller than the particles in cigarette smoke. In general, the model for a comet's composition is that of a "dirty snowball."

Comets have several components that vary greatly in composition, size, and brightness. These components are the following:

- *nucleus:* made of ice and rock, roughly 5-10 km across
- *coma:* the "head" of a comet, a large cloud of gas and dust, roughly 100,000 km in diameter
- *gas tail:* straight and wispy; gas in the coma becomes ionized by sunlight, and gets carried away by the solar wind to form a straight blueish tail. The shape of the gas tail is influenced by the magnetic field in the solar wind. Gas tails are pointed in the direction directly opposite the sun, and can extend  $10^8$  km.
- *dust tail:* dust is pushed outward by the pressure of sunlight and forms a long, curving tail that has a much more uniform appearance than the gas tail. The dust tail is pointed in the direction directly opposite the comet's direction of motion, and can also extend  $10^8$  km from the nucleus.

## 12.3 Types of Comets

Comets originate from two primary locations in the solar system. One class of comets, called the **long-period comets**, have long orbits around the sun with periods of  $> 200$  years. Their orbits are random in shape and inclination, with comets entering the inner solar system from all different directions. These comets are thought to originate in the **Oort cloud**, a spherical cloud of icy bodies that extends from  $\sim 20,000 - 150,000$  AU from the Sun. Some of these objects might experience only one close approach to the Sun and then leave the solar system (and the Sun's gravitational influence) completely.

In contrast, the **short-period comets** have periods less than 200 years, and their orbits are all roughly in the plane of the solar system. Comet Halley has a 76-year period, and therefore is considered a short-period comet. Comets with orbital periods  $< 100$  years do not get much beyond Pluto's orbit at their farthest distance from the Sun. Short-period comets cannot survive many orbits around the Sun before their ices are all melted away. It is thought that these comets originate in the **Kuiper Belt**, a belt of small icy bodies beyond the large gas giant planets and in the plane of the solar system. Kuiper Belt objects have only been definitely confirmed to exist in the last several years.

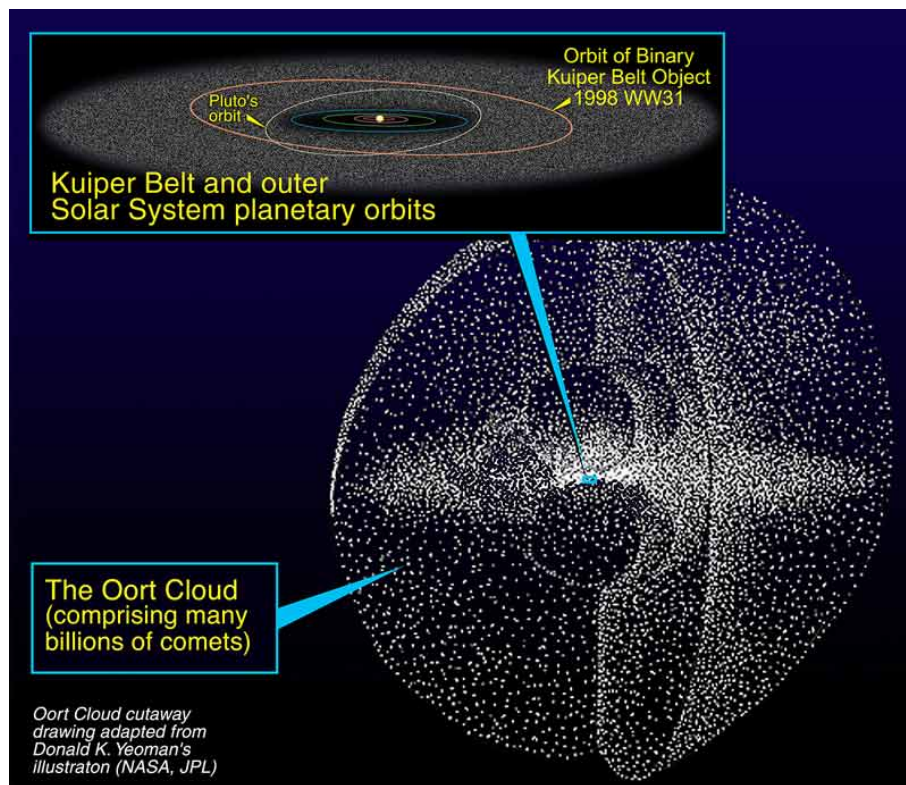


Figure 12.1: Different origins for long and short period comets. Image courtesy of NASA.

## 12.4 Exercises

### 12.4.1 Building a Comet

In this portion of the lab, you will actually build a comet out of household materials. These include water, ammonia, corn syrup, and dry ice ( $\text{CO}_2$  ice). Be sure to distribute the work evenly among all members of your group. Follow these directions:

1. Cut open a trash bag and use it to line your bucket.
2. Place 1 cup of water in the bucket.
3. Add 2 spoonfuls of sand, stirring well. (**NOTE:** Do not stir so hard that you rip the trash bag lining!!)
4. Add a dash of ammonia.
5. Add a dash of organic material (dark corn syrup). Stir until well-mixed.
6. Place a block or chunk of dry ice inside a towel and crush the block with the mallet.
7. Add 1 cup of crushed dry ice to the bucket, while stirring vigorously. (**NOTE:** Do not stir so hard that you rip the trash bag lining!!)
8. Continue stirring until mixture is almost frozen.
9. Lift the comet out of the bucket using the plastic liner and shape it for a few seconds as if you were building a snowball.
10. Add 1/2 cup water and wait until mixture is frozen.
11. Unwrap the comet once it is frozen enough to hold its shape.

### 12.4.2 Comets and Light

Observe the comet as it is sitting on a desk. Make note of some of its physical characteristics, for example: (**5 points**)

- shape:
- color:
- smell:

Now bring the comet over to the light source (overhead projector) and place it on top. Observe and record what happens to the comet. (**5 points**)



### 12.4.3 Comet Strength

Comets, like all objects in the solar system, are held together by their internal strength. If they pass too close to a large body, such as Jupiter, their internal strength is not large enough to compete with the powerful gravity of the massive body. In that case, a comet can be broken apart into smaller pieces. In 1994, we saw evidence of this when Comet Shoemaker-Levy/9 impacted into Jupiter. In 1992, that comet passed very close to Jupiter and was fragmented into pieces. Two years later, more than 21 cometary fragments crashed into Jupiter's atmosphere, creating spectacular (but temporary) "scars" on Jupiter's cloud deck.

After everyone in your group has carefully examined your comet, it is time to say goodbye. Take a sample rock and your comet, go outside, and drop them both on the sidewalk. What happened to each object? (**5 points**)

## 12.5 Questions

1. Draw a comet and label all of its components. Be sure to indicate the direction the Sun is in, and the comet's direction of motion. (**10 points**)
2. What are some differences between long-period and short-period comets? Does it make sense that they are two distinct classes of objects? Why or why not? (**10 points**)

3. List some properties of the comet you built. In particular, describe its shape, color, smell and weight relative to other common objects (e.g. tennis ball, regular snow ball, etc.). **(10 points)**
  
4. Describe what happened when you put your comet near the light source. Were there localized regions of activity, or did things happen uniformly to the entire comet? **(5 points)**
  
5. If a comet is far away from the Sun and then it draws nearer as it orbits the Sun, what would you expect to happen? **(10 points)**
  
6. Do you think comets (“dirty snowballs”) have more or less internal strength than asteroids, which are composed primarily of rock? [Hint: If you are playing outside with your friends in a snow storm, would you rather be hit with a snowball or a rock?] **(10 points)**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 12.6 Take-Home Summary

Summarize the important ideas covered in this lab. Questions you may want to consider are:

- Why are comets important to planetary astronomers?
- What can they tell us about the solar system?
- What are some components of comets and how are they affected by the Sun?
- How are comets different from asteroids?

