

RECITATION QUESTIONS – APRIL 1

1. Consider an electric automobile (such as a Tesla Model 3) of mass m whose fully-charged battery has electric potential energy U when it is fully charged. The car's electric motor can convert this energy to kinetic energy with a maximum power P_e .

Recall that if a force \vec{F} acts on an object moving with velocity \vec{v} , that force does work on the object with a power $P = \vec{F} \cdot \vec{v}$.

- (a) First, let's determine the maximum speed this car can sustain on flat ground.

At high speeds, the most significant force slowing the car down is air drag. This has the form $F_{\text{drag}} = \gamma v^2$.

If the driver of this car wants to drive at a speed v , find the rate that air drag does work (that is, the power) on the car. Is this power positive or negative?

- (b) In order to sustain this speed, the car's motor must do positive work on the car at the same rate. If the engine's maximum power is P_e , find the top speed of this car in terms of γ and P_e .

(c) For a Tesla Model 3, the values are approximately:

- $P_e = 200$ kW
- $U = 270$ MJ (2.7×10^8 J)
- $\gamma = 0.8$ kg/m

Based on these values, estimate the top speed of a Model 3. (At this high speed, air drag is the dominant force slowing the car down.) Convert your value into km/hr or miles per hour; is it reasonable?

(d) How far could a Model 3 drive at this speed before its battery is depleted?

(e) Suppose that the driver only went half as fast. How many times further could the driver travel on a charge? (*Hint: Look back at your result for (a). You should be able to figure this out without much math.*)

2. Suppose that a block of mass m is resting against a spring of spring constant k right before the base of a ramp elevated at an angle θ above the horizontal. The coefficient of kinetic friction between the block and the ramp is μ . The spring is compressed by an amount d .

When the spring is released, it propels the block up the ramp. (There is no friction until the block reaches the ramp; this will simplify your algebra.) It slides up the ramp a distance L , then slides back down and compresses the spring again by a maximum amount b . (You know m , k , μ , θ , and d ; you don't know L or b , but will find them later.)

- (a) Will b (the distance it compresses the spring when it comes back down) be larger than, the same as, or smaller than d (the distance the spring was compressed in the beginning)? You should be able to make a logical argument here without doing any mathematics.

(b) Determine L , the distance the block travels up the ramp, in terms of k , m , d , μ , g , and θ .

(c) Determine b , the distance the block compresses the spring when it comes back down. Since you have found a formula for L previously, you may use L in your answer here. (This is to save you writing, since substituting in for it is not all that enlightening.)