

### 3D notes

Created by Mr. Francis Hung

last updated: 2022-08-19

**Example 1** A tower is on a hillside which slope at  $18^\circ$  to the horizontal. At a point 93.6 m higher up the hill from the foot of the tower, the angle of depression of the top of the tower is  $12^\circ$ . Find the height of the tower.

Let the tower be  $AB = h$  m, with  $A$  as the top and  $B$  as the foot.  $BD$  is the horizontal line.

The slope  $BC$  inclines at  $18^\circ$  to  $BD$ .  $BC = 93.6$  m

$JC$  is another horizontal line. The angle of depression from  $C$  to  $A$  is  $12^\circ = \angle JCA$ .

$\angle JCB = 18^\circ$  (alt.  $\angle$ s  $JC \parallel BD$ )

$\angle ACB = 18^\circ - 12^\circ = 6^\circ$

$\angle BAC = 90^\circ + 12^\circ = 102^\circ$

By sine rule,  $\frac{h}{\sin 6^\circ} = \frac{93.6}{\sin 102^\circ}$

$h = 10.00$

The height of tower is 10.00 m correct to 2 decimal places.

**Example 2 AM 1999 Paper 2 Q11**

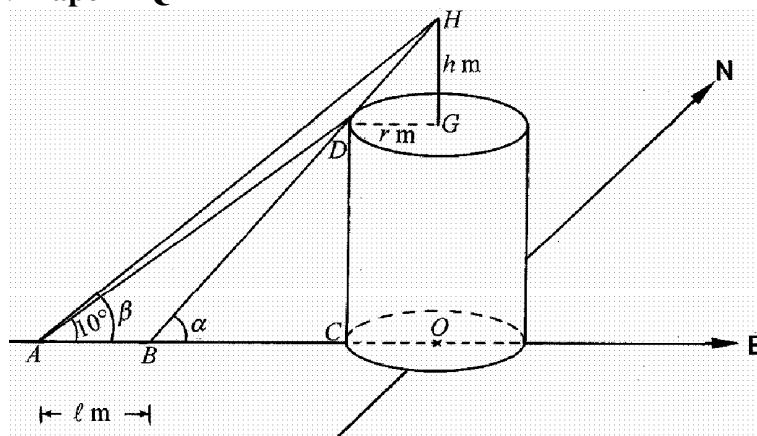
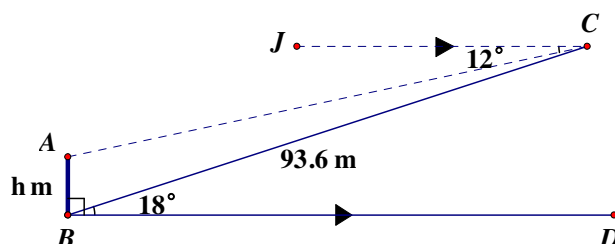


Figure 5 shows a right cylindrical tower with a radius of  $r$  m standing on horizontal ground. A vertical pole  $HG$ ,  $h$  m in height, stands at the centre  $G$  of the roof of the tower. Let  $O$  be the centre of the base of the tower.  $C$  is a point on the circumference of the base of the tower due west of  $O$  and  $D$  is a point on the roof vertically above  $C$ . A man stands at a point  $A$  due west of  $O$ . The angles of elevation of  $D$  and  $H$  from  $A$  are  $10^\circ$  and  $\beta$  respectively. The man walks towards the east to a point  $B$  where he can just see the top of the pole  $H$  as shown in Figure 5. (Note: If he moves forwards, he can no longer see the pole.) The angle of elevation of  $H$  from  $B$  is  $\alpha$ . Let  $AB = \ell$  m.

(a) Show that  $AD = \frac{\ell \sin \alpha}{\sin(\alpha - 10^\circ)}$  m.

Hence (i) express  $CD$  in terms of  $\ell$  and  $\alpha$ .

(ii) show that  $h = \frac{\ell \sin^2 \alpha \sin(\beta - 10^\circ)}{\sin(\alpha - 10^\circ) \sin(\alpha - \beta)}$ .

(Hint: You may consider  $\triangle ADH$ .)

(b) **In this part, numerical answers should be given correct to two significant figures.**

Suppose  $\alpha = 15^\circ$ ,  $\beta = 10.2^\circ$  and  $\ell = 97$ .

(i) Find

- (1) the height of the pole  $HG$ .
- (2) the height and radius of the tower.

(ii)  $P$  is a point south-west of  $O$ . Another man standing at  $P$  can just see the top of the pole  $H$ . Find

- (1) the distance of  $P$  from  $O$ .
- (2) the bearing of  $B$  from  $P$ .

(a) In  $\triangle ABD$ ,  $\angle ABD = 180^\circ - \alpha$  (adj.  $\angle$ s on st. line)  
 $\angle ADB = \alpha - 10^\circ$  (ext.  $\angle$  of  $\triangle$ )  
 $\frac{\ell}{\sin \angle ADE} = \frac{AD}{\sin \angle ABD}$  (Sine rule on  $\triangle ABD$ )  
 $AD = \frac{\ell \sin \alpha}{\sin(\alpha - 10^\circ)} \text{ m}$

(i) In  $\triangle ACD$ ,  $CD = AD \sin 10^\circ = \frac{\ell \sin \alpha \sin 10^\circ}{\sin(\alpha - 10^\circ)} \text{ m}$

(ii) In  $\triangle ABH$ ,  $\angle AHD = \alpha - \beta$  (ext.  $\angle$  of  $\triangle$ )  
 $\angle HAD = \beta - 10^\circ$   
 $\frac{DH}{\sin \angle HAD} = \frac{AD}{\sin \angle AHD}$  (Sine rule on  $\triangle ADH$ )  
 $\frac{DH}{\sin(\beta - 10^\circ)} = \frac{\frac{\ell \sin \alpha}{\sin(\alpha - 10^\circ)}}{\sin(\alpha - \beta)}$   
 $DH = \frac{\ell \sin \alpha \sin(\beta - 10^\circ)}{\sin(\alpha - 10^\circ) \sin(\alpha - \beta)}$

$DG \parallel BC$

$\angle HDG = \alpha$  (corr.  $\angle$ s  $DG \parallel BC$ )

In  $\triangle AHG$ ,  $h = DH \sin \alpha = \frac{\ell \sin^2 \alpha \sin(\beta - 10^\circ)}{\sin(\alpha - 10^\circ) \sin(\alpha - \beta)}$

(b)  $\alpha = 15^\circ$ ,  $\beta = 10.2^\circ$  and  $\ell = 97$

(i) (1)  $h = \frac{97 \sin^2 15^\circ \sin(10.2^\circ - 10^\circ)}{\sin(15^\circ - 10^\circ) \sin(15^\circ - 10.2^\circ)} = 3.110027219$

$HG = 3.1 \text{ m}$  (correct to 2 sig. fig.)

(2)  $CD = \frac{\ell \sin \alpha \sin 10^\circ}{\sin(\alpha - 10^\circ)} \text{ m}$  (by (a) (i))  
 $= \frac{97 \sin 15^\circ \sin 10^\circ}{\sin(15^\circ - 10^\circ)} \text{ m} = 50.01982714 \text{ m}$

The height of the tower = 50 m (correct to 2 significant figures)

In  $\triangle DHG$ ,  $r = \frac{h}{\tan \alpha} = \frac{3.110027219}{\tan 15^\circ} = 11.60677959$

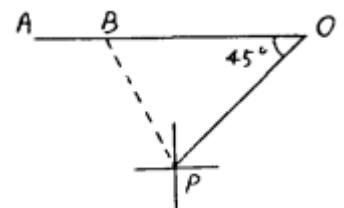
The radius of the tower = 12 m (correct to 2 significant figures)

(ii) (1) The distance of  $P$  from  $O = BO = \frac{CD + h}{\tan \alpha} = \frac{50.01982714 + 3.110027219}{\tan 15^\circ} \text{ m}$   
 $= 198.2833159 \text{ m}$   
 $= 200 \text{ m}$  (correct to 2 sig. fig.)

(2)  $\angle BOP = 45^\circ$  and  $BO = PO$   
 $\triangle BOP$  is an isosceles triangle  
 $\angle OBP = \frac{180^\circ - 45^\circ}{2} = 67.5^\circ$

The bearing  $B$  from  $P$  is  $\text{N}22.5^\circ\text{W}$ .

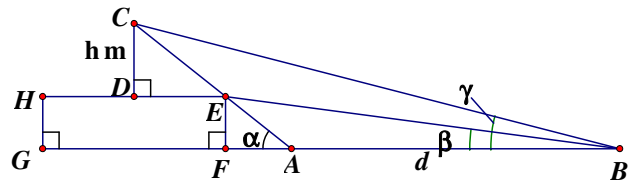
(base  $\angle$ s isos.  $\triangle$ )



**Class work 1**

From a point  $A$ , the top of a flagstaff of height  $h$  m can just be seen. The flagstaff stands at the centre of a square tower  $B$  is a point further away from the tower so that  $AB = d$  m and the flagstaff,  $A$ ,  $B$  are in the same vertical plane. If the elevation from  $A$  and  $B$  of the top of the flagstaff are  $\alpha$  and  $\gamma$  respectively, and the elevation of the top of the tower from  $B$  is  $\beta$ ;

show that  $h = \frac{d \sin^2 \alpha \sin(\gamma - \beta)}{\sin(\alpha - \gamma) \sin(\alpha - \beta)}$ .



$D$  is the mid-point of  $EH$

**Example 3** The elevation of the top of a vertical mast of height  $h$  m on a straight portion of a bank of a river, is  $30^\circ$  from a point  $A$  on the opposite bank and  $a$  m downstream. From a point  $B$  on this bank  $b$  m upstream, the elevation is  $60^\circ$ . Prove that  $a^2 - b^2 = \frac{8h^2}{3}$ .

If  $a = 50$ ,  $b = 10$ , calculate the height of the mast, the width of the river, and the elevation of the top of the mast from the point mid-way between  $A$  and  $B$ .

