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**AS and
A LEVEL**

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Contents

How to use this book

vi

1 Biological molecules	2	5.8 Oxygen-haemoglobin dissociation curves	77
1.1 Carbohydrates	2	Practice questions: Chapter 5	81
1.2 Carbohydrates – disaccharides and polysaccharides	4	6 Variation	83
1.3 Starch and cellulose	6	6.1 Investigating variation	83
1.4 Lipids	8	6.2 Types of variation	86
1.5 Proteins	10	Practice questions: Chapter 6	89
Practice questions: Chapter 1	14	7 DNA, genes, and chromosomes	91
2 Cells and cell structure	16	7.1 Structure of RNA and DNA	91
2.1 Investigating the structure of cells	16	7.2 DNA, genes, and chromosomes	97
2.2 The electron microscope	19	7.3 DNA replication	100
2.3 Eukaryotic cell structure	22	Practice questions: Chapter 7	102
2.4 Cell differentiation and organisation	28	8 Protein synthesis	104
2.5 The structure of prokaryotic cells	30	8.1 The genetic code	104
Practice questions: Chapter 2	32	8.2 Polypeptide synthesis – transcription and splicing	106
3 Biochemical reactions in cells	34	8.3 Polypeptide synthesis – translation	108
3.1 Enzymes and enzyme action	34	8.4 Protein folding	111
3.2 Factors affecting enzyme action	37	Practice questions: Chapter 8	113
3.3 Enzyme inhibition	41	9 Genetic diversity, species, and taxonomy	115
Practice questions: Chapter 3	43	9.1 Meiosis and genetic variation	115
4 Transport in and out of cells	45	9.2 Classification	119
4.1 Plasma membranes	45	9.3 Genetic comparisons using DNA and proteins	124
4.2 Diffusion	47	Practice questions: Chapter 9	128
4.3 Osmosis	50	10 Biodiversity within a community	130
4.4 Active transport	56	10.1 Genetic diversity	130
Practice questions: Chapter 4	59	10.2 Species diversity	134
5 Gas exchange and the transport of oxygen	61	10.3 Species diversity and human activities	137
5.1 Exchange between organisms and their environment	61	Practice questions: Chapter 10	140
5.2 Gas exchange in single-celled organisms and insects	64	11 Causes of disease	142
5.3 Gas exchange in the leaf of a plant	66	11.1 Pathogens	142
5.4 Structure of the human gas-exchange system	68	11.2 Data and disease	144
5.5 The mechanism of breathing	70	11.3 Lifestyle and health	146
5.6 Exchange of gases in the lungs	72	Practice questions: Chapter 11	152
5.7 Haemoglobin	75	12 Digestion and absorption	154
		12.1 Enzymes and digestion	154

12.2	Digestion	156	17.2	Binary fission	238
12.3	Absorption of the products of digestion	159	17.3	Gene mutation	241
	Practice questions: Chapter 12	164		Practice questions: Chapter 17	246
13	Human diseases	166	18	Populations	248
13.1	Cholera	166	18.1	Populations and ecosystems	248
13.2	Oral rehydration therapy	168	18.2	Investigating populations	250
13.3	The human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)	171	18.3	Variation in population size	254
	Practice questions: Chapter 13	174	18.4	Interactions between organisms – competition	257
14	Mammalian blood – defensive mechanisms	176	18.5	Interactions between organisms – predation	262
14.1	Cell recognition and the cells of the immune system	176	18.6	Succession	266
14.2	Phagocytosis	178	18.7	Conservation of habitats	270
14.3	T lymphocytes and cell-mediated immunity	180		Practice questions: Chapter 18	272
14.4	B lymphocytes, humoral immunity, and antibodies	183	19	Photosynthesis	274
14.5	Vaccination	186	19.1	Overview of photosynthesis	274
	Practice questions: Chapter 14	190	19.2	The light-dependent reaction	277
15	Mammalian blood – the circulatory system	192	19.3	The light-independent reaction	280
15.1	Circulatory system of a mammal	192	19.4	Factors affecting photosynthesis	283
15.2	Blood vessels and their functions	194		Practice questions: Chapter 19	288
15.3	The structure of the heart	199	20	Respiration	290
15.4	The cardiac cycle	201	20.1	Glycolysis	290
15.5	Heart disease	206	20.2	Anaerobic respiration	293
	Practice questions: Chapter 15	210	20.3	Link reaction and Krebs cycle	297
16	Mass transport systems in plants	212	20.4	Electron transfer chain	300
16.1	Movement of water through roots	212	20.5	Respiratory substrates	302
16.2	Movement of water up stems	215		Practice questions: Chapter 20	306
16.3	Transpiration and factors affecting it	218	21	Energy and ecosystems	308
16.4	Transport of organic substances in the phloem	222	21.1	Food chains and food webs	308
16.5	Investigating transport in plants	225	21.2	Energy transfer between trophic levels	311
16.6	Aphids and plant viruses	228	21.3	Ecological pyramids	314
	Practice questions: Chapter 16	232	21.4	Energy transfer in agricultural ecosystems	317
17	Cell division	234	21.5	Chemical and biological control of agricultural pests	320
17.1	The cell cycle and mitosis	234	21.6	Intensive rearing of domestic livestock	324
				Practice questions: Chapter 21	326
			22	Nutrient cycles	328
			22.1	The carbon cycle	328