**Type this summary.** Use complete sentences, and proofread your summary before handing in the lab. **(30 points)**

## 12.7 Extra Credit

Use the internet to look up one (or more) of the following current or planned spacecraft missions to comets and briefly describe the mission, its scientific objectives, and the significance of these objectives. **DO NOT copy the information from the web sites; put it into your own words! (3 points each)**

- Stardust (<http://stardust.jpl.nasa.gov/>)
- Deep Impact (<http://deepimpact.umd.edu/home/index.html>)
- Rosetta (<http://sci.esa.int/science-e/www/area/index.cfm?fareaid=13>)
- CONTOUR (<http://discovery.nasa.gov/contour.html>)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 13 An Eclipsing Extrasolar Planet

### 13.1 Introduction

One of the more recent new fields in astronomy is the search for (and discovery of) planets orbiting around stars other than our Sun, or “extrasolar planets.” Detecting planets outside of our Solar System is an extremely difficult task. This is because the planets themselves are rather dim compared to stars (making them difficult enough to observe), and it is very hard to observe very faint objects when they are next to really bright objects (the star the planet is orbiting). As a result, actual images of extrasolar planets are few and far between. We need some other way of determining the presence of a planet.

Luckily, we are able to observe an extrasolar planet’s influence upon its parent star. Just as the star’s immense gravitational pull causes the planet to move around it, the planet’s own gravitational pull has a small effect on the star as well. It is due to this gravitational interaction that the planet does not orbit around the star’s center, but rather around a location between the two objects known as the *center of mass* of the system. Because the star is much more massive, this location is usually not far from the star’s center. In the case of our own solar system, if we consider only the Sun and Jupiter (ignoring the other planets for now), their center of mass would be located at 0.005 AU, or about 1.07 times the radius of the Sun.

We have established that an extrasolar planet is too faint to observe. Can we see the parent star wobbling in its little orbit around the center of mass between the star and the extrasolar planet? Not directly. The star’s motion is very small, so it would be quite difficult to observe the star wobbling around in the night sky. But all is not lost: we can use a neat application from physics to help us out.

An effect known as the Doppler effect (or Doppler shift) is involved when you have an object that is either moving towards you (the observer) or away from you. If there is, say, an ambulance racing past you with its siren wailing, you might notice that the siren sounds more high-pitched when it is approaching you, and more low-pitched when it is moving away. This is because as the ambulance is coming closer, the pulses of the sound waves are bunched closer together, and as the ambulance is moving away, the pulses are spread farther apart. How far apart these pulses are determines the siren’s pitch. Something similar happens with light. If an object is moving towards you at a high speed, it appears as if the wavelengths of the light coming towards you have shortened a bit. The object’s entire spectrum has shifted a little towards shorter wavelengths: this is known as blueshifting. If an object is moving away from you, the wavelengths become longer than normal, and everything is shifted to longer wavelengths: redshifting.

By looking at a star’s spectrum (with the help of some absorption lines, for which we know

the “rest frame” wavelengths), we can tell how fast a star is moving towards us or away from us. (Note: we *cannot* use this method to determine a star’s motion in other directions, such as “up/down” or “left/right.”) We observe that some stars are moving towards us, and some are moving away from us. This is quite normal, as the stars are all moving about within our galaxy. What is interesting is when we see a star wobble with a fixed period: sometimes it is moving a little faster towards us, sometimes a little slower. What could cause a star to do this? A planet!

By measuring how blue- or red-shifted the star is over time, we can learn some information about the planet, which we detect *indirectly* even though we cannot actually see it. The easiest thing to determine is the orbital period: if the star’s wobble repeats every 2 years, then the planet’s orbital period must be 2 years. From there, if we know the star’s mass, we can use that information along with the orbital period to calculate the planet’s average distance from its sun. So far, so good.

The larger the mass of the planet, the farther away from the star the system’s center of mass will be, so a larger mass should result in a larger wobble. But this is where it gets tricky: we can only detect the star’s motion in the *radial* direction: towards us or away from us. And there is no reason to expect that all planetary orbits would be nicely aligned with our line of sight. So if a planet’s orbit causes a star to move up/down and left/right, but not towards/away, we will not be able to detect its presence using the Doppler method. Therefore, if a star has a very small wobble, we cannot be certain whether it has a small-mass planet orbiting it, or a larger-mass planet moving mainly in other directions. As a result, we can usually only figure out planetary masses in terms of  $i$ , the inclination of the planet’s orbit relative to our line of sight.

No Earth-sized planets have been discovered yet, mainly because our technology is not advanced enough to detect such extremely small wobbles. So far, astronomers have been discovering the easiest planets to find: those that are the largest (so they will tug on their stars more) and with the shortest orbital periods (a star wobbling with a period of several days is more easily noticeable than one that wobbles once every 300 years). As a result, most of the planets that have been discovered have masses greater than that of Jupiter, and many of them orbit their sun in only a few days! This is unlike what we are used to in our Solar System, and we may have to revise some of our models of planetary formation and evolution to be able to explain how such different planetary systems can exist.

There are very few systems for which we do know the planet’s orbital inclination; the best studied example is the star HD209458. The unique property of this system is that, from our point of view, the planet actually passes in front of the star, blocking out a small part of its light. Because of this, we know that the star’s wobbling in our line of sight is not lowered significantly, so we can figure out the planet’s actual mass. As an added bonus, we can also use how much of the star’s light is blocked out to figure out the size of the planet. Figure 12.1 shows a schematic of a planetary system like that of HD209458.

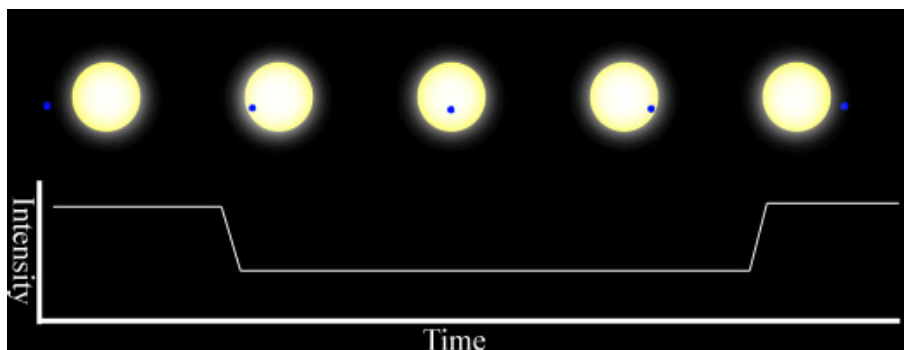


Figure 13.1: Schematic of an extrasolar planet transiting, or moving in front of, its parent star. The lines below the star images represent the amount of light one would receive from the star as the planet moves across it.