The blue lines in the figure are the river with parallel bank.  $CD$  = vertical mast,  $C$  = top,  $D$  = bottom,  $\angle CBD = 60^\circ$ ,  $\angle CAD = 30^\circ$ ,  $N$  is the point nearest to  $D$  across the river.  $BN = b$ ,  $AN = a$ ,  $M$  is the mid-point of  $AB$

$$BD = \frac{h}{\tan 60^\circ} = \frac{h}{\sqrt{3}}$$

$$AD = \frac{h}{\tan 30^\circ} = \sqrt{3}h$$

Apply Pythagoras' theorem on  $\triangle BDN$ ,  $\triangle ADN$

$$DN^2 = \left(\frac{h}{\sqrt{3}}\right)^2 - b^2 = (\sqrt{3}h)^2 - a^2$$

$$a^2 - b^2 = \frac{8h^2}{3}$$

$$a = 50, b = 10, 50^2 - 10^2 = \frac{8h^2}{3}$$

$$h = 30$$

The height of the mast is 30 m.

$$\text{The width of the river} = \sqrt{(\sqrt{3}h)^2 - a^2} \text{ m} = \sqrt{(\sqrt{3} \times 30)^2 - 50^2} \text{ m} = 10\sqrt{2} \text{ m} = 14.14 \text{ m}$$

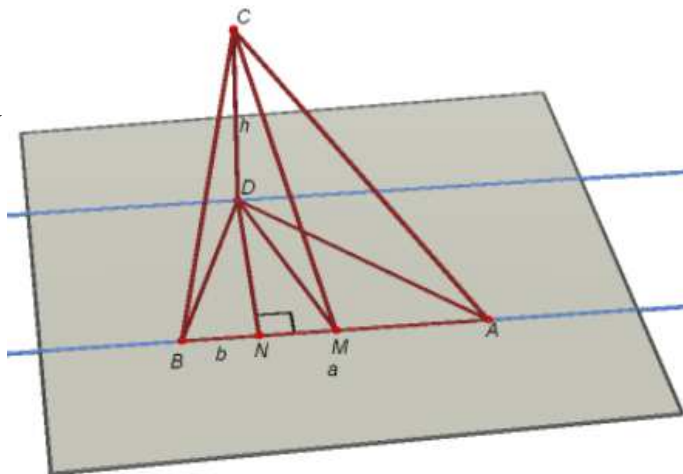
$$MN = BM - BN = \frac{a+b}{2} - b = \frac{a-b}{2} = \frac{50-10}{2} = 20 \text{ m}$$

$$DM = \sqrt{DN^2 + NM^2} = \sqrt{(10\sqrt{2})^2 + 20^2} \text{ m} = 10\sqrt{6} \text{ m}$$

$$\tan \angle CMD = \frac{CD}{DM} = \frac{30}{10\sqrt{6}} = \frac{\sqrt{6}}{2}$$

$$\angle CMD = 50.8^\circ$$

The angle of elevation from  $M$  to  $C = 50.8^\circ$



**Example 4** A lamp-shade is made of 4 equal panes of glass in the shaped of trapezium. The parallel sides of each pane are 28 cm and 8 cm long and each slant side 20 cm. What is the angle between

(a) each pane and the vertical;

(b) two adjacent panes?

(a) Let the lamp-shade be  $ABCDEFGH$  with a virtual vertex  $V$  as shown.  $ABCD$  is a square with side = 8 cm,  $EFGH$  is a square with side = 28 cm and centre at  $O$ .

$AH = BG = CF = DE = 20$  cm. The projection of  $V$  on the plane  $EFGH$  is  $O$ .

$$EG = FH = \sqrt{28^2 + 28^2} \text{ cm} = 28\sqrt{2} \text{ cm}$$

$$EO = FO = GO = HO = 14\sqrt{2} \text{ cm}$$

$\triangle VAB \sim \triangle VHG$  (equiangular)

$$\frac{VH}{VA} = \frac{HG}{AB} \quad (\text{corr. sides, } \sim \Delta s)$$

$$\frac{VA + 20}{VA} = \frac{28}{8}$$

$$VA = 8 \text{ cm, similarly, } VB = VC = VD = 8 \text{ cm}$$

$\therefore \triangle VAB, \triangle VBC, \triangle VCD, \triangle VDA$  are equilateral triangles with sides = 8 cm

$\triangle VEF, \triangle VFG, \triangle VGH, \triangle VHE$  are equilateral triangles with sides = 28 cm

In  $\triangle VOH$ ,  $VO \perp HO$ ,  $VH = 28$  cm,  $HO = 14\sqrt{2}$  cm,  $VO^2 = VH^2 - HO^2$  (Pythagoras' theorem)

$$VO = \sqrt{28^2 - (14\sqrt{2})^2} \text{ cm} = 14\sqrt{2} \text{ cm}$$

Let  $M$  be the mid-point of  $FG$ .  $FM = MG = 14$  cm

$$OM = 14 \text{ cm}$$

$$\tan \angle VMO = \frac{VO}{OM} = \frac{14\sqrt{2}}{14} = \sqrt{2}$$

The angle between each pane and the vertical =  $\angle VMO = 54.7^\circ$  (correct to 3 sig. figures)

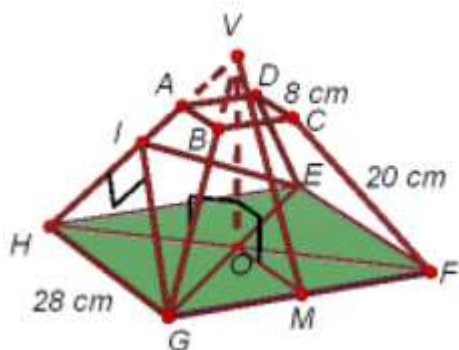
(b) Let the mid-point of  $VH$  be  $I$ . Join  $EG$ ,  $GI$  and  $EI$ .

The angle between two adjacent panes is  $\angle EIG$ .

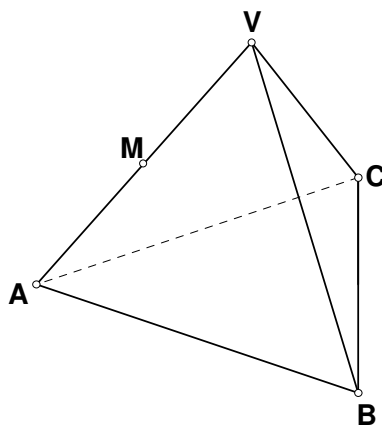
$$EI = GI = 28 \sin 60^\circ \text{ cm} = 14\sqrt{3} \text{ cm, } EG = 28\sqrt{2} \text{ cm}$$

$$\cos \angle EIG = \frac{(14\sqrt{3})^2 + (14\sqrt{3})^2 - (28\sqrt{2})^2}{2(14\sqrt{3})(14\sqrt{3})} = -\frac{1}{3}$$

$$\angle EIG = 109.47^\circ$$



**Example 5** In the figure,  $VABC$  is a regular tetrahedron with side = 2.  $M$  is the mid-point of  $VA$ . Find the angle between  $CM$  and the plane  $ABC$ .



Solution: Let  $D$  be the mid-point of  $BC$ .

Then  $VM = MA = CD = DB = 1$ .  $\triangle ACD \cong \triangle ABD$  (SSS)

$\angle ADC = \angle ADB = 90^\circ$  (corr.  $\angle$ s  $\cong$   $\Delta$ 's)

$$AD = \sqrt{2^2 - 1^2} = \sqrt{3}$$

$\triangle VMC \cong \triangle AMC$  (SSS)

$\angle VMC = \angle AMC = 90^\circ$  (corr.  $\angle$ s  $\cong$   $\Delta$ 's)

$$CM = \sqrt{2^2 - 1^2} = \sqrt{3}$$

$O$  is the orthogonal projection of  $V$  on the plane  $ABC$ .

$\angle AOV = 90^\circ$ .  $O$  is the centroid of  $\triangle ABC$ .

$$AO = \frac{2}{3} AD = \frac{2\sqrt{3}}{3}.$$

$P$  is the projection of  $M$  on the plane  $ABC$ .  $\angle APM = 90^\circ$ .

$MP \parallel VO$  (corr.  $\angle$ s eq.)

$$AP = PO = \frac{\sqrt{3}}{3} \quad (\text{intercept theorem})$$

$$\text{In } \triangle APM, MP^2 = AM^2 - AP^2 = 1^2 - \left(\frac{\sqrt{3}}{3}\right)^2 = \frac{2}{3}$$

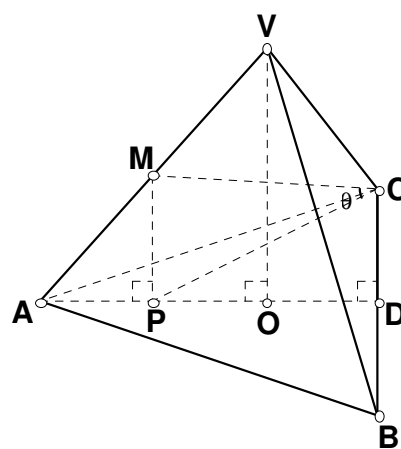
$$\Rightarrow MP = \sqrt{\frac{2}{3}}$$

In  $\triangle CPM$ ,  $\angle CPM = 90^\circ$ . required angle =  $\angle PCM = \theta$

$$\sin \theta = \frac{MP}{CM} = \frac{\sqrt{\frac{2}{3}}}{\sqrt{3}} = \frac{\sqrt{2}}{3}$$

