AQA GCSE Chemistry | 8462

SPECIFICATION POINT 4.10.4.2

Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Past-paper questions

Tier	**Higher**
Question groups	**11**
Available paper years	**2008–2025**

Using this booklet

1. Answer the questions in order and show your working.
2. Original question numbers and marks are retained.
3. Print at actual size (100%) for measuring questions.
4. Use the companion answer booklet to check your work.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Whole questions are retained for context, so some parts assess other specification points. Current and legacy sources are labelled. Continue on extra paper if needed.

4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 01

January 2008 | CHY2H | Original Q3 | Legacy

3 (a) A chemist was asked to identify a nitrogen compound. The chemist carried out an experiment to find the relative formula mass (M_r) of the compound.

The M_r of the compound was **44**.

Relative atomic masses: N = 14, O = 16

Draw a ring around the formula of the compound.

NO **NO_2** **N_2O_4** **N_2O**

(1 mark)

(b) Potassium nitrate is another nitrogen compound. It is used in fertilisers.
It has the formula **KNO_3**.

The M_r of potassium nitrate is **101**.

Calculate the percentage of **nitrogen** by mass in potassium nitrate.

Relative atomic mass: N = 14.

.....

.....

Percentage of nitrogen = ... %

(2 marks)

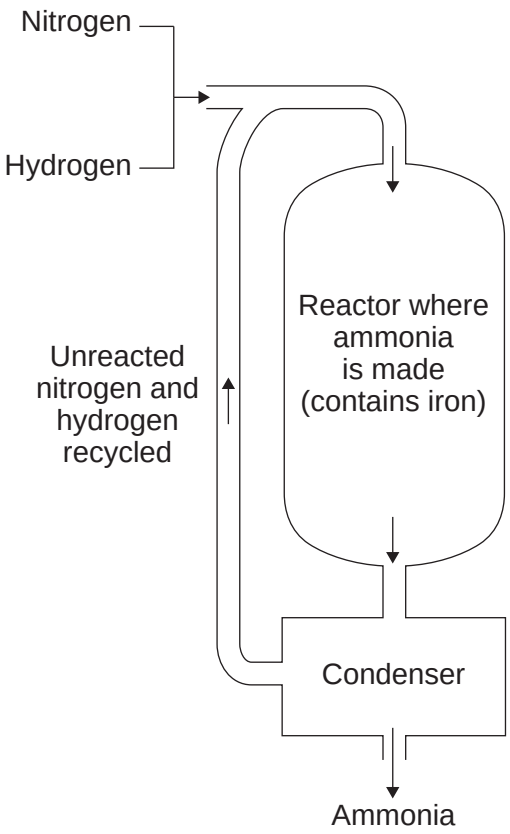
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4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 02

June 2010 | CHY2H | Original Q1 | Legacy

1 (a) The diagram shows how ammonia is made.



1 (a) (i) Complete the word equation for the reaction that takes place in the reactor.

nitrogen + ... → .....

(1 mark)

1 (a) (ii) Ammonia is made by passing nitrogen and hydrogen over hot iron.
Why is iron used in the reactor?

.....

.....

(1 mark)

1 (a) (iii) Explain how ammonia is separated from the unreacted nitrogen and hydrogen.

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.....

(2 marks)

4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 02 · continued

1 (b) Ammonia is used to make the fertiliser ammonium nitrate.

Calculate the relative formula mass (M_r) of ammonium nitrate, NH_4NO_3

Relative atomic masses (A_r): H = 1; N = 14; O = 16

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.....

Relative formula mass = ...

(2 marks)

1 (c) Another fertiliser is potassium nitrate, KNO_3

The relative formula mass (M_r) of potassium nitrate is 101.

Relative atomic masses (A_r): N = 14; O = 16; K = 39

The table shows the percentage by mass of potassium and nitrogen in four fertilisers, **A**, **B**, **C** and **D**.

Fertiliser	Percentage by mass of potassium (%)	Percentage by mass of nitrogen (%)
A	12.45	25.21
B	19.91	24.12
C	38.61	13.86
D	24.89	9.25

Which fertiliser, **A**, **B**, **C** or **D**, is potassium nitrate?

You **must** show your working to gain full marks.

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.....

.....