For further information, you can visit the following web site, which has an excellent description of how we detect planets outside of our solar system:

[http://planetquest.jpl.nasa.gov/science/finding\\_planets.html](http://planetquest.jpl.nasa.gov/science/finding_planets.html) . Once there, click on “Interactive: 4 Ways to Find a Planet.” The site requires Flash and uses sound, so make sure you visit the web page on an appropriate computer. The voice on the Flash site sounds as if it is addressing children (“Let’s see if we can find a planet!”), but it describes what is going on very clearly.

In this lab, we are going to focus on the eclipsing planet that is orbiting the star HD209458. (The planet is named HD209458b.) We will be using the star’s velocity along our line of sight and its lightcurve to determine properties of the planet, and compare it to planets in our Solar System. Figures 12.2 and 12.3 show graphs of the star’s lightcurve as the planet passes in front of it (12.2), and the star’s forward/backward velocity based on where the planet is located (12.3).

## 13.2 In-Lab Questions

### SHOW ALL OF YOUR WORK!

1. This planet is seen to have an orbital period of about 3.5 days. Using Kepler’s Third Law, and assuming the star is the same mass as the Sun, calculate the planet’s orbital semi-major axis (OSA). (Hint: don’t forget to convert the period into years!) (5 points)



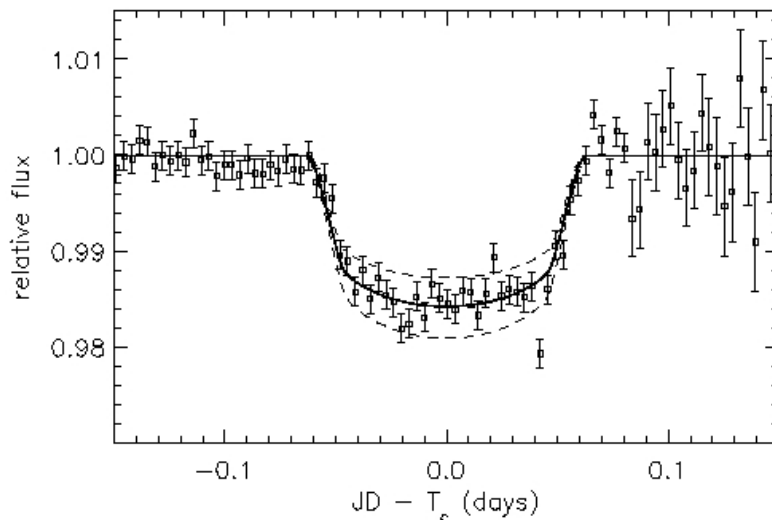


Figure 13.2: Brightness of the star HD209458 as a planet passes in front of it. Figure taken from <http://www.hao.ucar.edu/public/research/stare/hd209458.html>.

2. If this planet were placed in our Solar System at the same distance from the Sun, where (relative to the other planets) would it be? (For example, “between Earth and Mars,” or “beyond Pluto.”) **(2 points)**
  
3. Mercury’s OSA is 0.39 AU. What fraction of Mercury’s OSA is the OSA of this planet? **(3 points)**
  
4. a) The mass of this planet, calculated using its OSA and the speed of the star, is about  $1.2 \times 10^{30}$  g. How many Earth masses is this? (For your convenience, the properties of

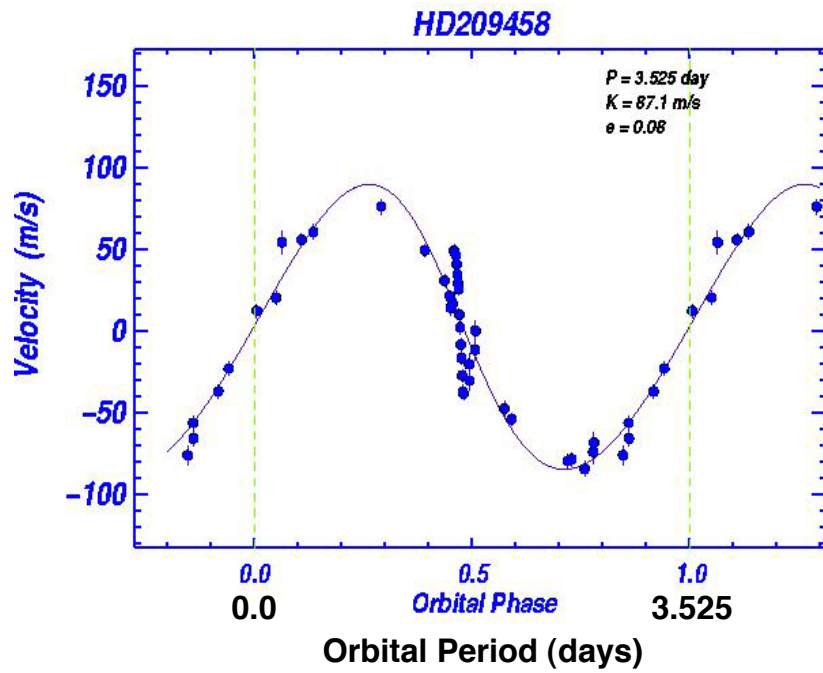


Figure 13.3: Doppler motion of the star HD209458 due to the presence of a nearby planet. Figure taken from <http://astron.berkeley.edu/~marcy/hd/doppler.html>.

Earth and Jupiter are given in Table 12.1, which appears later in this lab.) **(5 points)**

b) How many Jupiter masses is this? **(5 points)**

5. To estimate the radius of this planet, we can look at how much light it blocks out when it passes in front of its star. If nothing is in front of the star, then we see all  $\pi R_*^2$  of the star's disk, where  $R_*$  is the radius of the star. When the planet is in front of the star, an area of  $\pi R_p^2$  is blocked out (where  $R_p$  is the radius of the planet), so the fraction of the star's light that is lost is  $\pi R_p^2 / \pi R_*^2$ . Use this information and the graph of the star's brightness to estimate the radius of the planet. Assume that the star's radius is the same as that of the Sun: 700,000 km. **(10 points)**
6. The volume of a sphere is  $\frac{4}{3}\pi R^3$ . Using the radius you just calculated above, what is the volume of this planet in units of  $\text{cm}^3$ ? (Don't forget to convert the radius from km to cm before calculating!) **(5 points)**
7. Now, using the values for this planet's mass and volume, calculate its density. Give the value in units of  $\text{g}/\text{cm}^3$ . **(5 points)**
8. a) If we assume that all of our data and calculations are correct, what does the density suggest about this planet's composition? **(5 points)**

b) Do you think this planet is likely to have a significant amount of water or ice? Why or why not? **(5 points)**

Parameter	This Planet	Earth	Jupiter
Period (yr)		1	11.86
OSA (AU)		1	5.2
Orbital Eccentricity	0.1	0.017	0.048
Mass (g)		$5.97 \times 10^{27}$	$1.90 \times 10^{30}$
Density (g/cm <sup>3</sup> )		5.5	1.3

Table 13.1: Comparison of HD209458b, Earth, and Jupiter.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### 13.3 Take-Home Questions