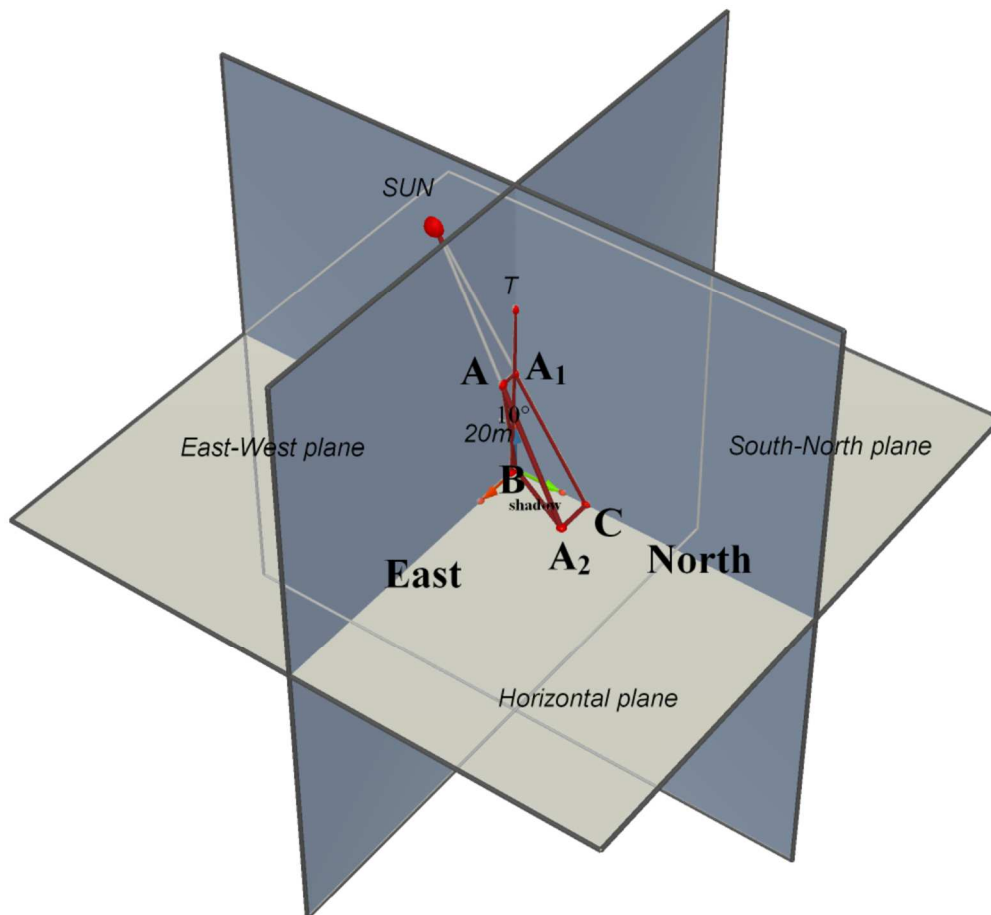
$$\theta = 28.1^\circ$$

See Example5.cg3.



**Example 6****Reference: Certificate Amalgamated Mathematics by W. K. Chow 1981 p.265Q16**

A 20-metre pole  $AB$  with one end ( $B$ ) on level ground is inclined at  $10^\circ$  to the vertical towards the East. At noon one day the angle of elevation of the sun was  $70^\circ$  due south of the pole. What was the length of the shadow of the pole at this time?



Construct two imaginary planes which are perpendicular to the horizontal. One plane is across the South-North direction and the other is across the East-West direction.

The foot of the pole,  $B$ , is at the intersection of these two imaginary planes.

$TB$  is a vertical line on the intersection of these two planes.

The pole  $AB$  lies on the East of the East-West plane such that  $\angle ABT = 10^\circ$ .

The sun lies on the South of the South-North plane.

$A_2B$  is the shadow of the pole  $AB$  on the horizontal ground.

On  $BT$ , construct a point  $A_1$  such that  $AA_1$  is parallel to the horizontal,  $\angle AA_1B = 90^\circ$ .

The sun cast a shadow  $BC$  on  $A_1B$  with  $\angle A_1CB = 70^\circ$ ,  $\angle A_2CB = 90^\circ$ .

$$A_1B = AB \cos 10^\circ = 20 \cos 10^\circ \text{ m}$$

$$BC = A_1B \cot 70^\circ = 20 \cos 10^\circ \cot 70^\circ \text{ m}$$

$$A_2C = AA_1 = 20 \sin 10^\circ \text{ m}$$

$$A_2B = \sqrt{A_2C^2 + BC^2} = \sqrt{(20 \sin 10^\circ)^2 + (20 \cos 10^\circ \cot 70^\circ)^2} \text{ m} = 7.97 \text{ m (correct to 3 sig. figures.)}$$

**Example 7** In the figure,  $VABCDE$  is a right pentagonal pyramid with a regular pentagonal base  $ABCDE$  with side = 2.  $V$  is the vertex of the pyramid and  $O$  is the projection of  $V$  on the base.  $VA = VB = VC = VD = VE = 2$ . Find the angle between

- $VB$  and the base,
- the plane  $VBC$  and the base,
- the planes  $VAB$  and  $VBC$ ,
- $CB$  and the plane  $VAB$ .

By definition,  $O$  is the centre of the regular pentagon.

$$AB = BC = CD = DE = EA = 2$$

$$\angle BAE = \angle ABC = \angle BCD = \angle CDE = \angle AED = 108^\circ$$

( $\angle$ s sum of polygon)

Join  $OA, OB, OC, OD, OE$ .

$$OA = OB = OC = OD = OE$$

$$\triangle OAB \cong \triangle OBC \cong \triangle OCD \cong \triangle ODE \cong \triangle OEA \text{ (S.S.S.)}$$

$$\angle AOB = \angle BOC = \angle COD = \angle DOE = \angle AOE = 72^\circ$$

( $\angle$ s at a pt., corr.  $\angle$ s  $\cong$   $\Delta$ s)

$$\angle OAB = \angle OBC \text{ (}\because OA = OB, \text{ base, } \angle\text{s isos. } \Delta\text{)}$$

$$= \frac{180^\circ - \angle AOB}{2} = 54^\circ \text{ (}\angle\text{s sum of } \Delta\text{)}$$

Let  $G$  be the projection of  $O$  on  $AB$ . Then  $OG \perp AB$ ,  $\triangle OAG \cong \triangle OBG$  (R.H.S.)

$$AG = GB = 1 \text{ (corr. sides } \cong \Delta\text{s)}, OG = GB \tan 54^\circ = \tan 54^\circ, OA = OB = OC = OD = OE = \sec 54^\circ$$

$\triangle VAB, \triangle VBC, \triangle VCD, \triangle VDE, \triangle VAE$  are congruent equilateral triangles with side = 2.

- Join  $VO$  and  $OB$ .

$$\cos \angle OBV = \frac{OB}{VB} = \frac{\sec 54^\circ}{2}$$

$$\angle OBV = 31.7^\circ \text{ (correct to 3 sig. fig.)}$$

- Let  $M$  be the mid point of  $BC$ .  $BM = MC = 1$ .

$$\triangle VBM \cong \triangle VCM \text{ (S.S.S.)}$$

$$\angle BMV = \angle CMV = 90^\circ \text{ (corr. } \angle\text{s } \cong \Delta\text{s, adj. } \angle\text{s on st. line)}$$

By definition,  $\angle VOM = 90^\circ$  ( $O$  is the projection of  $V$ )

$$\text{In } \triangle VBM, BM^2 + VM^2 = VB^2 \text{ (Pythagoras' theorem)}$$

$$\therefore VM = \sqrt{3}$$

$$\text{In } \triangle OBM, OM = BM \tan 54^\circ = \tan 54^\circ$$

$$\text{In } \triangle VOM, \cos \angle VMO = \frac{OM}{VM} = \frac{\tan 54^\circ}{\sqrt{3}}$$

$$\angle VMO = 37.4^\circ \text{ (correct to 3 sig. fig.)}$$

- Let  $N$  be the mid point of  $VB$ ,  $VN = NB = 1$ .

Join  $AN, NC, AC$ .

$$\triangle VAN \cong \triangle BAN \text{ (S.S.S.)}$$

$$\angle VNA = \angle BNA = 90^\circ \text{ (corr. } \angle\text{s } \cong \Delta\text{s, adj. } \angle\text{s on st. line)}$$

$$\triangle VCN \cong \triangle BCN \text{ (S.S.S.)}$$

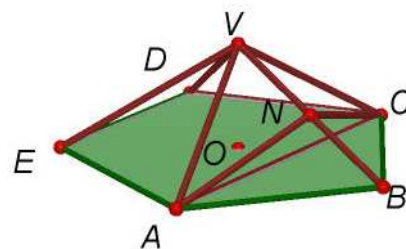
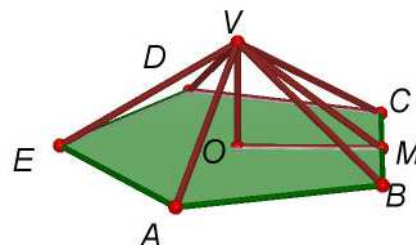
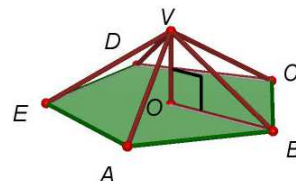
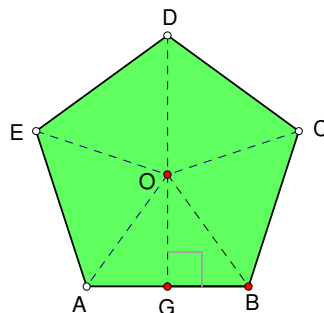
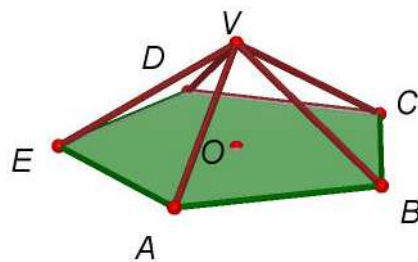
$$\angle VNC = \angle BNC = 90^\circ \text{ (corr. } \angle\text{s } \cong \Delta\text{s, adj. } \angle\text{s on st. line)}$$

$$\text{Similar to (b), } AN = \sqrt{3} = NC$$

$$\text{In } \triangle ABC, AC = 2 \times 2 \sin 54^\circ = 4 \sin 54^\circ$$

$$\text{In } \triangle ANC, \sin \frac{1}{2} \angle ANC = \frac{\frac{1}{2} AC}{AN} = \frac{2 \sin 54^\circ}{\sqrt{3}}$$

$$\angle ANC = 138^\circ \text{ (correct to 3 sig. fig.)}$$





(d) In  $\triangle VOC$ ,  $VO^2 = VC^2 - OC^2$  (Pythagoras' theorem)

$$VO = \sqrt{4 - \sec^2 54^\circ}$$

$$\text{Area of } \triangle ABC = \frac{1}{2} AB \times BC \sin 108^\circ = 2 \sin 108^\circ$$