Potassium nitrate is fertiliser ☐

(2 marks)

8

4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 03

June 2011 | CHY2H | Original Q3 | Legacy

3 The picture shows lumps of phosphate rock.



Phosphoric acid is made by adding sulfuric acid to phosphate rock.

3 (a) The rate of reaction between sulfuric acid and phosphate rock can be increased if the mixture is heated to a higher temperature.

Explain, in terms of particles, why an increase in temperature increases the rate of reaction.

.....

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(2 marks)

3 (b) State **one** other way in which the rate of reaction between sulfuric acid and phosphate rock can be increased.

.....

.....

(1 mark)

3

4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 04

7 Humberstone was a town in the desert of Northern Chile in South America. It was built for the people who worked in the nearby sodium nitrate mines.

The sodium nitrate was used as a fertiliser.

The sodium nitrate was exported by ship to countries all around the world.

Today the mines have closed and nobody lives in Humberstone.

One of the reasons for the mines closing was the invention of the Haber process.



7 (a) The Haber process is used to make ammonia (NH_3).

$$N_2(g) + 3H_2(g) \rightleftharpoons 2NH_3(g)$$

The forward reaction is exothermic.

7 (a) (i) Name the raw materials that are used to supply the nitrogen and hydrogen.

Nitrogen .....

Hydrogen .....

(2 marks)

4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 04 · continued

7 (a) (ii) The Haber process uses a temperature of 450 °C.

Explain, as fully as you can, why a temperature of 450 °C is used rather than a much higher temperature or a much lower temperature.

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(3 marks)

7 (a) (iii) Ammonia can be converted to ammonium nitrate by adding an acid.

Name this acid.

.....

(1 mark)

7 (b) Suggest and explain why the invention of the Haber process caused the closure of the Humberstone mines in Chile.

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(2 marks)

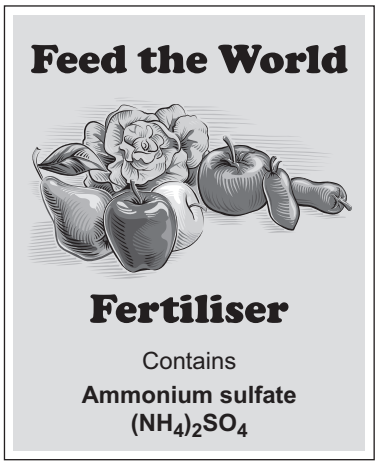
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4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 05

June 2011 | CHY3H | Original Q5 | Legacy

5 Ammonium sulfate is an artificial fertiliser.



5 (a) (i) When this fertiliser is warmed with sodium hydroxide solution, ammonia gas is given off. Describe and give the result of a test for ammonia gas.

Test .....

.....

Result .....

.....

(2 marks)

5 (a) (ii) Describe and give the result of a chemical test to show that this fertiliser contains sulfate ions (SO_4^{2-}).

Test .....

.....

Result .....

.....

(2 marks)

5 (b) Ammonium sulfate is made by reacting sulfuric acid (a *strong* acid) with ammonia solution (a *weak* alkali).

5 (b) (i) Explain the meaning of *strong* in terms of ionisation.

.....

(1 mark)

4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 05 · continued

5 (b) (ii) A student made some ammonium sulfate in a school laboratory.

The student carried out a titration, using a suitable indicator, to find the volumes of sulfuric acid and ammonia solution that should be reacted together.

Name a suitable indicator for strong acid-weak alkali titrations.

.....

(1 mark)

5 (b) (iii) The student found that 25.0 cm^3 of ammonia solution reacted completely with 32.0 cm^3 of sulfuric acid of concentration 0.050 moles per cubic decimetre.

The equation that represents this reaction is:

$$H_2SO_4\,(aq) \quad + \quad 2NH_3\,(aq) \quad \rightarrow \quad (NH_4)_2SO_4\,(aq)$$

Calculate the concentration of this ammonia solution in moles per cubic decimetre.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Concentration = ... moles per cubic decimetre

(3 marks)

5 (b) (iv) Use your answer to (b)(iii) to calculate the concentration of ammonia in grams per cubic decimetre.

(If you did not answer part (b)(iii), assume that the concentration of the ammonia solution is 0.15 moles per cubic decimetre. This is **not** the correct answer to part (b)(iii).)

Relative formula mass of ammonia (NH_3) = 17.

