



Test Prep

Science 101



1. Reading Passages

To Read or Not to Read

Of course, it's not a question of whether to read the passage or not, but instead, it's a question of **when to read the passage**. The science passages have a very intimidating appearance, and they're also very complex, so attempts to generally read the passage the first time through are somewhat pointless. Instead, go straight to the first question and then read the passage in response to the question. We find that, both in reading and in science, there seems to be a different part of your brain working when you read through a passage while looking for an answer to a specific question. As compared to just reading through and trying to remember everything you read, while reading through looking for an answer, you're more likely to remember things you saw that didn't relate to what you're looking for. This is because you're interacting with the information more profoundly as you're trying to judge whether or not it relates to what you're looking for.

Tip: Don't initially read the Science passages; only read them in response to answering each question.



2. Answering Questions

2 of the Most Difficult Questions on ACT Science

- When the Answer is Self-Explanatory

This can be a challenging question because we are used to fishing around the passage for information that will help answer the questions, when in this case, the information is right under our nose, and usually at the beginning of the passage (the last place we tend to look). The beginning of the passage is usually where the information pertaining to the scientific background relevant to a study will appear, so check there first on these questions.

- Questions with Rates

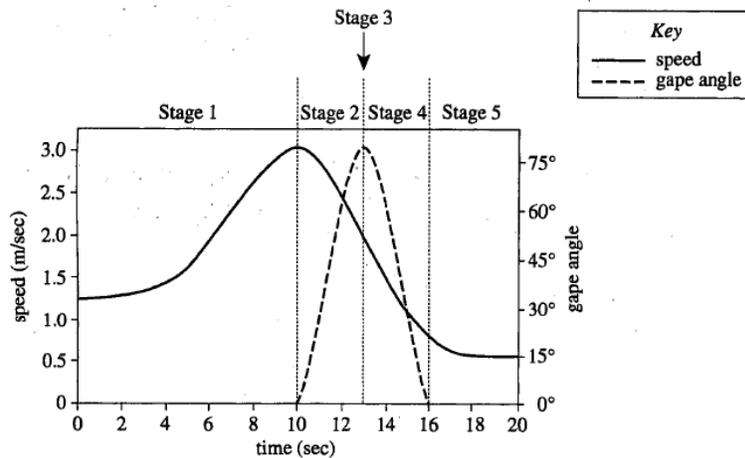
A question may ask you for some arrangement of the data that is not visible in any of the charts, but in a subtle manner, will, for example, ask for the answers in N/m^2 . The arrangement of the units may be telling you to arrange the number of Newtons over the number of square meters.

Other Question Types

- Double-Labeled Graphs

On questions with double-labeled graphs (see below), make sure you are reading carefully and that you are using the right label for the curve you happen to be looking at for a given question.





- Extrapolation Questions

On extrapolation questions, you are not given the numbers that you need. Instead, you must predict them. To do so, you must find the trend of how the numbers are increasing or decreasing and then continue that trend as it goes off the end of the graph.

- Pure Science Questions

Students tend to be intimidated by the Pure Science questions on the ACT, however they occur on average only once or twice per Science section (and could occur as many as 4 times per section). Moreover, these questions often only require basic scientific knowledge.