

21. This exercise is related to Einstein's famous law $E = mc^2$. The *relativistic momentum* p of a particle of mass m moving at a speed v along a straight line (say, the x -axis) is

$$p = \frac{mv}{\sqrt{1 - \frac{v^2}{c^2}}},$$

where c is the speed of light. The *relativistic force* on the particle along that line is

$$F = \frac{dp}{dt},$$

which is the same formula as Newton's Second Law of motion in classical mechanics. Assume that the particle starts at rest at position x_1 and ends at position x_2 along the x -axis. The work done by the force F on the particle is:

$$W = \int_{x_1}^{x_2} F \, dx = \int_{x_1}^{x_2} \frac{dp}{dt} \, dx$$

- (a) Show that

$$\frac{dp}{dv} = \frac{m}{\left(1 - \frac{v^2}{c^2}\right)^{3/2}}.$$

- (b) Use the Chain Rule formula

$$\frac{dp}{dt} = \frac{dp}{dv} \frac{dv}{dx} \frac{dx}{dt}$$

to show that

$$F \, dx = v \frac{dp}{dv} \, dv.$$

- (c) Use parts (a) and (b) to show that

$$W = \int_0^v \frac{dp}{dv} v \, dv = \int_0^v \frac{mv}{\left(1 - \frac{v^2}{c^2}\right)^{3/2}} \, dv.$$

- (d) Use part (c) to show that

$$W = \frac{mc^2}{\sqrt{1 - \frac{v^2}{c^2}}} - mc^2.$$

- (e) Define the *relativistic kinetic energy* K of the particle to be $K = W$, and define the *total energy* E to be

$$E = \frac{mc^2}{\sqrt{1 - \frac{v^2}{c^2}}}.$$

So by part (d), $K = E - mc^2$. Show that

$$E^2 = p^2 c^2 + (mc^2)^2.$$

(Hint: Expand the right side of that equation.)

- (f) What is E when the particle is at rest?

22. A *median* of a triangle is a line segment from a vertex to the midpoint of the opposite side, and the three medians intersect at a common point. Show that this point is a triangle's center of gravity.