.....

.....

.....

Concentration = ... grams per cubic decimetre

(2 marks)

11

4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 06

June 2016 | CH2HP | Original Q2 | Legacy

2 This question is about ammonia and fertilisers.

2 (a) Ammonia is produced by a reversible reaction.

The equation for the reaction is:

$$N_2 + 3H_2 \rightleftharpoons 2NH_3$$

Complete the sentence.

[1 mark]

The forward reaction is exothermic, so the reverse reaction is _____ .

2 (b) Calculate the percentage by mass of nitrogen in ammonia (NH_3).
Relative atomic masses (A_r): H = 1; N = 14
You **must** show how you work out your answer.

[3 marks]

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Percentage by mass of nitrogen = _____ %

4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 06 · continued

2 (c) A neutral solution can be produced when ammonia reacts with an acid.

2 (c) (i) Give the pH of a neutral solution.

[1 mark]

pH _____

2 (c) (ii) Which of these ionic equations shows a neutralisation reaction?

[1 mark]

Tick (✓) **one** box.

$H^+ + OH^- \longrightarrow H_2O$ ☐

$NH_4^+ + OH^- \longrightarrow NH_4OH$ ☐

$H^+ + Cl^- \longrightarrow HCl$ ☐

$H^+ + H_2O \longrightarrow H_3O^+$ ☐

2 (c) (iii) Name the salt produced when ammonia reacts with hydrochloric acid.

[1 mark]

_____

Question 2 continues on the next page

Question 06 · continued

2 (d) **In this question you will be assessed on using good English, organising information clearly and using specialist terms where appropriate.**

Farmers use ammonium nitrate as a fertiliser for crops.

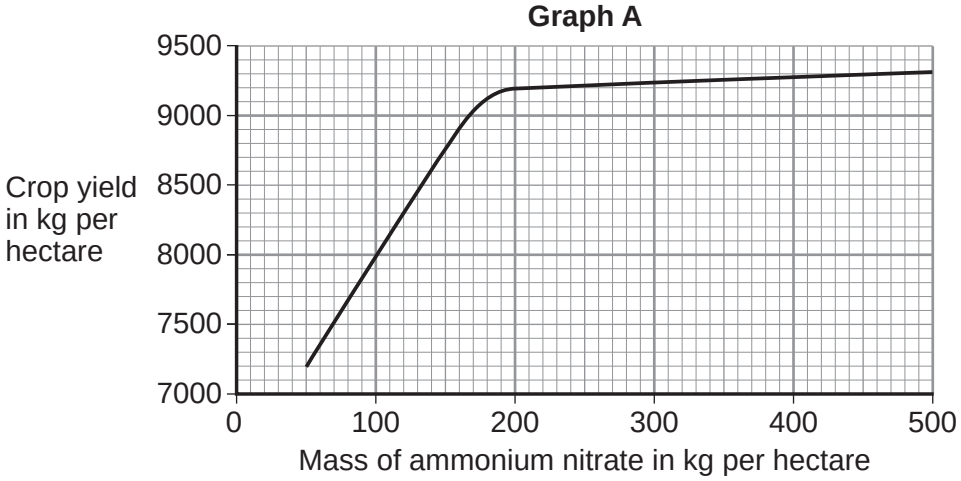
Rainwater dissolves ammonium nitrate in the soil.

Some of the dissolved ammonium nitrate runs off into rivers and lakes.

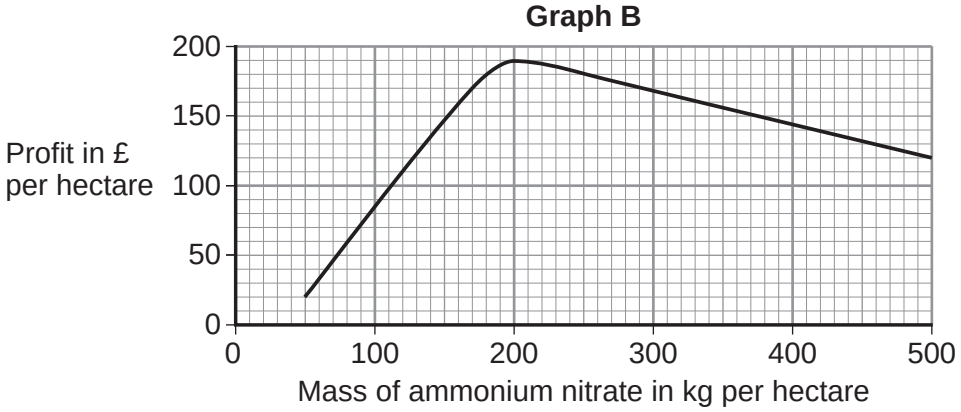
Figure 2 shows three graphs **A**, **B** and **C**. The graphs show information about the use of ammonium nitrate as a fertiliser. A hectare is a measurement of an area of land.