Volume of the tetrahedron  $VABC$

$$= \frac{1}{3} \times \text{Area of } \triangle ABC \times VO$$

$$= \frac{1}{3} \times 2 \sin 108^\circ \times \sqrt{4 - \sec^2 54^\circ} \dots\dots (1)$$

Let  $F$  be the projection of  $C$  on the plane  $VAB$ .

$$\text{Area of } \triangle VAB = \frac{1}{2} 2 \times 2 \sin 60^\circ = \sqrt{3}$$

Volume of the tetrahedron  $VABC$

$$= \frac{1}{3} \times \text{Area of } \triangle VAB \times CF$$

$$= \frac{1}{3} \times \sqrt{3} \times CF \dots\dots (2)$$

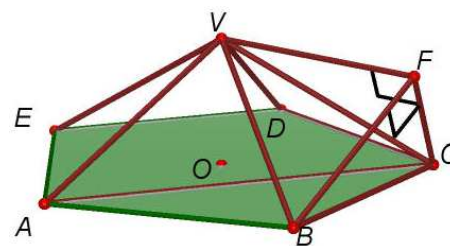
$$(1) = (2) \Rightarrow \frac{1}{3} \times 2 \sin 108^\circ \times \sqrt{4 - \sec^2 54^\circ} = \frac{1}{3} \times \sqrt{3} \times CF$$

$$CF = \frac{2 \sin 108^\circ \sqrt{4 - \sec^2 54^\circ}}{\sqrt{3}}$$

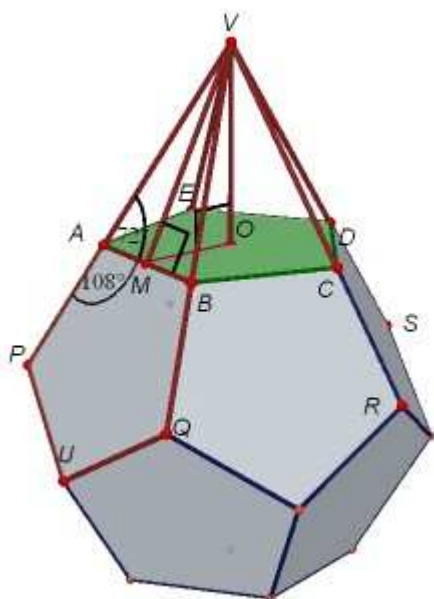
$$\text{In } \triangle BCF, \sin \angle CBF = \frac{CF}{BC} = \frac{\sin 108^\circ \sqrt{4 - \sec^2 54^\circ}}{\sqrt{3}}$$

$$\angle CBF = 35.2^\circ \text{ (correct to 3 sig. fig.)}$$

See the PowerPoint Example 7



**Example 8** The following figure shows a regular dodecahedron with side = 2 (units).  $ABCDE$  and  $ABQUP$  are two adjacent faces. Find the angle between these two adjacent faces.



$ABCDE$  and  $ABQUP$  are regular pentagons with sides = 2.

$\angle PAB = 108^\circ$  ( $\angle$ s sum of polygon)

Produce  $PA$ ,  $QB$  to meet at  $V$ . Join  $VC$ ,  $VD$ ,  $VE$ .

Then  $VABCDE$  is a right pentagonal pyramid with vertex  $V$  and a regular pentagonal base  $ABCDE$ .

$\angle VAB = 72^\circ = \angle VBA$  (adj.  $\angle$ s on st. line)

$\triangle VAB \cong \triangle VBC \cong \triangle VCD \cong \triangle VDE \cong \triangle VEA$  and  $VA = VB = VC = VD = VE$

Let  $O$  be the projection of  $V$  on the base  $ABCDE$ . Then  $O$  is the centre of  $ABCDE$ .

Let  $M$  be the mid-point of  $AB$ . Then  $\angle VMB = 90^\circ = \angle VOM = \angle AMO$  and  $AM = MB = 1$

In  $\triangle AOM$ ,  $\angle BAE = 108^\circ$ ,  $\angle OAM = 54^\circ$ ,  $OM = AM \tan \angle OAM = \tan 54^\circ$

In  $\triangle VAM$ ,  $VM = AM \tan \angle VAM = \tan 72^\circ$

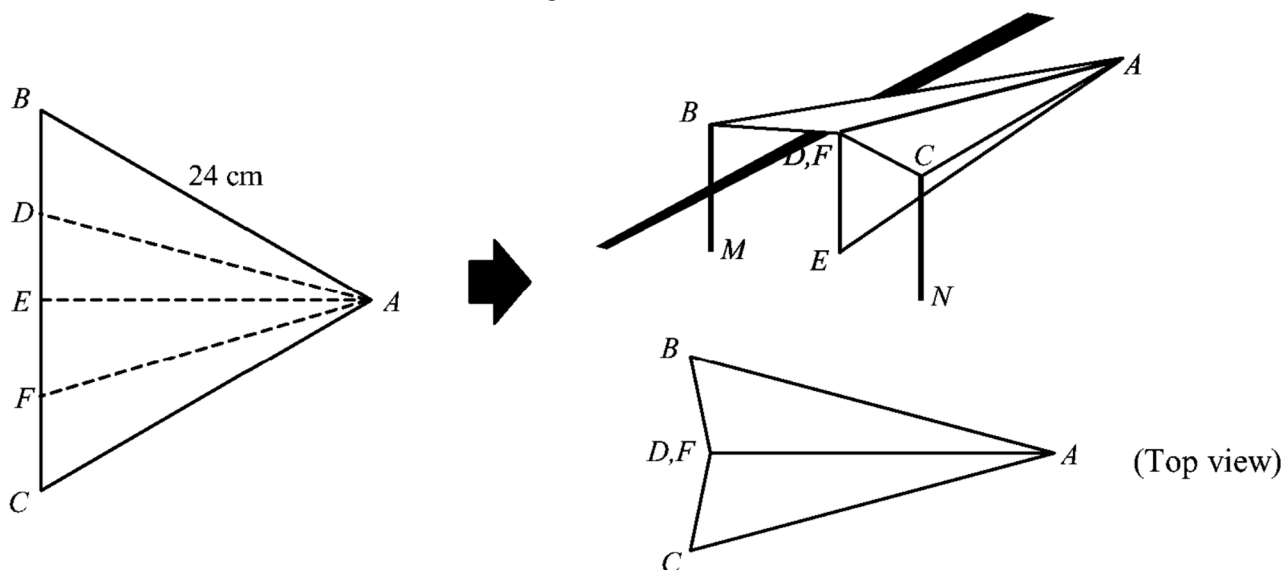
In  $\triangle VMO$ ,  $\cos \angle VMO = \frac{OM}{VM} = \frac{\tan 54^\circ}{\tan 72^\circ}$

$\angle VMO = 63.4^\circ$  (correct to 3 significant figures)

The angle between  $ABCDE$  and  $ABQUP$  is  $\angle OMU = 180^\circ - 63.4^\circ = 116.6^\circ$  (adj.  $\angle$ s on st. line)

**Example 9 Mathematics 1999 Q18**

In Figure 10, a paper card  $ABC$  in the shape of an equilateral triangle of side 24 cm is folded to form a paper aeroplane.  $D, E$  and  $F$  are points on edge  $BC$  so that  $BD = DE = EF = FC$ . The aeroplane is formed by folding the paper card along the lines  $AD, AE$  and  $AF$  so that  $AD$  and  $AF$  coincide. It is supported by two vertical sticks  $BM$  and  $CN$  of equal length so that  $A, B, D, F, C$  lie on the same plane and  $A, E, M, N$  lie on the same horizontal ground.



- (a) Find the distance between the tips,  $B$  and  $C$ , of the wings of the aeroplane.  
 (b) Find the inclination of the wings of the aeroplane to the horizontal ground.  
 (c) Find the length of the stick  $CN$ .

(a)  $BD = DE = EF = FC = 6$  cm

$\angle ADB = 60^\circ$  (property of equilateral  $\Delta$ )

$$AD^2 = [24^2 + 6^2 - 2(24)(6) \cos 60^\circ] \text{ cm}^2 = 468 \text{ cm}^2$$

$$AD = \sqrt{468} \text{ cm} = AF$$

$$\frac{\sin \angle BAD}{6} = \frac{\sin 60^\circ}{\sqrt{468}}$$

$$\angle BAD = 13.89788625^\circ = \angle CAF$$

$$BC \text{ of the aeroplane} = 2(24) \sin 13.89788625^\circ \text{ cm}$$

$$= 11.52922707 \text{ cm}$$

$$= 11.5 \text{ cm (correct to 3 significant figures)}$$

- (b) The inclination of the wings of the aeroplane to the horizontal ground  
 $= \angle DAE$  of the aeroplane  
 $= \angle BAE - \angle BAD$   
 $= 30^\circ - 13.89788625^\circ$   
 $= 16.10211375^\circ = 16.1^\circ$  (correct to 3 significant figures)

- (c) Let  $H$  be the mid-point of  $BC$  of the aeroplane.

Then  $AH \perp BC$ .

$$AH = AB \cos \angle BAD = 24 \cos 13.89788625^\circ \text{ cm}$$

$$= 23.297440824 \text{ cm}$$

Let  $K$  be the foot of perpendicular from  $H$  to the ground.

Then it is easy to show that  $\triangle ADE \sim \triangle AHK$ .

$$HK = AH \cos \angle DAE$$

$$= 23.297440824 \sin 16.10211375^\circ \text{ cm}$$

$$= 6.461538462 \text{ cm} = CN$$

$$CN = 6.46 \text{ cm (correct to 3 significant figures)}$$

**See Example9.cg3.**

**3D-problem (vector)**

**Example 10** Let  $O(0, 0, 0)$ ,  $A(1, 0, 0)$ ,  $B(x, y, 0)$  be three points on the  $x$ - $y$  plane, where  $x, y > 0$ .