22.2	The greenhouse effect and global warming	331	27 Homeostasis and negative feedback	425
22.3	The nitrogen cycle	335	27.1	Principles of homeostasis 425
22.4	Use of natural and artificial fertilisers	338	27.2	The principles of feedback mechanisms 427
22.5	Environmental consequences of using nitrogen fertilisers	340	27.3	The need to control blood glucose concentration 430
	Practice questions: Chapter 22	342	27.4	Hormones and the regulation of blood glucose 434
23 Inheritance and selection	344	27.5	Control of heart rate 439	
23.1	Studying inheritance	344		Practice questions: Chapter 27 442
23.2	Monohybrid inheritance	347	28 Control of transcription and translation	444
23.3	Sex inheritance and sex linkage	350	28.1	Epigenetic control of gene expression 444
23.4	Co-dominance and multiple alleles	353	28.2	Hormones and RNA interference 447
23.5	Dihybrid crosses and gene interactions	356	28.3	Totipotency and cell specialisation 451
23.6	Allele frequency and population genetics	362		Practice questions: Chapter 28 456
23.7	Selection	365	29 Recombinant DNA technology	458
23.8	Speciation	369	29.1	Producing DNA fragments 458
	Practice questions: Chapter 23	372	29.2	<i>In vitro</i> gene cloning – the polymerase chain reaction 461
24 Response to stimuli	374	29.3	<i>In vivo</i> gene cloning – the use of vectors 463	
24.1	Sensory reception	374	29.4	Use of recombinant DNA technology 469
24.2	Role of receptors	377		Practice questions: Chapter 29 475
24.3	The nervous system and neurones	381	Mathematical Skills in A level Biology	477
24.4	The nerve impulse	385		
24.5	Passage of an action potential	389		
24.6	Speed of the nerve impulse	392		
24.7	Structure and function of synapses	395		
24.8	Transmission across a synapse	399		
	Practice questions: Chapter 24	402		
25 Skeletal muscles as effectors	404			
25.1	Structure of skeletal muscle	404		
25.2	Contraction of skeletal muscle	408		
	Practice questions: Chapter 25	413		
26 Control systems in plants	415			
26.1	Tropisms and auxins	415		
26.2	Ethene and abscisic acid (ABA)	421		
	Practice questions: Chapter 26	423		

Glossary	490
Answers	495
Index	531

Answers to the Practice Questions are available at
www.oxfordsecondary.com/oxfordaqaexams-alevel-biology

How to use this book

Learning objectives

- At the beginning of each topic, there is a list of learning objectives.
- These are matched to the specification and allow you to monitor your progress.
- A specification reference is also included.
Specification reference: 3.1.1

Synoptic link

These highlight how the sections relate to each other. Linking different areas of biology together becomes increasingly important, as many exam questions (particularly at A Level) will require you to bring together your knowledge from different areas.

Study tip

Study tips contain prompts to help you with your revision.

Hint

Hint features give other information or ways of thinking about a concept to support your understanding.