1. In this lab, we determined the properties of a planet orbiting the star HD209458. If we compare this planet to the planets in our Solar System, which type of planet does it resemble more: a terrestrial planet (like Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars), or a giant planet (like Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune)? What characteristics did you use to figure this out? **(10 points)**
2. What property (or properties) of this planet might make it much different from the planets we see in our Solar System? Why? **(5 points)**
3. If, instead of this planet, we had a planet identical to Earth orbiting this star at 1 AU, how would the lightcurve and plot of velocity be different? Assume this new planet would still pass in front of the star. (Specifically, consider how much the star would wobble, the period of this wobbling, and how much starlight would be blocked out.) **(10 points)**

4. Describe the technique used to determine the forward/backward velocity of the star HD209458 (or any other star, for that matter). **(5 points)**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Out of the many extrasolar planets discovered so far, only HD209458b passes in front of its star, allowing us to determine its size. Why is it so rare for a planet to pass in front of its star like HD209458b does? How do we know that there are many more extrasolar planets out there, if they don't pass in front of their star and are too faint to see? **(10 points)**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. You probably obtained a density for this planet that seems a bit outside the range of "normal" densities from our experience with planets in our Solar System. After careful inspection of spectra from this system, astronomers now believe that the planet's atmosphere is in the process of billowing out and leaving the planet... probably due to the intense heat. As a result, the planet ends up blocking out more of the star's light than the size of the actual planet would suggest (see an artist's rendition below). Thinking about the effects that this has on the star's lightcurve, does this new information help to explain why the planet's density is off in the way you found... or does it imply that the planet's real density is even further off? Explain your answer. **(10 points)**



Figure 13.4: This illustration shows the extrasolar planet HD 209458b depicted in orbit around its sun. The planet is a type of extrasolar planet known as a “hot Jupiter.” Image taken from <http://www.nasa.gov/vision/universe/newworlds/poof.html>.





## 14 The Sun

### 14.1 Introduction

The Sun is a very important object for all life on Earth. The nuclear reactions that occur in its core produce the energy required by plants and animals for survival. We schedule our lives around the rising and setting of the Sun in the sky. During the summer, the Sun is higher in the sky and thus warms us more than during the winter, when the Sun stays low in the sky. But the Sun's effect on Earth is even more complicated than these simple examples.

The Sun is the nearest star to us, which is both an advantage and a disadvantage for astronomers who study stars. Since the Sun is very close, and very bright, we know much more about the Sun than we know about other distant stars. This complicates the picture quite a bit since we need to better understand the physics going on in the Sun in order to comprehend all of our detailed observations. This difference makes the job of solar astronomers in some ways more difficult than the job of stellar astronomers, and in some ways easier! It's a case of having lots of incredibly detailed data. But all of the phenomena associated with the Sun are occurring on other stars, so understanding the Sun's behavior provides insights to how other stars might behave.

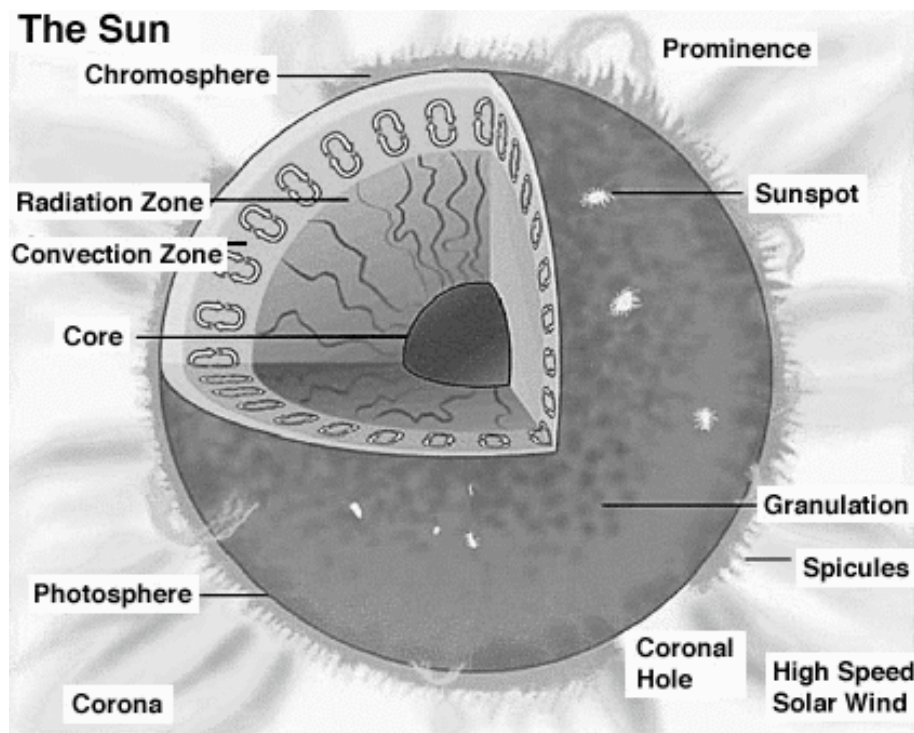


Figure 14.1: A diagram of the various layers/components of the Sun, as well as the appearance and location of other prominent solar features.

- *Goals:* to discuss the layers of the Sun and solar phenomena; to use these concepts in conjunction with pictures to deduce characteristics of solar flares, prominences, sunspots, and solar rotation
- *Materials:* You will be given a Sun image notebook, a bar magnet with iron filings and a plastic tray. You will need paper to write on, a ruler, and a calculator

## 14.2 Layers of the Sun

One of the things we know best about the Sun is its overall structure. Figure 13.1 is a schematic of the layers of the Sun's interior and atmosphere. The interior of the Sun is made up of three distinct regions: the core, the radiative zone, and the convective zone. The *core* of the Sun is very hot and dense. This is the only place in the Sun where the temperature and pressure are high enough to support nuclear reactions. The *radiative zone* is the region of the sun where the energy is transported through the process of radiation. Basically, the photons generated by the core are absorbed and emitted by the atoms found in the radiative zone like cars in stop and go traffic. This is a very slow process. The *convective zone* is the region of the Sun where energy is transported by rising "bubbles" of material. This is the same phenomenon that takes place when you boil a pot of water. The hot bubbles rise to the top, cool, and fall back down. This gives the the surface of the Sun a granular look. Granules are bright regions surrounded by darker narrow regions. These granules cover the entire surface of the Sun.

The atmosphere of the Sun is also comprised of three layers: the photosphere, the chromosphere, and the corona. The *photosphere* is a thin layer that forms the visible surface of the Sun. This layer acts as a kind of insulation, and helps the Sun retain some of its heat and slow its consumption of fuel in the core. The *chromosphere* is the Sun's lower atmosphere. This layer can only be seen during a solar eclipse since the photosphere is so bright. The *corona* is the outer atmosphere of the Sun. It is very hot, but has a very low density, so this layer can only be seen during a solar eclipse. More information on the layers of the Sun can be found in your textbook.

## 14.3 Sunspots

Sunspots appear as dark spots on the photosphere (surface) of the Sun (see Figure 13.2). They last from a few days to over a month. Their average size is about the size of the Earth, although they have been observed to be over twice the size of the Earth! Sunspots are commonly found in pairs. How do these spots form?