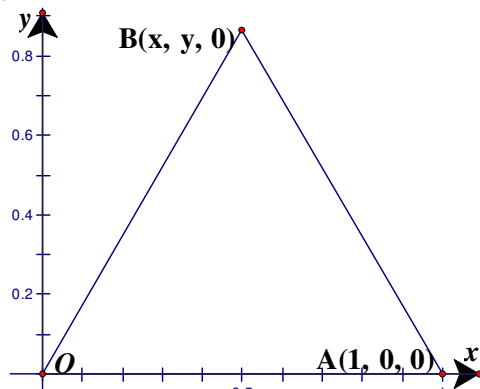
- (a) If  $OAB$  is an equilateral triangle, find the coordinates of  $B$ .  
 (b) If  $G$  is the centroid of  $\triangle OAB$ , find the coordinates of  $G$ .  
 (c) Let  $C(x', y', z')$  be a point such that  $z' > 0$ . If  $OABC$  is a regular tetrahedron, find the coordinates of  $C$ .  
 (d) Find the shortest distance between  $OA$  and  $BC$ .

(a)  $OA = 1 = OB$

$$\angle AOB = 60^\circ$$

$$B = (\cos 60^\circ, \sin 60^\circ, 0)$$

$$= \left( \frac{1}{2}, \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}, 0 \right)$$



(b)  $G = \left( \frac{0+1+\frac{1}{2}}{3}, \frac{0+0+\frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}}{3}, \frac{0+0+0}{3} \right) = \left( \frac{1}{2}, \frac{\sqrt{3}}{6}, 0 \right)$

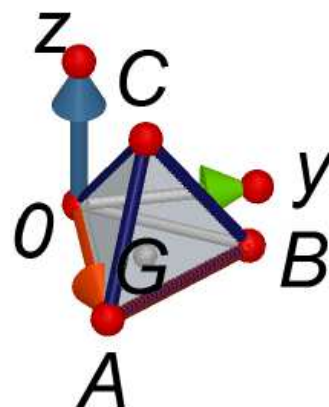
- (c)  $CG \perp x$ - $y$  plane

$$C = \left( \frac{1}{2}, \frac{\sqrt{3}}{6}, z' \right)$$

$$OC = 1 \Rightarrow \sqrt{\left( \frac{1}{2} \right)^2 + \left( \frac{\sqrt{3}}{6} \right)^2 + (z')^2} = 1$$

$$\frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{12} + z'^2 = 1 \Rightarrow z' = \sqrt{\frac{2}{3}}$$

$$C = \left( \frac{1}{2}, \frac{\sqrt{3}}{6}, \frac{\sqrt{6}}{3} \right)$$



- (d) Let  $M$  be the mid-point of  $OA$  and  $N$  be the mid-point of  $BC$ .

$$M = \left( \frac{1}{2}, 0, 0 \right), N = \left( \frac{\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2}}{2}, \frac{\frac{\sqrt{3}}{2} + \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}}{2}, \frac{0 + \frac{\sqrt{6}}{3}}{2} \right) = \left( \frac{1}{2}, \frac{\sqrt{3}}{3}, \frac{\sqrt{6}}{6} \right)$$

$$\overrightarrow{MN} = \overrightarrow{ON} - \overrightarrow{OM} = \frac{\sqrt{3}}{3} \mathbf{j} + \frac{\sqrt{6}}{6} \mathbf{k}; \quad \overrightarrow{BC} = \overrightarrow{OC} - \overrightarrow{OB} = -\frac{\sqrt{3}}{3} \mathbf{j} + \frac{\sqrt{6}}{3} \mathbf{k}$$

$$\overrightarrow{OA} \cdot \overrightarrow{MN} = \mathbf{i} \cdot \left( \frac{\sqrt{3}}{3} \mathbf{j} + \frac{\sqrt{6}}{6} \mathbf{k} \right) = 0$$

$$\overrightarrow{MN} \cdot \overrightarrow{BC} = \left( \frac{\sqrt{3}}{3} \mathbf{j} + \frac{\sqrt{6}}{6} \mathbf{k} \right) \cdot \left( -\frac{\sqrt{3}}{3} \mathbf{j} + \frac{\sqrt{6}}{3} \mathbf{k} \right) = -\frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{3} = 0$$

$\therefore MN \perp OA$  and  $MN \perp BC$

$$MN = \sqrt{\left( \frac{\sqrt{3}}{3} \right)^2 + \left( \frac{\sqrt{6}}{6} \right)^2} = \sqrt{\frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{6}} = \sqrt{\frac{1}{2}}$$

The shortest distance between  $OA$  and  $BC$  is  $\frac{\sqrt{2}}{2}$ .

Q2 (M2 PP Q12 modified)

$O(0, 0, 0)$ ,  $A(1, 0, 0)$ ,  $B(0, 1, 0)$ ,  $C(1, 1, 1)$ . Find the shortest distance between  $AB$  and  $OC$ .

$$\overrightarrow{OA} = \mathbf{i}, \quad \overrightarrow{AB} = \overrightarrow{OB} - \overrightarrow{OA} = -\mathbf{i} + \mathbf{j}$$

$$\overrightarrow{OC} \times \overrightarrow{AB} = \begin{vmatrix} \mathbf{i} & \mathbf{j} & \mathbf{k} \\ 1 & 1 & 1 \\ -1 & 1 & 0 \end{vmatrix} = -\mathbf{i} - \mathbf{j} + 2\mathbf{k} = \text{normal vector perpendicular to } OC \text{ and } AB$$

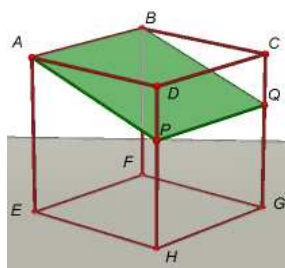
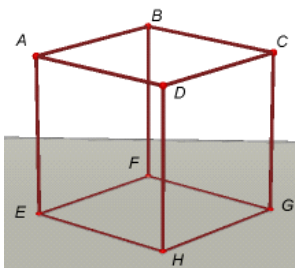
Let the angle between  $OA$  and  $\overrightarrow{OC} \times \overrightarrow{AB}$  be  $\theta$ .

Then the projection of  $OA$  on  $\overrightarrow{OC} \times \overrightarrow{AB}$  is

$$\begin{aligned} OA \cos \theta &= \frac{|\overrightarrow{OA} \cdot (\overrightarrow{OC} \times \overrightarrow{AB})|}{|\overrightarrow{OC} \times \overrightarrow{AB}|} \\ &= \frac{|\mathbf{i} \cdot (-\mathbf{i} - \mathbf{j} + 2\mathbf{k})|}{\sqrt{(-1)^2 + 1^2 + 2^2}} \\ &= \frac{1}{\sqrt{6}} = \frac{\sqrt{6}}{6} \end{aligned}$$

$\therefore$  The shortest distance between  $AB$  and  $OC$  is  $\frac{\sqrt{6}}{6}$ .

In the figure,  $ABCDHGFE$  is a rectangular cuboid lying on a horizontal ground.



$P, Q$  are points lying on the edges  $DH$  and  $CG$  respectively such that  $DP = CQ$ .

Let the angle between the inclined plane  $APQB$  and the base  $EFGH$  be  $\theta$ .

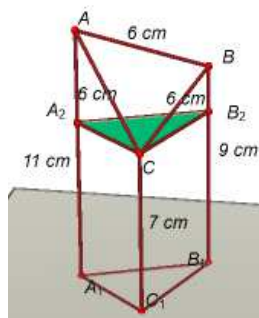
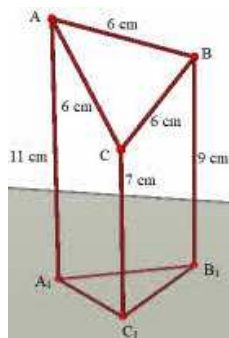
Then  $\theta = \angle PAD$ .

$$\cos \theta = \frac{AD}{AP} = \frac{AD \times AB}{AP \times AB} = \frac{\text{Area of } ABCD}{\text{Area of } APQB} = \frac{\text{Area of shadow}}{\text{Area of object}}$$

### Example 11

An equilateral triangle of sides 6 cm has its vertices at heights 7 cm, 9 cm, 11 cm above a horizontal plane. Find the dimensions of the projection of the triangle on the horizontal and the inclination of the equilateral triangle to the horizontal.

Solution.



Assume the equilateral triangle is  $ABC$  and its projection is  $A_1B_1C_1$ .

By Pythagoras' theorem, the dimensions of the projection of  $ABC$  are

$$A_1B_1 = \sqrt{6^2 - 2^2} = \sqrt{32}$$

$$A_1C_1 = \sqrt{6^2 - 4^2} = \sqrt{20}$$

$$B_1C_1 = \sqrt{6^2 - (4-2)^2} = \sqrt{32}$$

By Heron's formula, area of  $A_1B_1C_1 = \sqrt{s(s-a)(s-b)(s-c)}$

$$s = \frac{\sqrt{32} + \sqrt{20} + \sqrt{32}}{2} = 7.89$$

$$s - a = s - c = \sqrt{5}$$

$$s - b = 3.42$$

$$\text{Area of } A_1B_1C_1 = \sqrt{135}$$

$$\text{By direct calculation, area of } ABC = \frac{1}{2} \cdot 6^2 \cdot \sin 60^\circ = 9\sqrt{3}$$

If  $\theta$  is the inclination of  $ABC$ ,

$$\cos \theta = \frac{\sqrt{135}}{9\sqrt{3}} = \frac{\sqrt{5}}{3}$$

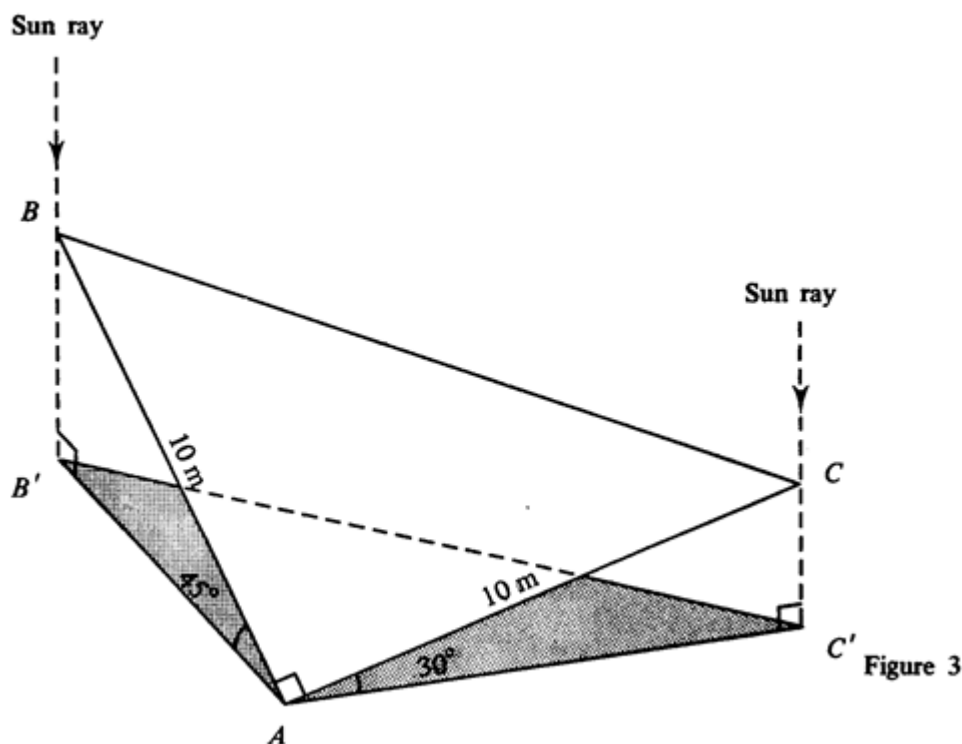
$$\theta = 41.8^\circ$$

**Example 12 3D Mathematics 1989**

Answers in this question should be given correct to at least 3 significant figures or in surd form.