Figure 2

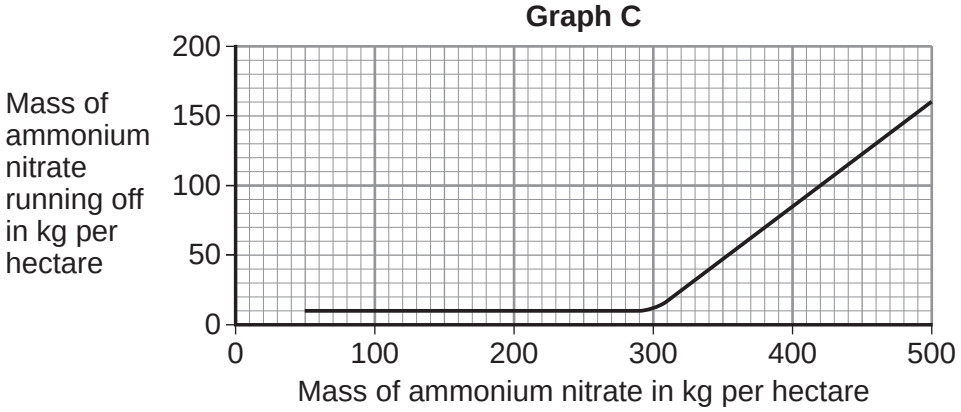
Graph A



Graph B



Graph C



4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 06 · continued

Suggest how much ammonium nitrate farmers should use per hectare.
Give reasons for your answer.
Use information from graphs **A**, **B** and **C**.

[6 marks]

Extra space

13

4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 07

0 2 This question is about water.

0 2 . 1 In the UK, potable (drinking) water is produced from different sources of fresh water.

Explain how potable water is produced from fresh water.

[4 marks]

0 2 . 2 A different country has:

- very little rainfall
- a long coastline
- plentiful energy supplies.

Suggest **one** process this country could use to obtain most of its potable water.

[1 mark]

4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 07 · continued

0 2 . 3 Waste water is not fit to drink.

Treatment of waste water produces two substances:

- liquid effluent
- solid sewage sludge.

Draw **one** line from each substance to the way the substance is processed.

[2 marks]

Substance	Process
	Aerobic biological treatment
Liquid effluent	Anaerobic digestion
	Grit removal
Solid sewage sludge	Screening
	Sedimentation

Question 2 continues on the next page

4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 07 · continued

Table 1 shows information about the disposal of processed solid sewage sludge in the UK in 1992 and in 2010.

Table 1

Year	Mass of processed solid sewage sludge in millions of kilograms				
	Used as fertiliser	Sent to landfill	Burned	Other methods	Total
1992	440	130	90	338	998
2010	1118	9	260	26	1413

0 2 . 4 Calculate the percentage of processed solid sewage sludge that was burned in 2010.

Give your answer to 3 significant figures.

Use **Table 1**.

[3 marks]

Percentage (3 significant figures) = _____ %

4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 07 · continued

0 2 . 5 Suggest **one** reason why the total mass of processed solid sewage sludge increased between 1992 and 2010.

[1 mark]

0 2 . 6 Between 1992 and 2010 the proportion of processed solid sewage sludge used as fertiliser increased.

Suggest **two** reasons why.

[2 marks]

1

2

13

4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 08

November 2021 | 8462/2H | Original Q5

0 5 This question is about fertilisers.

Some fertilisers are described as NPK fertilisers because they contain three elements needed for healthy plant growth.

0 5 . 1 Which **two** compounds each contain **two** of these elements?

[2 marks]

Tick (✓) **two** boxes.