This book contains many different features. Each feature is designed to support and develop the skills you will need for your exams, as well as foster and stimulate your interest in biology.

Terms that you will need to be able to define and understand are shown in **bold type** within the text.

Where terms are not explained within the same topic, they are highlighted in **bold orange text**. You can look these words up in the glossary.



Application features

These features contain important and interesting applications of biology in order to emphasise how scientists and engineers have used their scientific knowledge and understanding to develop new applications and technologies. There are also application features to develop your maths skills, and to develop your practical skills. In addition, there is a feature on each of the ten Required Practicals clearly sign-posted within each relevant chapter.



Extension features

These features contain material that is beyond the specification, which is designed to stretch you and provide you with a broader knowledge and understanding and lead the way into the types of thinking and areas you might study in further education. As such, neither the detail nor the depth of questioning will be required for the exams. But this book is about more than getting through the exams.

- 1 Extension and application features have questions that link the material with concepts that are covered in the specification. There are also extension features to develop your maths skills, and to develop your practical skills.

Summary questions

- 1 These are short questions that test your understanding of the topic and allow you to apply the knowledge and skills you have acquired. The questions are ramped in order of difficulty.

Mathematical Skills in A level Biology

Biology students are often less comfortable with the application of mathematics compared with students such as physicists, for whom complex maths is a more obvious everyday tool. Nevertheless, it is important to realise that biology does require competent maths skills in many areas. It is important to practise these skills so you are familiar with them as part of your routine study of the subject.

Confidence with mental arithmetic is very helpful, but among the most important skills is that of taking care and checking calculations. We may not be required to understand the detailed theory of the maths we use, but we do need to be able to apply the skills accurately, whether simply calculating percentages or means, or substituting numbers into complex-looking algebraic equations, such as in statistical tests.

This chapter is designed to help with some of the regularly encountered mathematical problems in biology.

Working with the correct units

In biology it is very important to be secure in the use of correct units. These must always be written clearly in calculations.

Base units

The units we use are from the *Système Internationale* – the SI units. In biology we most commonly use the SI base units:

- metre (m) for length, height, distance
- kilogram (kg) for mass
- second (s) for time
- mole (mol) for the amount of a substance.

You should develop good habits right from the start, being careful to use the correct abbreviation for each unit used. For example, seconds should be abbreviated to s, not 'sec' or 'S'.

Derived units

Biologists also use SI derived units, such as:

- square metres (m^2) for area
- cubic metre (m^3) for volume
- cubic centimetre (cm^3), also written as millilitre (ml), for volume
- degree Celsius ($^{\circ}C$) for temperature
- mole per litre (mol/L , $mol\ dm^{-3}$) is usually used for concentration of a substance in solutions (although the official SI derived unit is moles per cubic metre)
- joule (J) for energy
- pascal (Pa) for pressure
- volt (V) for electrical potential.

Maths link
MS 0.1

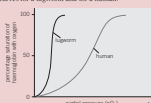
Mathematical section to support and develop your mathematical skills required for your course. Remember, at least 10% of your exam will involve mathematical skills.

265

Practice questions: Chapter 7

Chapter 7 Mass transport

- 1 Lupinus live in soil where the partial pressure of oxygen is low. The graph shows oxygen dissociation curves for a lupinus and for a human.

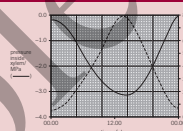


- (a) Explain the advantage to the lupinus of having haemoglobin with a dissociation curve in the position shown. (2 marks)
(b) In humans, substances move out of the capillaries to form tissue fluid. Describe how this tissue fluid is returned to the circulatory system. (1 mark)

- 2 The table shows pressure changes in the left side of the heart during one cardiac cycle.