In figure 3, a triangular board  $ABC$ , right-angled at  $A$  with  $AB = AC = 10$  m, is placed with the vertex  $A$  on the horizontal ground.  $AB$  and  $AC$  make angles  $45^\circ$  and  $30^\circ$  with the horizontal respectively. The sun casts a shadow  $AB'C'$  of the board on the ground such that  $B'$  and  $C'$  are vertically below  $B$  and  $C$  respectively.

- Find the length of  $AB'$  and  $AC'$ .
- Find the lengths of  $BC$ ,  $BB'$  and  $CC'$ .
- Using the results of (b), or otherwise, find the length of  $B'C'$ .
- Find  $\angle B'AC'$ . Hence find the area of the shadow.



- $AB' = AB \cos 45^\circ = 10 \cos 45^\circ \text{ m} = 5\sqrt{2} \text{ m}$   
 $AC' = AC \cos 30^\circ = 10 \cos 30^\circ \text{ m} = 5\sqrt{3} \text{ m}$
- $BC^2 = AB^2 + AC^2 = 10^2 + 10^2$  (Pythagoras' theorem)  
 $BC = 10\sqrt{2} \text{ m}$   
 $BB' = AB \sin 45^\circ = 10 \sin 45^\circ \text{ m} = 5\sqrt{2} \text{ m}$   
 $CC' = AC \sin 30^\circ = 10 \sin 30^\circ \text{ m} = 5 \text{ m}$
- Let  $D$  be the foot of perpendicular from  $C$  to  $BB'$ .  
 $BD = (5\sqrt{2} - 5) \text{ m}$

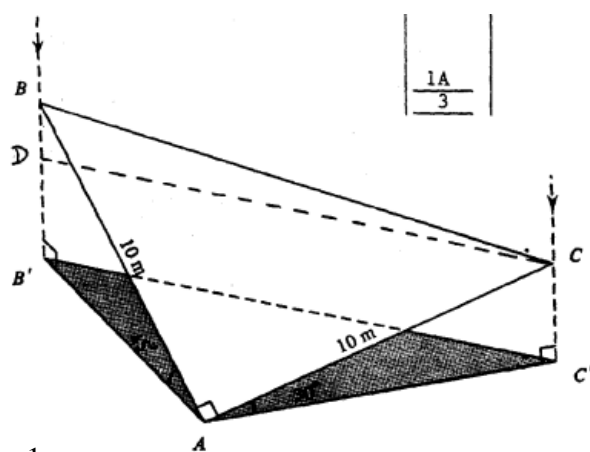
$$B'C' = CD = \sqrt{(10\sqrt{2})^2 - (5\sqrt{2} - 5)^2} \text{ m}$$

$$= \sqrt{125 + 50\sqrt{2}} \text{ m} = 13.9897 \text{ m}$$

- By cosine rule,  $\cos \angle B'AC' = \frac{50 + 75 - (125 + 50\sqrt{2})}{2 \times 5\sqrt{2} \times 5\sqrt{3}} = -\frac{1}{\sqrt{3}}$

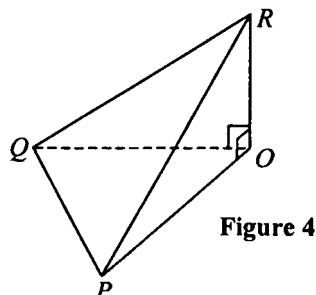
$$\angle B'AC' = 125.264^\circ$$

$$\text{Area of the shadow} = \frac{1}{2} \cdot (5\sqrt{2}) \cdot (5\sqrt{3}) \sin 125.264^\circ = 25 \text{ m}^2$$

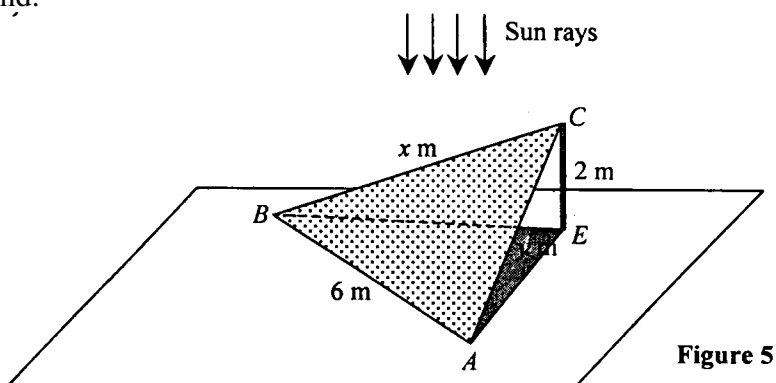


**Example 13 AM 2003 Q18**

18. (a) Figure 4 shows a tetrahedron  $OPQR$  with  $RO$  perpendicular to the plane  $OPQ$ . Let  $\theta$  be the angle between the planes  $RPQ$  and  $OPQ$ . Show that  $\frac{\text{Area of } \triangle OPQ}{\text{Area of } \triangle RPQ} = \cos \theta$

**Figure 4**

- (b) In figure 5, a pole of length 2 m is erected vertically at a point  $E$  on the horizontal ground. A triangular board  $ABC$  of area  $12 \text{ m}^2$  is supported by the pole such that side  $AB$  touches the ground and vertex  $C$  is fastened to the top of the pole.  $AB = 6 \text{ m}$ ,  $BC = x \text{ m}$  and  $CA = y \text{ m}$ , where  $6 > x > y$ . The sun rays are vertical and cast a shadow of the board on the ground.

**Figure 5**

- (i) Find the area of the shadow.  
 (ii) Two other ways of supporting the board with the pole are to fasten vertex  $A$  or  $B$  to the top of the pole with the opposite touching the ground. Among these three ways, determine which one will give the largest shadow.
- (a) Let  $M$  be the point on  $QP$  such that  $MR \perp QP$  and  $MO \perp QP$ .

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\text{Area of } \triangle OPQ}{\text{Area of } \triangle RPQ} &= \frac{\frac{1}{2} QP \times MR}{\frac{1}{2} QP \times MO} \\ &= \frac{MR}{MO} = \cos \theta \end{aligned}$$

- (b) (i) Let  $M$  be the point on  $AB$  such that  $CM \perp AB$  and  $EM \perp AB$ .  
 Area of  $\triangle ABC = 12 \text{ m}^2$

$$\frac{1}{2} \times 6 \times CM = 12$$

$$CM = 4$$

$$ME^2 + 2^2 = 4^2$$

$$ME = 2\sqrt{3}$$

$$\text{Area of } \triangle ABE = \frac{1}{2} \times 6 \times 2\sqrt{3} = 6\sqrt{3} \text{ m}^2$$



(ii) Let  $N$  be the point on  $BC$  such that  $AN \perp BC$ .

Let  $L$  be the point on  $AC$  such that  $BL \perp AC$ .

Area of  $\triangle ABC = 12 \text{ m}^2$

$$\Rightarrow \frac{1}{2} \times x \times AN = \frac{1}{2} \times y \times BL = 12$$

$$AN = \frac{24}{x}, BL = \frac{24}{y}; CM = 4$$

$$6 > x > y \Rightarrow \frac{24}{6} < \frac{24}{x} < \frac{24}{y}$$

$$\Rightarrow CM < AN < BL$$

If the pole is to fasten vertex  $A$ , let the inclination be  $\alpha$ .

If the pole is to fasten vertex  $B$ , let the inclination be  $\beta$ .

$$\sin \theta = \frac{2}{CM}; \sin \alpha = \frac{2}{AN}; \sin \beta = \frac{2}{BL}$$

$$CM < AN < BL \Rightarrow \sin \beta < \sin \alpha < \sin \theta \Rightarrow \beta < \alpha < \theta$$

$$\cos \beta > \cos \alpha > \cos \theta$$

Area of shadow will be largest when the pole is to fasten vertex  $B$ .

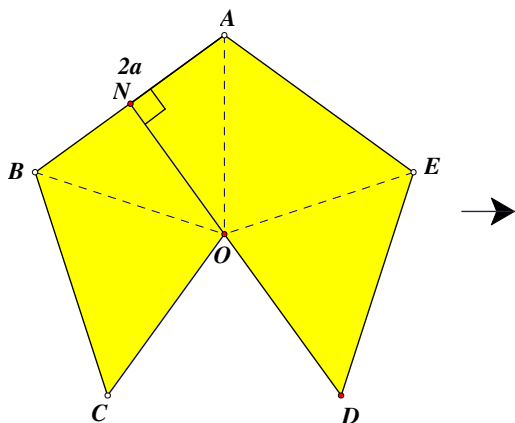
**Example 14**

Figure A

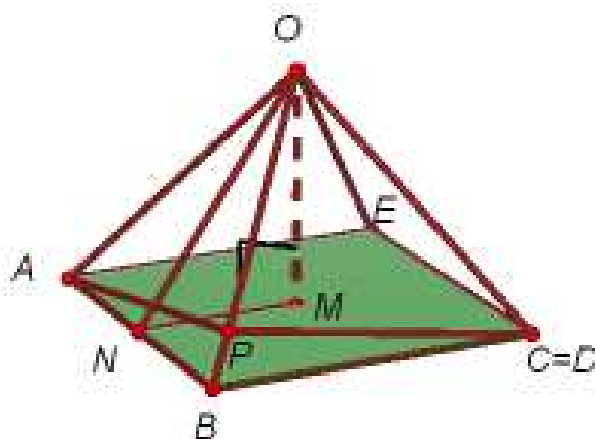


Figure B

In Figure A,  $ABCDE$  is a regular pentagon with length of a side  $= 2a$ .  $O$  is the centre of the pentagon.  $\triangle OCD$  is cut off from the pentagon. The remaining hexagon is folded along  $OB$ ,  $OA$  and  $OE$ . A right pyramid with square base is formed by sticking  $OC$  and  $OD$  together in Figure B.

