

Science Practices

Unit: Laboratory & Measurement

NGSS Standards/MA Curriculum Frameworks (2016): SP1, SP2, SP3, SP4, SP5, SP6, SP7, SP8

AP[®] Physics 1 Learning Objectives/Essential Knowledge (2024): SP1.A, SP1.B, SP1.C, SP2.A, SP2.B, SP2.C, SP2.D, SP3.A, SP3.B, SP3.C

Mastery Objective(s): (Students will be able to...)

- Describe what the College Board, the NGSS, and the State of Massachusetts want you to know about how science is done.

Language Objectives:

- Explain what the student is expected to do for each of the AP[®] Science Practices.

Tier 2 Vocabulary: data, claim, justify

Notes:

AP[®] Physics Essential Knowledge (2024)

The College Board has described the scientific method in practical terms, dividing them into seven Science Practices that students are expected to learn in AP Physics 1.

Science Practice 1: Creating Representations

Create representations that depict physical phenomena.

- 1.A** Create diagrams, tables, charts, or schematics to represent physical situations.
- 1.B** Create qualitative sketches of graphs that represent features of a model or the behavior of a physical system.
- 1.C** Create quantitative graphs with appropriate scales and units, including plotting data.

Science Practice 2: Mathematical Routines

Conduct analyses to derive, calculate, estimate, or predict.

- 2.A** Derive a symbolic expression from known quantities by selecting and following a logical mathematical pathway.
- 2.B** Calculate or estimate an unknown quantity with units from known quantities, by selecting and following a logical computational pathway.
- 2.C** Compare physical quantities between two or more scenarios or at different times and locations in a single scenario.
- 2.D** Predict new values or factors of change of physical quantities using functional dependence between variables.

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Science Practice 3: Scientific Questioning and Argumentation

Describe experimental procedures, analyze data, and support claims.

- 3.A** Create experimental procedures that are appropriate for a given scientific question.
- 3.B** Apply an appropriate law, definition, theoretical relationship, or model to make a claim.
- 3.C** Justify or support a claim using evidence from experimental data, physical representations, or physical principles or laws.

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NGSS Science Practices (2013)**1. Asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering)**

Asking questions and defining problems in 9–12 builds on K–8 experiences and progresses to formulating, refining, and evaluating empirically testable questions and design problems using models and simulations.

- Ask questions:
 - that arise from careful observation of phenomena, or unexpected results, to clarify and/or seek additional information.
 - that arise from examining models or a theory, to clarify and/or seek additional information and relationships.
 - to determine relationships, including quantitative relationships, between independent and dependent variables.
 - to clarify and refine a model, an explanation, or an engineering problem.
- Evaluate a question to determine if it is testable and relevant.
- Ask questions that can be investigated within the scope of the school laboratory, research facilities, or field (*e.g.*, outdoor environment) with available resources and, when appropriate, frame a hypothesis based on a model or theory.
- Ask and/or evaluate questions that challenge the premise(s) of an argument, the interpretation of a data set, or the suitability of a design.
- Define a design problem that involves the development of a process or system with interacting components and criteria and constraints that may include social, technical, and/or environmental considerations.

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2. Developing and using models

Modeling in 9–12 builds on K–8 experiences and progresses to using, synthesizing, and developing models to predict and show relationships among variables between systems and their components in the natural and designed worlds.

- Evaluate merits and limitations of two different models of the same proposed tool, process, mechanism or system in order to select or revise a model that best fits the evidence or design criteria.
- Design a test of a model to ascertain its reliability.
- Develop, revise, and/or use a model based on evidence to illustrate and/or predict the relationships between systems or between components of a system.
- Develop and/or use multiple types of models to provide mechanistic accounts and/or predict phenomena, and move flexibly between model types based on merits and limitations.
- Develop a complex model that allows for manipulation and testing of a proposed process or system.
- Develop and/or use a model (including mathematical and computational) to generate data to support explanations, predict phenomena, analyze systems, and/or solve problems.

3. Planning and carrying out investigations

Planning and carrying out investigations in 9–12 builds on K–8 experiences and progresses to include investigations that provide evidence for and test conceptual, mathematical, physical, and empirical models.

- Plan an investigation or test a design individually and collaboratively to produce data to serve as the basis for evidence as part of building and revising models, supporting explanations for phenomena, or testing solutions to problems. Consider possible confounding variables or effects and evaluate the investigation’s design to ensure variables are controlled.
- Plan and conduct an investigation individually and collaboratively to produce data to serve as the basis for evidence, and in the design: decide on types, how much, and accuracy of data needed to produce reliable measurements and consider limitations on the precision of the data (e.g., number of trials, cost, risk, time), and refine the design accordingly.
- Plan and conduct an investigation or test a design solution in a safe and ethical manner including considerations of environmental, social, and personal impacts.
- Select appropriate tools to collect, record, analyze, and evaluate data.
- Make directional hypotheses that specify what happens to a dependent variable when an independent variable is manipulated.

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- Manipulate variables and collect data about a complex model of a proposed process or system to identify failure points or improve performance relative to criteria for success or other variables.

4. Analyzing and interpreting data

Analyzing data in 9–12 builds on K–8 experiences and progresses to introducing more detailed statistical analysis, the comparison of data sets for consistency, and the use of models to generate and analyze data.

- Analyze data using tools, technologies, and/or models (*e.g.*, computational, mathematical) in order to make valid and reliable scientific claims or determine an optimal design solution.
- Apply concepts of statistics and probability (including determining function fits to data, slope, intercept, and correlation coefficient for linear fits) to scientific and engineering questions and problems, using digital tools when feasible.
- Consider limitations of data analysis (*e.g.*, measurement error, sample selection) when analyzing and interpreting data.
- Compare and contrast various types of data sets (*e.g.*, self-generated, archival) to examine consistency of measurements and observations.
- Evaluate the impact of new data on a working explanation and/or model of a proposed process or system.
- Analyze data to identify design features or characteristics of the components of a proposed process or system to optimize it relative to criteria for success.