Time / s	Left atrium / kPa	Left ventricle / kPa
0.1	0.7	0.8
0.2	1.0	1.0
0.3	0.1	0.9
0.4	0.2	15.3
0.5	1.0	4.5
0.6	0.5	1.0
0.7	0.5	0.3
0.8	0.7	0.3

- (a) Between which times is the valve between the atrium and the ventricle closed? (2 marks)
(b) The maximum pressure in the ventricle is much higher than that in the atrium. Explain what causes this. (1 mark)
(c) Use the information in the table to calculate the heart rate in beats per minute. (1 mark)
- 3 (a) (i) An arteriole is described as an artery. Explain why. (1 mark)
(ii) An artery carries oxygenated blood. Explain how these muscle fibres relax to allow blood to flow to capillaries. (2 marks)
(b) (i) A capillary has a thin wall. This leads to rapid exchange of substances between the blood and tissue fluid. Explain why. (1 mark)
(ii) Blood flow in capillaries is slow. Give the advantage of this. (1 mark)
(c) Kwashiorkor is a disease caused by a lack of protein in the blood. This leads to a swollen abdomen and a build up of tissue fluid. (2 marks)
Explain why a build up of protein in the blood causes a build up of tissue fluid. (2 marks)
- 4 Scientists measured the rate of water flow and the pressure in the xylem in a small branch. Their results are shown in the graph.



- (i) Use your knowledge of transpiration to explain the changes in the rate of flow in the xylem shown in the graph. (3 marks)
(ii) Explain why the values for the pressure in the xylem are negative. (1 mark)

- (b) Shown measured the thickness of the walls of three blood vessels in a large group of people. Their results are given in the table.

Name of vessel	Mean wall thickness / μm [1 standard deviation]
Aorta	5.7 ± 1.2
Pulmonary artery	1.0 ± 0.2
Pulmonary vein	0.5 ± 0.2

- (i) Explain the difference in thickness between the pulmonary artery and the pulmonary vein. (1 mark)
(ii) The thickness of the aorta wall changes all the time during each cardiac cycle. Explain why. (3 marks)
(iii) Which of the three blood vessels shows the greatest variation in wall thickness? Explain your answer. (1 mark)

- (c) Describe how tissue fluid is formed and how it is returned to the circulatory system. (6 marks)

- 5 Explain how water enters xylem from the endodermis in the root and is then transported to the leaves. (6 marks)

- 6 The table shows measurements of pulse rate, systolic blood pressure and diastolic blood pressure of an individual after sitting in a chair or walking fast or running.

level of activity	pulse rate / beats per minute	systolic pressure / kPa	diastolic pressure / kPa	stroke volume / ml
sitting	62	15.5	10.4	55
after walking	58	15.2	10.7	74
after running	105	21.8	11.1	88

- (a) Calculate the changes in systolic pressure as the level of activity increases. (2 marks)
(b) Explain the difference in the effect of exercise on systolic and diastolic pressure. (3 marks)
(c) Calculate the cardiac output of this individual after running. Give your answer in $dm^3\ min^{-1}$. (1 mark)
(d) Predict and explain the effect on potential cardiac output of daily exercise sessions over a six month period. (2 marks)

Practice questions at the end of each chapter including questions that cover practical and maths skills.

194

195

Biological molecules

1.1 Carbohydrates

Learning objectives:

- Describe how large molecules like carbohydrates are constructed.
- Describe the structure of a monosaccharide.
- Describe how to carry out the Benedict's test for reducing sugars.

Specification reference: 3.1.1.1 and 3.1.1.2

As the word suggests, carbohydrates are carbon molecules (carbo) combined with water (hydrate). Some carbohydrate molecules are small whilst others are large.

Life based on carbon

Carbon atoms have an unusual feature. They very readily form bonds with other carbon atoms. This allows a sequence of carbon atoms of various lengths to be built up. These form a backbone along which other atoms can be attached. This permits an immense number of different types and sizes of molecule, all based on carbon. The variety of life that exists on Earth is a consequence of living organisms being based on the versatile carbon atom. As a result, carbon-containing molecules are known as organic molecules. In living organisms, there are relatively few other atoms that attach to carbon. Life is therefore based on a small number of chemical elements.

