**COMET BAY COLLEGE**

**Physics - Unit 1 – Task 2**

**Nuclear Energy Test**

**Name: Total Marks /52**

**Question 1:**

Within a nuclear reactor, uranium-235 is bombarded by a neutron to split into two daughter products also emitting two neutrons. Part of the nuclear equation is shown below.

1. Write the element name for the missing daughter product labelled X. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1 mark)
2. What is the atomic and mass numbers of the daughter product X:
3. Mass number \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1 mark)
4. Atomic number \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1 mark)

**Question 2:**

In terms of the properties of alpha and beta radiation, explain why alpha radiation cannot penetrate paper but beta radiation can. (4 marks)

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**Question 3:**

A radioactive isotope has a count of 8.85 x 103 decays per hour. Calculate the activity of the source. (NOTE: 1 activity is a measure of counts per second) (2 marks)

**Question 4:**

For an atomic bomb to explode the amount of uranium-235 must reach critical mass and then the fission reaction created from a neutron induced chain reaction becomes uncontrollable. What is a neutron induced chain reaction and why does it need critical mass to explode? (4 marks)

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**Question 5:**

Calculate the binding energy per nucleon (in MeV) of the Helium-3 atom given the mass of He-3 when using a mass spectrometer measures 4.99 x 10-27 kg . (5 marks)

**Question 6:**

A pure sample of radioactive gold is known to have a count of 42.0 kBq, however it also has a half-life occurring every 3 days. The sample analysed in the laboratory has a reading of 2.5 kBq. How many days has the sample being sitting there before being analysed, assuming it was initially pure? (5 marks)

**Question 7:**

A radiation source and a detector can be used to measure the thickness of very thin aluminium foil during manufacture. Select, from the table, a suitable radioisotope to be used as a radiation source for this industrial process.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Radioisotope** | **Most Useful Radiation Emitted** | Half-Life |
| Americium-241  Cesium-137  Cobalt-60  Iodine-131  Radium-223  Strontium-90 | alpha  gamma  gamma  beta  alpha  beta | 432 years  30 years  5.27 days  8.04 days  11.4 years  29 years |

1. Choice: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1 mark)
2. Reason for choice: (4 marks)

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**Question 8:**

The forming of a new element during radioactive decay is called ‘transmutation’. Explain why emitting alpha and beta radiation causes a transmutation but by emitting gamma radiation does not.(3 marks)

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**Question 9:**

Determine the half-life of the substance from the graph.

1. Half-life = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1 mark)
2. Second Half – life = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1 mark)
3. Third Half – life = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1 mark)
4. Is this graph a correct representation of a typical radioactive decay? Explain why. (3 marks)

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**Question 10:**

A miner in a uranium mine is unaware that he is breathing in radon-222 gas, an alpha emitter. The gas has a very long half life with an activity of 3.40 kBq which will be unchanged during his time in the mine. Each decay of the isotope releases 3.8 x 10-12 J of energy into the body and that the radioisotope is not eliminated from the body as it settles into the tissue of his lung. After a month the gas is discovered and the mine closed (assume a month is 30 days).

NOTE: 1 Bq = 1 decay

1. Calculate the total energy the miner absorbed into his lungs during this time. (2 marks)
2. Calculate the absorbed dose he received in one month if he has a mass of 75 kg. (If you were unable to obtain a value for (a) above use 0.035 J) (2 marks)
3. Calculate the dose equivalent of the alpha radiation. (2 marks)
4. Looking at the table below, should the miner be concerned about his exposure? Explain.

(2 marks)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Dose Equivalent (Sv) | Body damage |
| 0.25 | Reduction in white blood cell count |
| 1 | Possible nausea, vomiting. |
| 4 | Nausea, diarrhoea, drop in blood cell count. |
| 5 | Loss of hair, 50% die. |
| 10 | Severe damage to central nervous system, death within days |

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**Question 11:**

When Pu-238 (atomic number 94) is bombarded with a neutron, fission occurs to form Sn-128 (atomic number 50), Ru-108 (atomic number 44) and some neutrons.

1. Complete the nuclear equation showing the number of neutrons released. (1 mark)
2. How much binding energy is released per reaction in Joules using the information on your data sheet and the information below? (6 marks)

* Pu-238 = 396.82 × 10-27 kg
* Sn-128 = 212.33 × 10-27 kg
* Ru-108 = 179.13 × 10-27 kg