5. Using mathematics and computational thinking

Mathematical and computational thinking in 9–12 builds on K–8 experiences and progresses to using algebraic thinking and analysis, a range of linear and nonlinear functions including trigonometric functions, exponentials and logarithms, and computational tools for statistical analysis to analyze, represent, and model data. Simple computational simulations are created and used based on mathematical models of basic assumptions.

- Create and/or revise a computational model or simulation of a phenomenon, designed device, process, or system.
- Use mathematical, computational, and/or algorithmic representations of phenomena or design solutions to describe and/or support claims and/or explanations.
- Apply techniques of algebra and functions to represent and solve scientific and engineering problems.

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- Use simple limit cases to test mathematical expressions, computer programs, algorithms, or simulations of a process or system to see if a model “makes sense” by comparing the outcomes with what is known about the real world.
- Apply ratios, rates, percentages, and unit conversions in the context of complicated measurement problems involving quantities with derived or compound units (such as mg/mL, kg/m³, acre-feet, etc.).

6. Constructing explanations (for science) and designing solutions (for engineering)

Constructing explanations and designing solutions in 9–12 builds on K–8 experiences and progresses to explanations and designs that are supported by multiple and independent student-generated sources of evidence consistent with scientific ideas, principles, and theories.

- Make a quantitative and/or qualitative claim regarding the relationship between dependent and independent variables.
- Construct and revise an explanation based on valid and reliable evidence obtained from a variety of sources (including students’ own investigations, models, theories, simulations, peer review) and the assumption that theories and laws that describe the natural world operate today as they did in the past and will continue to do so in the future.
- Apply scientific ideas, principles, and/or evidence to provide an explanation of phenomena and solve design problems, taking into account possible unanticipated effects.
- Apply scientific reasoning, theory, and/or models to link evidence to the claims to assess the extent to which the reasoning and data support the explanation or conclusion.
- Design, evaluate, and/or refine a solution to a complex real-world problem, based on scientific knowledge, student-generated sources of evidence, prioritized criteria, and tradeoff considerations.

7. Engaging in argument from evidence

Engaging in argument from evidence in 9–12 builds on K–8 experiences and progresses to using appropriate and sufficient evidence and scientific reasoning to defend and critique claims and explanations about the natural and designed world(s). Arguments may also come from current scientific or historical episodes in science.

- Compare and evaluate competing arguments or design solutions in light of currently accepted explanations, new evidence, limitations (*e.g.*, trade-offs), constraints, and ethical issues.
- Evaluate the claims, evidence, and/or reasoning behind currently accepted explanations or solutions to determine the merits of arguments.

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- Respectfully provide and/or receive critiques on scientific arguments by probing reasoning and evidence, challenging ideas and conclusions, responding thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, and determining additional information required to resolve contradictions.
- Construct, use, and/or present an oral and written argument or counter-arguments based on data and evidence.
- Make and defend a claim based on evidence about the natural world or the effectiveness of a design solution that reflects scientific knowledge and student-generated evidence.
- Evaluate competing design solutions to a real-world problem based on scientific ideas and principles, empirical evidence, and/or logical arguments regarding relevant factors (*e.g.*, economic, societal, environmental, ethical considerations).

8. Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information

Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information in 9–12 builds on K–8 experiences and progresses to evaluating the validity and reliability of the claims, methods, and designs.

- Critically read scientific literature adapted for classroom use to determine the central ideas or conclusions and/or to obtain scientific and/or technical information to summarize complex evidence, concepts, processes, or information presented in a text by paraphrasing them in simpler but still accurate terms.
- Compare, integrate and evaluate sources of information presented in different media or formats (*e.g.*, visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a scientific question or solve a problem.
- Gather, read, and evaluate scientific and/or technical information from multiple authoritative sources, assessing the evidence and usefulness of each source.
- Evaluate the validity and reliability of and/or synthesize multiple claims, methods, and/or designs that appear in scientific and technical texts or media reports, verifying the data when possible.
- Communicate scientific and/or technical information or ideas (*e.g.* about phenomena and/or the process of development and the design and performance of a proposed process or system) in multiple formats (*i.e.*, orally, graphically, textually, mathematically).

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Massachusetts Science Practices (2016)

1. Define a design problem that involves the development of a process or system with interacting components and criteria and constraints that may include social, technical, and/or environmental considerations.
2. Develop and/or use a model (including mathematical and computational) to generate data to support explanations, predict phenomena, analyze systems, and/or solve problems.
3. Plan and conduct an investigation, including deciding on the types, amount, and accuracy of data needed to produce reliable measurements, and consider limitations on the precision of the data.
4. Apply concepts of statistics and probability (including determining function fits to data, slope, intercept, and correlation coefficient for linear fits) to scientific questions and engineering problems, using digital tools when feasible.
5. Use simple limit cases to test mathematical expressions, computer programs, algorithms, or simulations of a process or system to see if a model “makes sense” by comparing the outcomes with what is known about the real world.
6. Apply scientific reasoning, theory, and/or models to link evidence to the claims and assess the extent to which the reasoning and data support the explanation or conclusion.
7. Respectfully provide and/or receive critiques on scientific arguments by probing reasoning and evidence and challenging ideas and conclusions, and determining what additional information is required to solve contradictions.
8. Evaluate the validity and reliability of and/or synthesize multiple claims, methods, and/or designs that appear in scientific and technical texts or media, verifying the data when possible.

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