- Ammonium nitrate ☐
- Ammonium phosphate ☐
- Calcium chloride ☐
- Calcium phosphate ☐
- Potassium chloride ☐
- Potassium nitrate ☐

0 5 . 2 Rocks containing calcium phosphate are treated with acid to produce soluble salts that can be used as fertilisers.

Name the soluble salts produced when calcium phosphate reacts with:

- nitric acid
- phosphoric acid.

[2 marks]

Nitric acid _____

Phosphoric acid _____

4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 08 · continued

0 5 . 3 Ammonium sulfate is a compound in fertilisers.

Ammonium sulfate can be made using an industrial process or in the laboratory.

In the industrial process, the following steps are used.

1. React streams of ammonia solution and sulfuric acid together.
2. Evaporate the water by passing the solution down a warm column.
3. Collect dry crystals continuously at the bottom of the column.

In the laboratory, the following steps are used.

1. React ammonia solution and sulfuric acid in a conical flask.
2. Evaporate water from the solution until crystals start to form.
3. Leave to cool and crystallise further.
4. Separate the crystals using filtration.
5. Dry the crystals between pieces of filter paper.

Evaluate the two methods for producing a large mass of ammonium sulfate.

[4 marks]

8

4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 09

1 0 This question is about fertilisers.

Compounds of nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) are used as fertilisers to improve agricultural productivity.

Table 4 shows information about three compounds, **A**, **B** and **C**, that can be used as fertilisers.

Table 4

	Compound A	**Compound B**	**Compound C**
Name	potassium chloride	ammonium nitrate	diammonium hydrogen phosphate
Formula	KCl	NH_4NO_3	$(NH_4)_2HPO_4$
Percentage (%) of N, P and K by mass	**K**: 52%	**N**: 35%	**N**: 21% **P**: 23%
Cost in £/kg	0.24	0.23	0.35

1 0 . 1 A scientist analysed the percentages of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium in a soil.

The percentages of nitrogen and of potassium in the soil were lower than the percentages needed for high agricultural productivity.

There was sufficient phosphorus in the soil for high agricultural productivity.

Evaluate the use of the compounds in **Table 4** to improve the agricultural productivity of this soil.

[4 marks]

4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 09 · continued

10.2 How is potassium chloride (compound **A**) obtained from the Earth?

[1 mark]

10.3 Name **one** other compound that could be used instead of potassium chloride (compound **A**) to give a similar improvement in agricultural productivity.

[1 mark]

10.4 Nitric acid is needed to produce ammonium nitrate (compound **B**).

Name a compound needed to produce nitric acid.

[1 mark]

10.5 Phosphate rock contains phosphorus compounds.

Plants absorb phosphorus from compounds dissolved in rainwater.

Suggest why phosphate rock **cannot** be used directly as a fertiliser.

[1 mark]

10.6 Phosphate rock can be treated with different acids to produce salts useful as fertilisers.

Name the salts which are produced by treating phosphate rock with:

- sulfuric acid
- phosphoric acid.

[2 marks]

Sulfuric acid _____

Phosphoric acid _____

10

4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 10

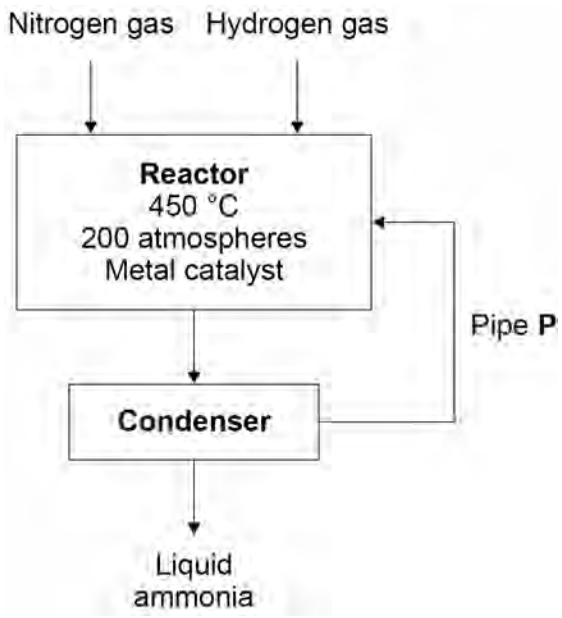
June 2024 | 8462/2H | Original Q2

0 2 This question is about ammonia and nitric acid.