Hint

In biology certain prefixes are commonly used to indicate numbers. There are two systems, one based on Latin and the other on Greek. The Greek terms that are used when referring to chemicals are:

- mono – one
- di – two
- tri – three
- tetra – four
- penta – five
- hexa – six
- poly – many

The making of large molecules

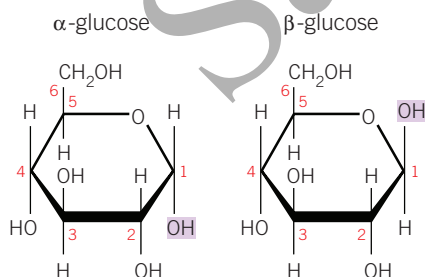
Many organic molecules, including carbohydrates, are made up of a chain of individual molecules. Each of the individual molecules that make up these chains is given the general name **monomer**. The carbon atoms of these monomers join to form longer chains. These longer chains of repeating monomer units are called **polymers**. How this happens is explained in Topic 1.2. Biological molecules such as carbohydrates and proteins are often polymers. These polymers are based on a surprisingly small number of chemical elements. Most are made up of just four elements: carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen.

In carbohydrates, the basic monomer unit is a sugar, otherwise known as a saccharide. A single monomer is therefore called a **monosaccharide**. A pair of monosaccharides can be combined to form a **disaccharide**. Monosaccharides can also be combined in much larger numbers to form **polysaccharides**.

Monosaccharides

Monosaccharides are sweet-tasting, soluble substances that have the general formula $(\text{CH}_2\text{O})_n$, where n can be any number from 3 to 7.

Perhaps the best-known monosaccharide is glucose. This molecule is a hexose (6-carbon) sugar and has the formula $\text{C}_6\text{H}_{12}\text{O}_6$. However, the atoms of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen can be arranged in many different ways, forming **isomers**. Although the molecular structure is often shown as a straight chain for convenience, the atoms actually form a ring, as in Figure 1, which can take a number of forms.



▲ **Figure 1** Molecular arrangements of α - and β -glucose (five carbon atoms at the intersection of the lines have been omitted for simplicity. Each line represents a covalent bond).

Test for reducing sugars

All monosaccharides and some disaccharides (e.g., maltose) are reducing sugars. Reduction is a chemical reaction involving the gain of electrons. A reducing sugar is therefore a sugar that can donate electrons to (or reduce) another chemical, in this case Benedict's reagent. The test

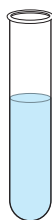
for a reducing sugar is therefore known as the Benedict's test. Benedict's reagent is an alkaline solution of copper(II) sulfate. When a reducing sugar is heated with Benedict's reagent it forms an insoluble orange-brown to red precipitate of copper(I) oxide. The test is carried out as follows:

- Add 2 cm³ of the food sample to be tested to a test tube. If the sample is not already in liquid form, first grind it up in water.
- Add an equal volume of Benedict's reagent.
- Heat the mixture in a gently boiling water bath for 5 minutes.

1 Food sample dissolved in water



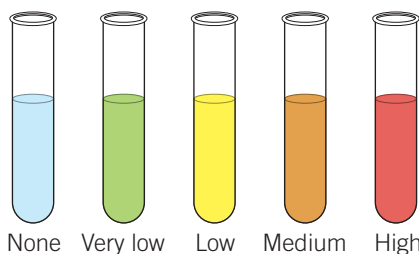
2 Equal volume of Benedict's reagent added



3 Heated in water bath – if reducing sugar present, solution turns orange-brown



▲ Figure 2 The Benedict's test



▲ Figure 3 Results of Benedict's test according to the concentration of reducing sugar present



▲ Figure 4 If a reducing sugar is present, an orange-brown colour is formed



Semi-quantitative nature of the Benedict's test

Table 1 shows the relationship between the concentration of reducing sugar and the colour of the solution and precipitate formed during the Benedict's test. The differences in colour mean that the Benedict's test is semi-quantitative, that is it can be used to estimate the approximate amount of reducing sugar in a sample.

The Benedict's test was carried out on five food samples. The results are shown in Table 2.

- 1 Place the letters in sequence of the increasing amount of reducing sugar in each sample.
- 2 Suggest a way, other than comparing colour changes, in which different concentrations of reducing sugar could be estimated.
- 3 Explain why it is not possible to distinguish between very concentrated samples, even though their concentrations are different.

Study tip

The Benedict's test may be a practical exercise but make sure that you have a detailed knowledge of the procedure.

Summary questions

- 1 Large molecules often contain carbon. Why is this?
- 2 What is the general name for a molecule that is made up of many similar repeating units?
- 3 Why does Benedict's reagent turn red when heated with a reducing sugar?