$M$  is the centre of the squared base  $ABCE$  of the pyramid in Figure B.  $N$  is the mid-point of  $AB$ .

- Find  $OA$  and  $ON$ .
- Find  $OM$ .
- Find the volume of the pyramid.
- Find the angle between the faces  $OAB$  and  $OBC$  in Figure B.

- $\angle BAO = \angle ABC = 108^\circ$  ( $\angle$  sum of polygon)

$$OA = OB = OC = OD = OE$$

$$\angle OAB = \angle OBA = 54^\circ$$

$$AN = NB = a$$

$$\triangle OAB \cong \triangle OBN \text{ (S.A.S.)}$$

$$\text{In } \triangle OAN, OA = a \sec 54^\circ$$

$$ON = a \tan 54^\circ$$

- In Figure B,  $BC = 2a$ ,  $NM = a$

$$\text{In } \triangle OMN, OM^2 + NM^2 = ON^2 \text{ (Pythagoras' theorem)}$$

$$OM^2 = (a \tan 54^\circ)^2 - a^2 = a^2(\tan^2 54^\circ - 1)$$

$$OM = a\sqrt{\tan^2 54^\circ - 1}$$

$$\text{Let } \beta = 54^\circ, \text{ then } 5\beta = 270^\circ, 3\beta = 270^\circ - 2\beta, \text{ let } \tan \beta = t$$

$$\tan 3\beta = \tan(270^\circ - 2\beta) = \cot 2\beta$$

$$\frac{3t - t^3}{1 - 3t^2} = \frac{1 - t^2}{2t}$$

$$6t^2 - 2t^4 = 1 - t^2 - 3t^2 + 3t^4$$

$$5t^4 - 10t^2 + 1 = 0$$

$$t^2 = \frac{5 + \sqrt{20}}{5} = \frac{5 + 2\sqrt{5}}{5} \quad \text{or} \quad \frac{5 - \sqrt{20}}{5} = \frac{5 - 2\sqrt{5}}{5}$$

$$\tan 54^\circ > \tan 45^\circ = 1$$

$$t^2 = \frac{5 + 2\sqrt{5}}{5} \quad \text{only}$$

$$OM = a\sqrt{\frac{5 + 2\sqrt{5}}{5} - 1} = a\sqrt{\frac{2}{\sqrt{5}}}$$

- Volume of the pyramid  $= \frac{1}{3}(2a)^2 a \sqrt{\frac{2}{\sqrt{5}}} = \frac{4a^3}{3} \sqrt{\frac{2}{\sqrt{5}}}$

- (d) Let  $P$  be a point on  $OB$  (in Figure B) such that  $AP \perp OB$  and  $CP \perp OB$ .

$$AC = \sqrt{2}AB = 2\sqrt{2}a \quad (\text{in Figure B})$$

$$\text{In } \triangle ABP, \angle OBA = 54^\circ$$

$$AP = 2a \sin 54^\circ$$

angle between the faces  $OAB$  and  $OBC = \angle APC$  (in Figure B)

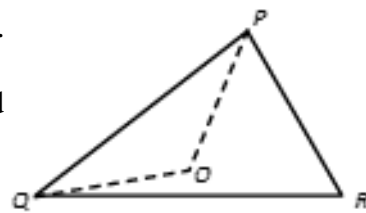
$$\begin{aligned} \cos \angle APC &= \frac{AP^2 + CP^2 - AC^2}{2AP \cdot CP} \\ &= \frac{(2a \sin 54^\circ)^2 + (2a \sin 54^\circ)^2 - (2\sqrt{2}a)^2}{2(2a \sin 54^\circ)} \\ &= \frac{2(\sin 54^\circ)^2 - (\sqrt{2})^2}{2(\sin 54^\circ)^2} \\ &= \frac{(\sin 54^\circ)^2 - 1}{(\sin 54^\circ)^2} \\ &= \frac{-\cos^2 54^\circ}{\sin^2 54^\circ} \\ &= -\cot^2 54^\circ \\ \angle APC &= 121.86^\circ \end{aligned}$$

**Example 15** (CLSMSS 2020-21 S.6 Mock Exam. Paper 1 Q19)

- (a) The figure shows a triangle  $PQR$ .  $O$  is the circumcentre of  $\triangle PQR$ . Let  $M$  be the mid-point of  $PQ$ .

(i) By expressing  $\angle POQ$ , express  $OP$  in terms of  $PQ$  and  $\angle PRQ$ .

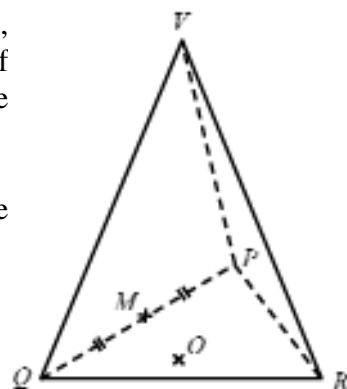
(ii) Let  $A$  be the area of  $\triangle PQR$ . Show that  $OP = \frac{PQ \cdot QR \cdot RP}{4A}$ .



- (b)  $VPQR$  is a tetrahedron with  $\triangle PQR$  described in (a) as the base, where  $PQ = 7$  cm,  $QR = 8$  cm and  $RP = 5$  cm.  $O$  is the foot of perpendicular from  $V$  to the plane  $PQR$  and the volume of the tetrahedron  $VPQR$  is  $80 \text{ cm}^3$ .

(i) Find  $VP$ .

(ii) By finding  $VM$ , or otherwise, evaluate the angle between the side  $QR$  and the plane  $VPQ$ .



- (a) (i) Construct the circumscribed circle  $PQR$ . Join  $OM$ .

$$\triangle POM \cong \triangle QOM \quad (\text{S.S.S.})$$

$$\angle POM = \angle QOM \quad (\text{corr. } \angle\text{s, } \cong \Delta\text{s})$$

$$\angle PRQ = \frac{1}{2} \angle POQ \quad (\angle \text{ at centre twice } \angle \text{ at } \odot^{\text{ce}})$$

$$= \angle POM$$

$OM \perp PQ$  (line joining centre to mid-point of chord  $\perp$  chord)

$$\text{In } \triangle POM, \sin \angle POM = \frac{PM}{OP}$$

$$\therefore \sin \angle PRQ = \frac{\frac{1}{2} PQ}{OP}$$

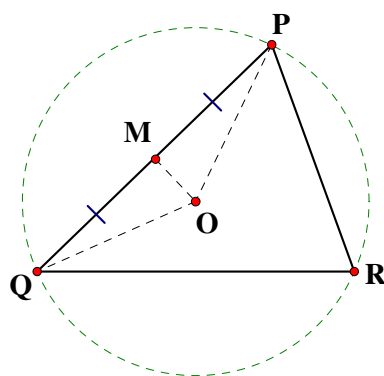
$$OP = \frac{PQ}{2 \sin \angle PRQ}$$

$$(ii) \sin \angle PRQ = \frac{PQ}{2OP} \quad \dots (*)$$

$$A = \frac{1}{2} RP \cdot QR \sin \angle PRQ$$

$$= \frac{1}{2} RP \cdot QR \cdot \frac{PQ}{2OP} \quad \text{by } (*)$$

$$\therefore OP = \frac{PQ \cdot QR \cdot RP}{4A}.$$



- (b) (i) First, we find the area of  $\triangle PQR$  by Heron's formula.

$$s = \frac{1}{2}(5 + 7 + 8) = 10 \text{ cm}$$

$$A = \sqrt{10(10-5)(10-7)(10-8)} = 10\sqrt{3} \text{ cm}^2$$

$$\text{Volume of the tetrahedron} = \frac{1}{3} A \cdot VO = 80 \text{ cm}^3$$

$$\frac{1}{3} \cdot 10\sqrt{3} \cdot VO = 80 \Rightarrow VO = 8\sqrt{3} \text{ cm}$$

$$\text{By (a)(ii), } OP = \frac{PQ \cdot QR \cdot RP}{4A} = \frac{5 \cdot 7 \cdot 8}{4(10\sqrt{3})} = \frac{7}{\sqrt{3}} \text{ cm}$$

In  $\triangle VOP$ ,  $VO^2 + OP^2 = VP^2$  (Pythagoras' theorem)

$$VP = \sqrt{(8\sqrt{3})^2 + \left(\frac{7}{\sqrt{3}}\right)^2} = \sqrt{\frac{625}{3}} = \frac{25\sqrt{3}}{3} \text{ cm}$$

- (ii)  $OP = OQ$  (radii of the circumscribed circle)  
 $VO = VO$  (common side)  
 $\angle VOP = \angle VOQ = 90^\circ$  (given)  
 $\triangle VOP \cong \triangle VOQ$  (S.A.S.)  
 $VP = VQ$  (corr. sides,  $\cong \Delta$ s)  
 $VM = VM$  (common sides)  
 $PM = MQ$  (given that  $M$  is the mid-point of  $PQ$ )  
 $\triangle VMP \cong \triangle VMQ$  (S.S.S.)  
 $\angle VMP = \angle VMQ$  (corr.  $\angle$ s,  $\cong \Delta$ s)  
 $\angle VMP + \angle VMQ = 180^\circ$  (adj.  $\angle$ s on st. line)  
 $\therefore \angle VMP = 90^\circ$