The formation of sunspots is attributed to the Sun's *differential rotation*. The Sun is a ball of gas, and therefore does not rotate like the Earth or any other solid object. The Sun's equator rotates faster than its poles. It takes roughly 25 days for something to travel once around the equator, but about 35 days for it to travel once around the north or south pole. This differential rotation acts to twist up the magnetic field lines inside the Sun. At times, the lines can get so twisted that they pop out of the photosphere. Figure 13.3 illustrates this concept. When a magnetic field loop pops out, the places where it leaves and re-enters the

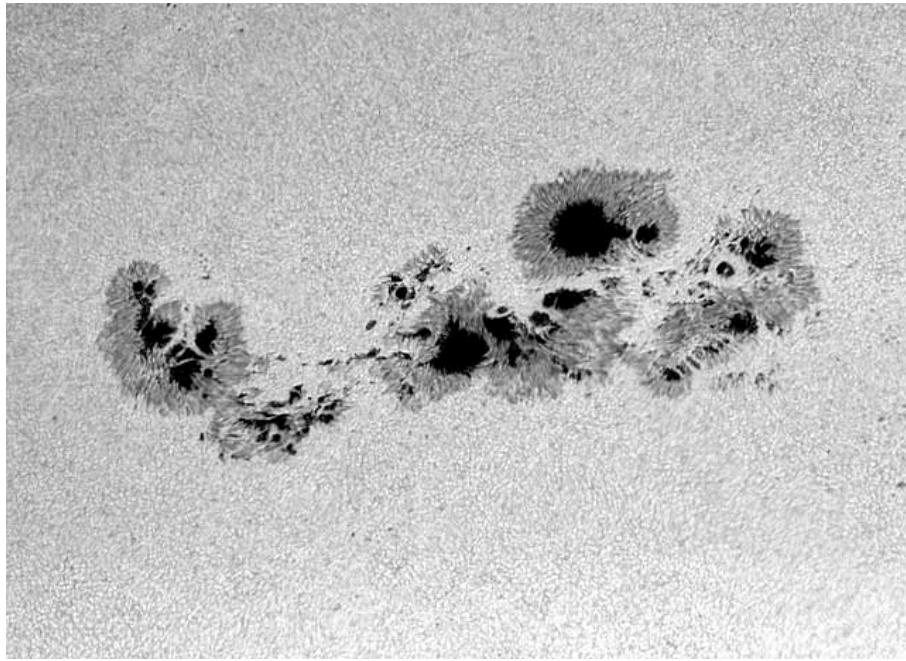


Figure 14.2: A large, complex group of sunspots.

photosphere are cooler than the rest of the Sun's surface. These cool places appear darker, and therefore are called "sunspots."

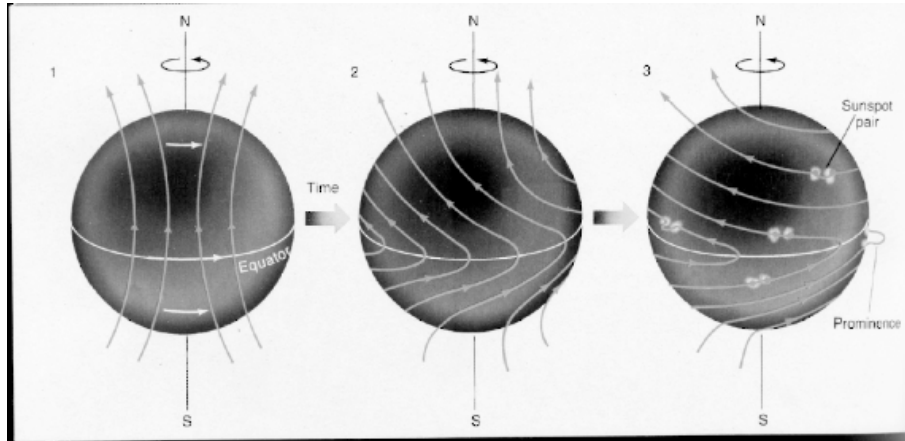


Figure 14.3: Sunspots are a result of the Sun's differential rotation.

The number of sunspots rises and falls over an 11 year period. This is the amount of time it takes for the magnetic lines to tangle up and then become untangled again. This is called the *Solar Cycle*. Look in your textbook for more information on sunspots and the solar cycle.

## 14.4 Solar Phenomenon

The Sun is a very exciting place. All sorts of activity and eruptions take place in it and around it. We will now briefly discuss a few of these interesting phenomena. You will be analyzing pictures of prominences and flares during your lab.

*Prominences* are huge loops of glowing gas protruding from the chromosphere. Charged particles spiral around the magnetic field lines that loop out over the surface of the Sun, and therefore we see bright loops above the Sun's surface. Very energetic prominences can break free from the magnetic field lines and shoot out into space.

*Flares* are brief but bright eruptions of hot gas in the Sun's atmosphere. These eruptions occur near sunspot groups and are associated with the Sun's intertwined magnetic field lines. A large flare can release as much energy as 10 billion megatons of TNT! The charged particles that flares emit can disrupt communication systems here on Earth.

Another result of charged particles bombarding the Earth is the Northern Lights. When the particles reach the Earth, they latch on to the Earth's magnetic field lines. These lines enter the Earth's atmosphere near the poles. The charged particles from the Sun then excite the molecules in Earth's atmosphere and cause them to glow. Your textbook will have more fascinating information about these solar phenomena.

## 14.5 Lab Exercises

There are two main exercises in this lab. The first part consists of a series of "stations" in a three ring binder where you examine some pictures of the Sun and answer some questions about the images that you see. In the second exercise you will actually look at the Sun using a special telescope to see some of the phenomena that were detailed in the images in the first exercise of this lab. During this lab you will use your own insight and knowledge of basic physics and astronomy to obtain important information about the phenomena that we see on the Sun, just as solar astronomers do. If there is not sufficient room to write in your answers into this lab, do not hesitate to use additional sheets of paper. Do not try to squeeze your answers into the tiny blank spaces in this lab description if you need more space than provided! Don't forget to **SHOW ALL OF YOUR WORK**.

One note of caution about the images that you see: the colors of the pictures (especially those taken by SOHO) are *not* true colors, but are simply colors used by the observatories' image processing teams to best enhance the features shown in the image.

### 14.5.1 Exercise #1: Getting familiar with the Size and Appearance of the Sun

**Station 1:** In this first station we simply present some images of the Sun to familiarize yourself with what you will be seeing during the remainder of this lab. Note that this station has no questions that you have to answer, but you still should take time to familiarize yourself with the various features visible on/near the Sun, and get comfortable with the specialized, filtered image shown here.

- The first image in this station is a simple "white light" picture of the Sun as it would appear to you if you were to look at it in a telescope that was designed for viewing the

Sun. Note the dark spots on the surface of the Sun. These are “sunspots,” and are dark because they are cooler than the rest of the photosphere.