▼ Table 1 The Benedict's test

Concentration of reducing sugar	Colour of solution and precipitate
None	Blue
Very low	Green
Low	Yellow
Medium	Brown
High	Red

▼ Table 2

Sample	Colour of solution
A	Yellowish brown
B	Green
C	Red
D	Dark brown
E	Yellowish green

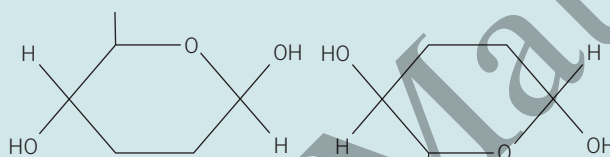
Practice questions: Chapter 1

- 1 (a) The table shows some substances found in cells. Complete the table to show the properties of these substances. Put a tick in the box if the statement is correct.

Statement	Substance			
	Starch	Glycogen	Deoxyribose	DNA helicase
Substance contains only the elements carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen				
Substance is made from amino acid monomers				
Substance is found in both animal cells and plant cells				

(4 marks)

- (b) The diagram shows two molecules of β -glucose.



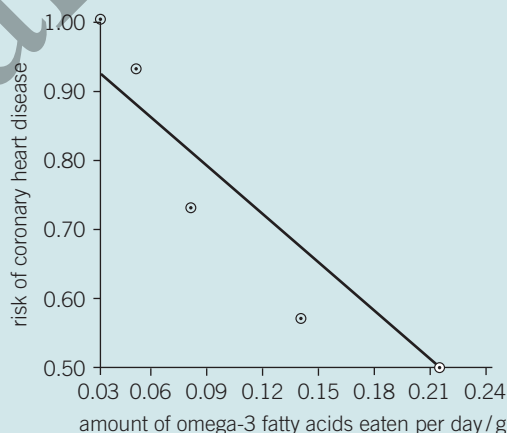
On the diagram, draw a box around the atoms that are removed when the two β -glucose molecules are joined by condensation.

(2 marks)

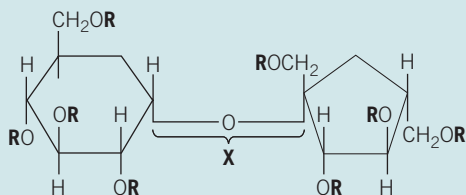
- (c) (i) Hydrogen bonds are important in cellulose molecules. Explain why. (2 marks)
(ii) A starch molecule has a spiral shape. Explain why this shape is important to its function in cells. (1 mark)

AQA Jan 2011

- 2 (a) Omega-3 fatty acids are unsaturated. What is an *unsaturated* fatty acid? (2 marks)
(b) Scientists investigated the relationship between the amount of omega-3 fatty acids eaten per day and the risk of coronary heart disease. The graph shows their results. Do the data show that eating omega-3 fatty acids prevents coronary heart disease? Explain your answer. (3 marks)



- (c) Olestra is an artificial lipid. It is made by attaching fatty acids, by condensation, to a sucrose molecule. The diagram below shows the structure of olestra. The letter R shows where a fatty acid molecule has attached.



- (i) Name bond **X**. (1 mark)
- (ii) A triglyceride does *not* contain sucrose or bond **X**. Give **one** other way in which the structure of a triglyceride is different to olestra. (1 mark)
- (iii) Starting with separate molecules of glucose, fructose, and fatty acids, how many molecules of water would be produced when one molecule of olestra is formed? (1 mark)
- AQA Jan 2011
- 3 (a) (i) The equation shows the reaction catalysed by the enzyme lactase. Complete this equation.
Lactose + → Glucose + (2 marks)
- (b) (ii) Name the type of chemical reaction shown in this equation. (1 mark)
- (c) Lactase is an enzyme. Lactose is a reducing sugar.
- (i) Describe how you could use the biuret test to distinguish a solution of the enzyme lactase from a solution of lactose. (1 mark)
- (ii) Explain the result you would expect with the enzyme. (1 mark)
- AQA Jan 2010
- 4 Some seeds contain lipids. Describe how you could use the emulsion test to show that a seed contains lipids. (3 marks)
- AQA Jan 2012