In  $\triangle VMP$ ,  $VM^2 + MP^2 = VP^2$  (Pythagoras' theorem)

$$VM = \sqrt{\frac{625}{3} - \left(\frac{7}{2}\right)^2} = \sqrt{\frac{2353}{12}}$$

$$\sin \angle VPM = \frac{VM}{VP} = \sqrt{\frac{2353}{12}} \div \sqrt{\frac{625}{3}} = \frac{\sqrt{2353}}{50}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Area of } \triangle VPQ &= \frac{1}{2} \cdot VP \cdot PQ \cdot \sin \angle VPQ \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \cdot \frac{25}{\sqrt{3}} \cdot 7 \cdot \frac{\sqrt{2353}}{50} = \frac{7\sqrt{2353}}{4\sqrt{3}} \end{aligned}$$

Let the perpendicular distance from  $R$  to the plane  $VPQ$  be  $h$  cm. Then

$$\text{Volume of the tetrahedron } VPQR = \frac{1}{3} \cdot \text{Area of } \triangle VPQ \cdot h = 80$$

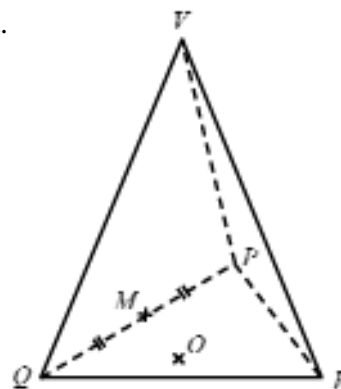
$$\frac{1}{3} \cdot \frac{7\sqrt{2353}}{4\sqrt{3}} \cdot h = 80$$

$$h = \frac{960\sqrt{3}}{7\sqrt{2353}}$$

The angle between  $QR$  and the plane  $VPQ$  is  $\theta$ .

$$\sin \theta = \frac{h}{QR} = \frac{960\sqrt{3}}{7\sqrt{2353}} \div 8 = \frac{120\sqrt{3}}{7\sqrt{2353}} = 0.612114785$$

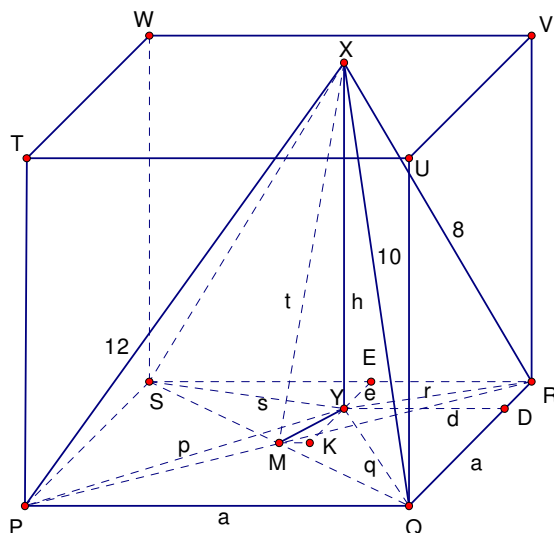
$$\theta = 37.74257329^\circ \approx 37.7^\circ \text{ (correct to 3 significant figures)}$$



**Example 14 Canadian Mathematics Competition 2015 Cayley Contest (Grade 10) Q25**

Rectangular prism  $PQSWTUV$  has a square base  $PQRS$ . Point  $X$  is on the face  $TUVW$  so that  $PX = 12$ ,  $QX = 10$  and  $RX = 8$ . The maximum possible area of rectangle  $PQUT$  is closest to

- (A) 67.84 (B) 67.82 (C) 67.90  
(D) 67.86 (E) 67.88



Suppose the diagonals  $PR$  and  $QS$  intersect at  $M$ . Let  $PQ = QR = RS = SP = a$ .

Then  $PR = QS = \sqrt{2}a$

$M$  is the centre of the square.

$$PM = MR = QM = MS = \frac{\sqrt{2}a}{2} \quad (\text{diagonals of a square})$$

Let the projection of  $X$  on the plane  $PQRS$  be  $Y$ . ( $Y$  lies inside  $\triangle SMR$ )

$XY$  is the height of the prism. Then  $XY$  is perpendicular to the plane  $PQRS$ .

Let  $PY = p$ ,  $QY = q$ ,  $RY = r$ ,  $SY = s$ ,  $XY = h$ .

Let  $\angle PMX = \theta$ ,  $\angle SMX = \alpha$ ,  $XM = t$ .

$$\text{Apply cosine rule on } \triangle PXM, 12^2 = \left(\frac{\sqrt{2}a}{2}\right)^2 + t^2 - 2 \cdot \frac{\sqrt{2}}{2}at \cos \theta \quad \dots\dots (1)$$

$\angle RMX = 180^\circ - \theta$  (adj.  $\angle$ s on st. line)

$$\text{Apply cosine rule on } \triangle RXM, 8^2 = \left(\frac{\sqrt{2}a}{2}\right)^2 + t^2 - 2 \cdot \frac{\sqrt{2}}{2}at \cos(180^\circ - \theta) \quad \dots\dots (2)$$

Using the fact that  $\cos(180^\circ - \theta) = -\cos \theta$

$$(1) + (2): 208 = a^2 + 2t^2 \quad \dots\dots (3)$$

$$a^2 - 2\sqrt{2}at + 2t^2 + 2\sqrt{2}at = 208$$

$$(a - \sqrt{2}t)^2 + 2\sqrt{2}at = 208$$

$$2\sqrt{2}at = 208 - (a - \sqrt{2}t)^2$$

$$2\sqrt{2}at \leq 208$$

$$a^2 t^2 \leq \left(\frac{104}{\sqrt{2}}\right)^2 = 5408 \quad \dots\dots (*)$$

$$\text{Apply cosine rule on } \triangle SXM, SX^2 = \left(\frac{\sqrt{2}a}{2}\right)^2 + t^2 - 2 \cdot \frac{\sqrt{2}}{2}at \cos \alpha \quad \dots\dots (4)$$

$\angle QMX = 180^\circ - \alpha$  (adj.  $\angle$ s on st. line)

$$\text{Apply cosine rule on } \triangle QXM, 10^2 = \left(\frac{\sqrt{2}a}{2}\right)^2 + t^2 - 2 \cdot \frac{\sqrt{2}}{2}at \cos(180^\circ - \alpha) \quad \dots\dots (5)$$

Using the fact that  $\cos(180^\circ - \alpha) = -\cos \alpha$

$$(4) + (5): SX^2 + 100 = a^2 + 2t^2 \dots\dots (6)$$

$$(3) = (6): SX^2 + 100 = 208 = a^2 + 2t^2$$

$$\therefore SX = \sqrt{108} \dots\dots (7)$$

Apply Pythagoras' theorem on  $\triangle PXY$ ,  $\triangle QXY$ ,  $\triangle RXY$ ,  $\triangle SXY$

$$p^2 = 144 - h^2 \dots\dots (8)$$

$$q^2 = 100 - h^2 \dots\dots (9)$$

$$r^2 = 64 - h^2 \dots\dots (10)$$

$$s^2 = 108 - h^2 \dots\dots (11)$$

Draw  $YD \parallel SR$ , cutting  $QR$  at  $D$ . Let  $YD = d$ .

Draw  $YE \parallel QR$ , cutting  $SR$  at  $E$ . Let  $YE = e$ .

Draw  $MK \parallel SR$ , cutting  $EY$  produced at  $K$ .

Then  $\angle MKY = 90^\circ$

$$MK + YD = \frac{a}{2}; KY + YE = \frac{a}{2} \quad (\because M \text{ is the centre of the square } PQRS)$$

$$\therefore MK = \frac{a}{2} - d \dots\dots (12); KY = \frac{a}{2} - e \dots\dots (13)$$

$$\text{In } \triangle YRD, d^2 + e^2 = r^2 \dots\dots (14) \text{ (Pythagoras' theorem)}$$

$$\text{Sub. (10) into (14), } d^2 + e^2 = 64 - h^2 \dots\dots (15)$$

$$\text{In } \triangle YSE, (a - d)^2 + e^2 = s^2 \dots\dots (16) \text{ (Pythagoras' theorem)}$$

$$\text{Sub. (11) into (16), } (a - d)^2 + e^2 = 108 - h^2 \dots\dots (17)$$

$$\text{In } \triangle YQD, (a - e)^2 + d^2 = q^2 \dots\dots (18) \text{ (Pythagoras' theorem)}$$

$$\text{Sub. (9) into (18), } (a - e)^2 + d^2 = 100 - h^2 \dots\dots (19)$$

$$(17) - (15): a^2 - 2ad = 44$$

$$\Rightarrow a - 2d = \frac{44}{a} \dots\dots (20)$$

$$(19) - (15): a^2 - 2ae = 36$$

$$\Rightarrow a - 2e = \frac{36}{a} \dots\dots (21)$$

$$\text{In } \triangle MKY, MY^2 = MK^2 + KY^2 \dots\dots (22) \text{ (Pythagoras' theorem)}$$

$$\text{Sub. (12), (13) into (22): } MY^2 = \left(\frac{a}{2} - d\right)^2 + \left(\frac{a}{2} - e\right)^2 = \frac{1}{4}[(a - 2d)^2 + (a - 2e)^2] \dots\dots (23)$$

$$\text{Sub. (20), (21) into (23): } MY^2 = \frac{1}{4}\left[\left(\frac{44}{a}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{36}{a}\right)^2\right] = \frac{808}{a^2} \dots\dots (24)$$

$$\text{In } \triangle MXY, XY^2 = XM^2 - MY^2 \dots\dots (25) \text{ (Pythagoras' theorem)}$$

$$\text{Sub. (24) into (25): } XY^2 = h^2 = t^2 - \frac{808}{a^2}$$

$$\Rightarrow a^2 h^2 = a^2 t^2 - 808 \dots\dots (26)$$

$$\text{The area of rectangle } PQUT = PQ \times PT = ah = \sqrt{(at)^2 - 808} \text{ by (26)}$$

$$\leq \sqrt{5408 - 808} \text{ by (*)}$$

$$= \sqrt{4600} = 10\sqrt{46} \approx 67.82 \text{ (correct to 2 decimal places)}$$

Answer (B).