- When we take a very close-up view of the Sun’s photosphere we see that it is broken up into much smaller “cells.” This is the “solar granulation,” and is shown in picture #2. Note the size of these granules. These convection cells are about the size of New Mexico!
- To explore what is happening on the Sun more fully requires special tools. If you have had the spectroscopy lab, you will have seen the spectral lines of elements. By choosing the right element, we can actually probe different regions in the Sun’s atmosphere. In our first example, we look at the Sun in the light of the hydrogen atom (“H-alpha”). This is the red line in the spectrum of hydrogen. If you have a daytime lab, and the weather is good, you will get to see the Sun just like it appears in picture #3. The dark regions in this image is where cool gas is present (the dark spot at the center is a sunspot). The dark linear, and curved features are “prominences,” and are due to gas caught in the magnetic field lines of the underlying sunspots. They are above the surface of the Sun, so they are a little bit cooler than the photosphere, and therefore darker.
- Picture #4 shows a “loop” prominence located at the edge (or “limb”) of the Sun (the disk of the Sun has been blocked out using a special telescope called a “coronagraph” to allow us to see activity near its limb). If the Sun cooperates, you may be able to see several of these prominences with the solar telescope.

**Station 2:** Here are two images of the Sun taken by the SOHO satellite several days apart (the exact times are at the top of the image).

- Look at the sunspot group just below center of the Sun in **image 1**, and then note that it has rotated to the western (right-hand) limb of the Sun in **image 2**. Since the sunspot group has moved from center to limb, you then know that the Sun has rotated by one quarter of a turn ( $90^\circ$ ).
- Determine the precise time difference between the images. Use this information plus the fact that the Sun has turned by 90 degrees in that time to determine the rotation rate of the Sun. If the Sun turns by 90 degrees in time  $t$ , it would complete one revolution of 360 degrees in how much time? **(5 points)**

- Does this match the rotation rate given in your textbook or in lecture? Show your work. **(5 points)**

In the second set of photographs at this station are two different images of the Sun: the first one on is a photo of the Sun taken in normal light, and the second one on the right is a “magnetogram” (a picture of the magnetic field distribution on the surface of the Sun) taken at about the same time. (Note that black and white areas represent regions with different *polarities*, like the north and south poles of a bar magnet.)

- What do you notice about the location of *sunspots* in the photo and the location of the *strongest magnetic fields*, shown by the brightest or darkest colors in the magnetogram? **(5 points)**
- Based on this answer, what do you think causes sunspots to form? Why do you think they are dark? **(5 points)**

**Station 3:** Here is a picture of the *corona* of the Sun, taken by the SOHO satellite in the extreme ultraviolet. (An image of the Sun has been superimposed at the center of the picture. The black ring surrounding it is a result of image processing and is not real.)

- Determine the diameter of the Sun, then measure the minimum extent of the corona (diagonally from upper left to lower right). **(3 points)**

- If the photospheric diameter of the Sun is 1.4 million kilometers ( $1.4 \times 10^6$  km), how big is the corona? (HINT: use unit conversion!) **(7 points)**

- How many times larger than the Earth is the corona? (Earth diameter=12,500 km) **(5 points)**

**Station 4:** This image shows a time-series of exposures by the SOHO satellite showing an *eruptive prominence*.

- As in station 3, measure the diameter of the Sun and then measure the distance of the top of the prominence from the edge of the Sun in the first (earliest) image. Then measure the distance of the top of the prominence from the edge of the Sun in the last image. **(3 points)**

- Convert these values into real distances based on the linear scale of the images. The diameter of the Sun is  $1.4 \times 10^6$  kilometers. **(7 points)**

- The velocity of an object is the distance it travels in a certain amount of time (velocity=distance/time). Find the velocity of the prominence by subtracting the two



distances and dividing the answer by the amount of time between the two images. **(5 points)**

- In the most severe of solar storms, those that cause flares, and “coronal mass ejections” (and can disrupt communications on Earth), the material ejected in the prominence (or flare) can reach velocities of 2,000 kilometers per second. If the Earth is  $150 \times 10^6$  kilometers from the Sun, how long (hours or days) would it take for this ejected material to reach the Earth? **(5 points)**

**Station 5:** This is a plot of where sunspots tend to occur on the Sun as a function of *latitude* (top plot) and time (bottom plot). What do you notice about the distribution sunspots? How long does it take the pattern to repeat? What does this length of time correspond to? **(5 points)**

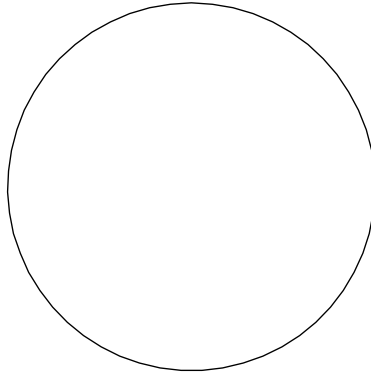
### 14.5.2 Exercise #2: Looking at the Sun

The Sun is very bright, and looking at it with either the naked eye or any optical device is dangerous—special precautions are necessary to enable you to actually look at the Sun. To make the viewing safe, we must eliminate 99.999% of the light from the Sun to reduce it to safe levels. In this exercise you will be using a very special telescope designed for viewing the Sun. This telescope is equipped with a hydrogen light filter. It only allows a tiny amount of light through, isolating a single emission line from hydrogen (“H-alpha”). In your lecture session you will learn about the emission spectrum of hydrogen, and in the spectroscopy lab you get to see this red line of hydrogen using a spectroscope. Several of the pictures in Exercise #1 were actually obtained using a similar filter system. This filter system gives

us a unique view of the Sun that allows us to better see certain types of solar phenomena, especially the “prominences” you encountered in Exercise #1.

- In the “Solar Observation Worksheet” below, draw what you see on and near the Sun as seen through the special solar telescope. **(10 points)**

# Solar Observation Worksheet



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Lab Sec.: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

TA: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Kitt Peak Vacuum Telescope images are courtesy of KPNO/NOAO. SOHO Extreme Ultraviolet Imaging Telescope images courtesy of the SOHO/EIT consortium. SOHO Michelson Doppler Imager images courtesy of the SOHO/MDI consortium. SOHO is a project of international cooperation between the European Space Agency (ESA) and NASA.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 14.6 Summary

**(30 points)** Summarize the important concepts discussed in this lab.

- Discuss the different types of phenomena and structures you looked at in the lab
- Explain how you can understand what causes a phenomenon to occur by looking at the right kind of data
- List the six layers of the Sun (in order) and give their temperatures.
- What causes the Northern (and Southern) Lights, also known as “Aurorae”?

Use complete sentences and, proofread your summary before turning it in.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 15 Review for Final Exam

### 15.1 Introduction

This lab is designed to start preparing you for the final exam in this class. *You **will** be responsible for the material you learned in lab on the final exam!* Today you will revisit the most important points from each lab by answering these questions, which you will go over *at the end of today's lab*. Thus, by the end of lab today you should know what kind of questions to expect about the labs, as well as the answers to those questions. The questions are broken down by lab, so it should be clear where you can find the answers if you do not remember them. *Make the most of this class period by making sure you understand the important points from all of the labs!*

### 15.2 Lab Review Questions

#### Lab 2: Scale Model of the Solar System

1. Based on the scale model of the solar system that we built on the football field, describe the *spacing* of the planets relative to the Sun and to one another.
2. If the entire solar system were scaled down to 100 yards in size, how big would the Sun be? How about a giant planet (*e.g.* Jupiter)? How about a terrestrial planet (*e.g.* Earth)?

#### Lab 3: Phases of the Moon

1. What is the shape of the 3rd-quarter Moon's appearance, what time of day does it rise, and what time of day is this phase of the Moon at its highest point in the sky?

2. The Moon was most recently at its Full Moon phase on April 13th. When will/did the next New Moon occur? When will the next Full Moon occur?

#### **Lab 4: Density**

1. What is the definition of *density*?
2. List the following in order of **decreasing** density: lead, ice, styrofoam, silicate rock, iron

#### **Lab 5: Reflectance Spectroscopy**

1. Describe how the distinction between a red tee-shirt and a blue tee-shirt is different from a red star vs. a blue star. [Think about what causes a star to be red or blue; is this the same cause for a tee-shirt color?]
2. Describe the color difference between Mars and Venus in the context of this lab. Why does one (which one?) appear to be much redder in color?

#### **Lab 6: Locating Earthquakes**

1. How is the study of earthquakes used to learn about the interior of the Earth?

2. What causes earthquakes on the Earth?
3. Would you expect to detect earthquakes on any of the other terrestrial planets if you dropped seismometers on them today? Why or why not?
4. Describe how geologists use seismic measurements to determine the exact location of an earthquake's *epicenter*.

### **Lab 7: Surface of the Moon**

1. By looking at images of the Moon's surface, how can you tell which area is older and which area is younger?
2. What caused the *highlands* and the *maria* to look as they do today?
3. Do you think it is a coincidence that the average density and composition of the Moon is a very close match to that of the Earth's mantle? Why or why not?

### **Lab 8: Heating and Cooling of Planets/Daytime Observations**

1. Explain how the following factors can affect a planet's average surface temperature: axial tilt, ellipticity of a planet's orbit, and the rotation rate of a planet.



2. How does the presence of greenhouse gases in an atmosphere affect a planet's surface temperature?
3. If you spend a lot of time in your car in Las Cruces in the summer, would it be better to have light or dark color upholstery? Why?
4. Why does Venus have phases?
5. How did the observations of the phases of Venus help Galileo demonstrate the strength of the heliocentric model of the universe?

### **Lab 9: Surface Features on Mars**

1. What is the evidence that Mars probably had liquid water on its surface in the past?
2. Mars certainly does not have water on its surface today – where did it go?

### **Lab 10: Heat Loss from Io**

1. What is the source of the internal heat that powers Io's volcanoes?

2. If Object 2 is twice as hot as Object 1, will it emit more or less radiation than Object 1? [Bonus question: how much more or less?]

### **Lab 11: Building a Comet**

1. Draw a picture of a comet, labeling all of its parts.
2. What causes the tails of a comet, and are they always visible?
3. Describe the two reservoirs of comets. Where are they located?
4. How does the internal strength of a comet compare to that of an asteroid? Why are they different?

### **Lab 12: Extra-Solar Planets**

1. Describe the technique that has been employed to detect the presence of nearly all of the extrasolar planets that we know to be orbiting other stars in our Galaxy.
2. Even if an Earth-like planet exists in orbit around another star, the technique described above would not currently indicate the presence of that Earth-type

planet. Why not?

### **Lab 13: The Sun**

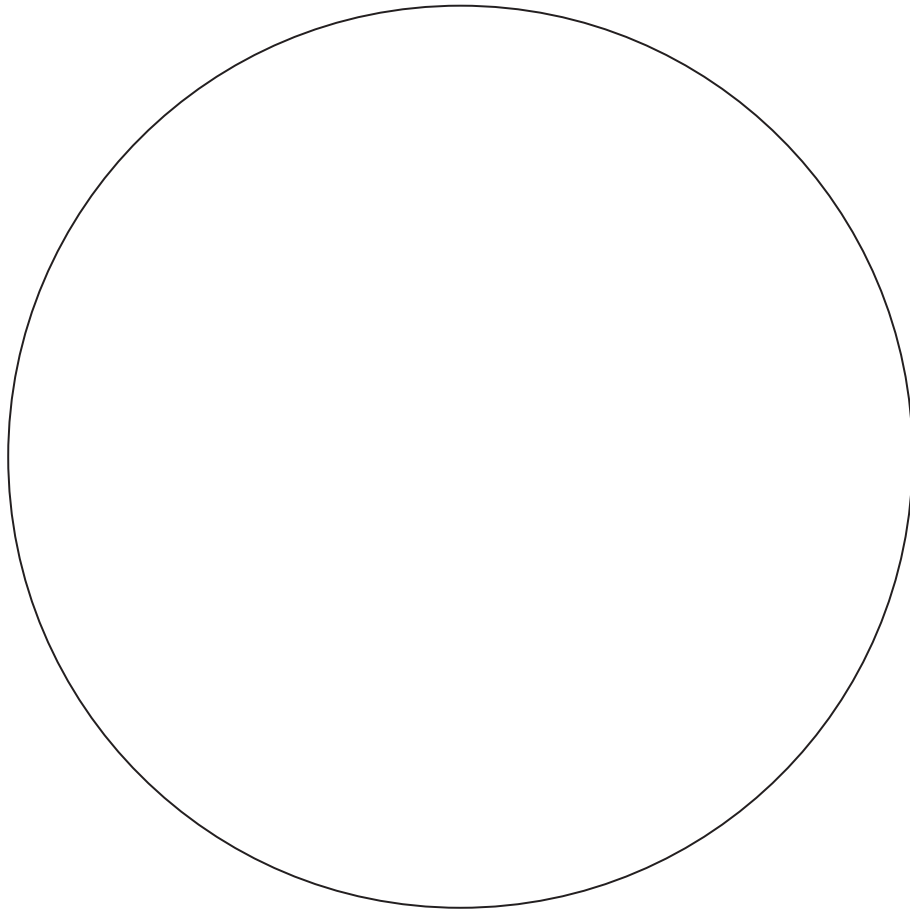
1. What are sunspots, and what leads to their formation?
2. List and describe the three interior regions of the Sun.
3. What is differential rotation?

Name:

Date:

Object:

Telescope:



**Draw the object as it looks to you through the telescope**

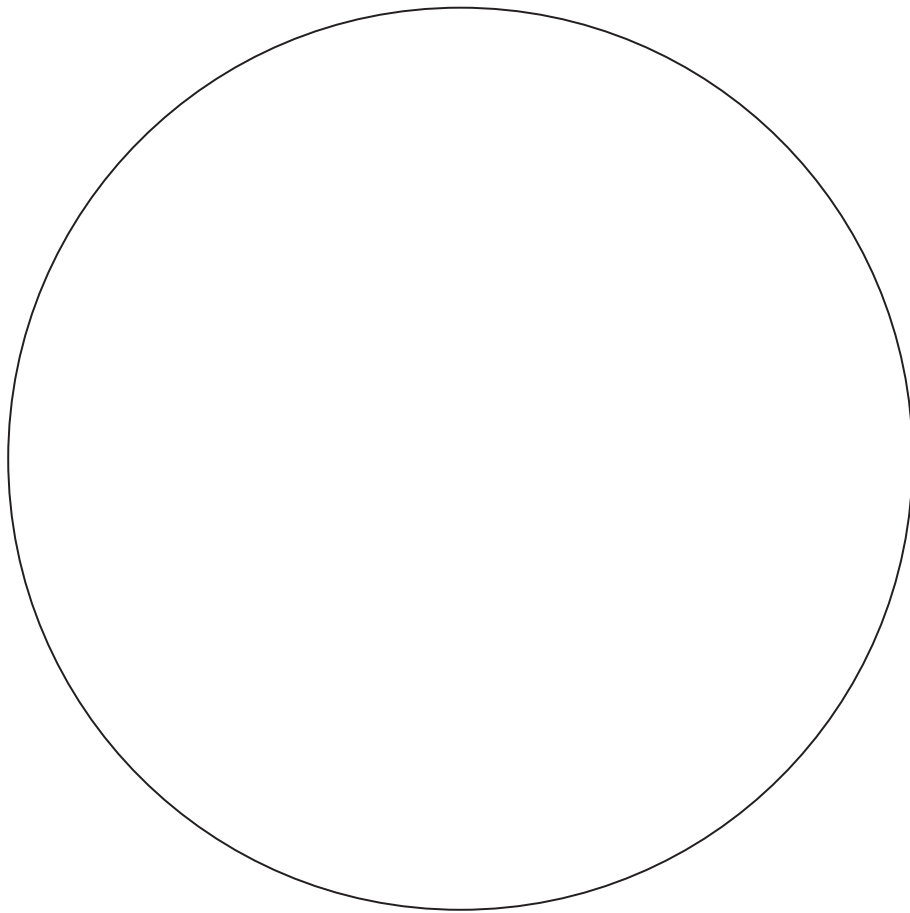


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Telescope:



**Draw the object as it looks to you through the telescope**

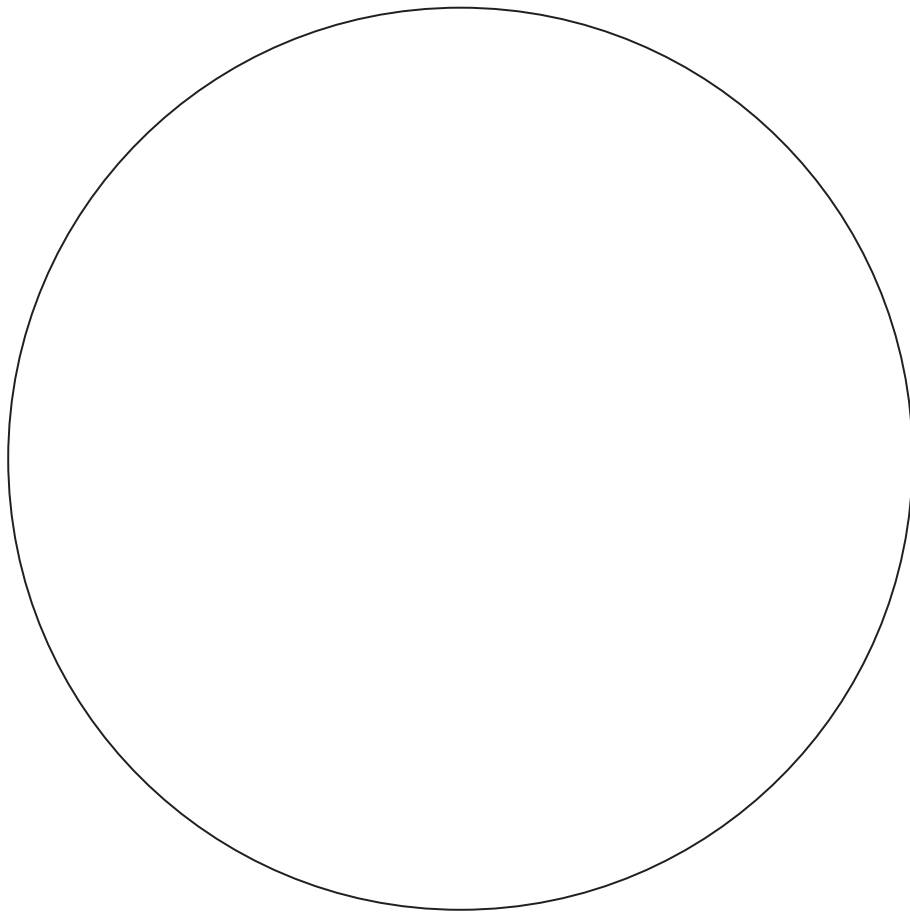


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**Draw the object as it looks to you through the telescope**



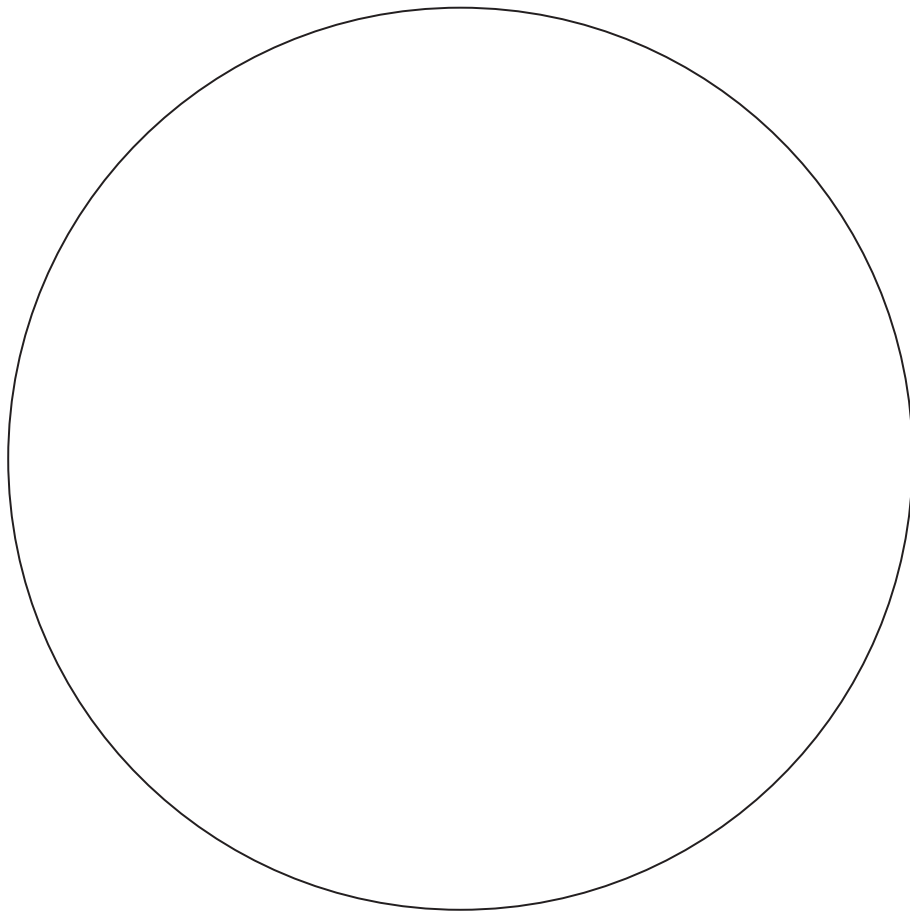


Name:

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**Draw the object as it looks to you through the telescope**