In the Haber process ammonia is produced from nitrogen and hydrogen.

Figure 1 represents the Haber process.

Figure 1



0 2 . 1 Pipe **P** links the condenser to the reactor.

Why is the condenser linked to the reactor?

Use **Figure 1**.

[1 mark]

0 2 . 2 Which metal is used as a catalyst in this reaction?

[1 mark]

Question 10 · continued

Nitric acid is produced by reacting ammonia with oxygen.

The word equation for the production of nitric acid is:

ammonia + oxygen → water + nitric acid

Platinum is a catalyst in this reaction.

0 2 . 3 Describe the test for oxygen gas.

Give the result if oxygen gas is present.

[2 marks]

Test _____

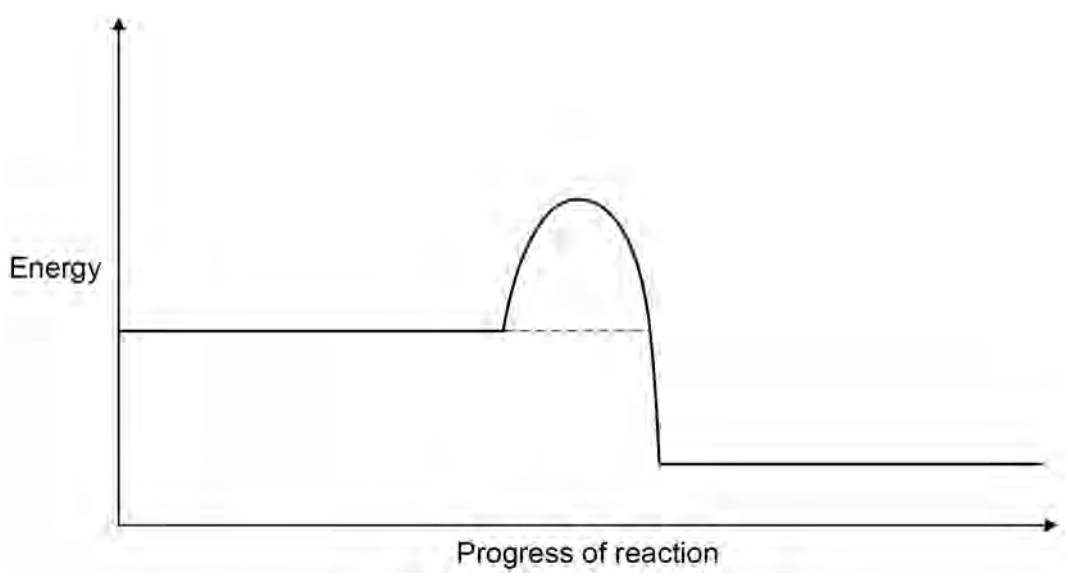
_____

Result _____

_____

Figure 2 represents the reaction profile of the catalysed reaction between ammonia and oxygen.

Figure 2



4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 10 · continued

0 2 . 4 Complete the reaction profile for the catalysed reaction in **Figure 2**.

You should:

- label the activation energy
- label the reactants and products, using the names of the reactants and products.

[2 marks]

0 2 . 5 How would **Figure 2** be different if **no** catalyst was used?

[1 mark]

Tick (✓) **one** box.

The final energy level would be higher. ☐

The final energy level would be lower. ☐

The line would reach a higher peak. ☐

The line would reach a lower peak. ☐

0 2 . 6 Ammonia and nitric acid react to produce the salt, ammonium nitrate.

Ammonium ions and nitrate ions both contain nitrogen.

Suggest **one** use of ammonium nitrate.

[1 mark]

_____

_____

8

4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 11

June 2025 | 8462/2H | Original Q9

0 9 This question is about ammonia.

Ammonia is produced from nitrogen and hydrogen in the Haber process.

Hydrogen is produced from methane and steam.

The equation for one of the reactions in the production of hydrogen is:

$$CH_4(g) + H_2O(g) \rightleftharpoons CO(g) + 3\,H_2(g)$$

The forward reaction absorbs energy from the surroundings.

0 9 . 1 Explain why a high temperature is used in this reaction.

[3 marks]

0 9 . 2 Explain why as low a pressure as possible is used in this reaction.

[2 marks]

4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 11 · continued

0 9 . 3 A nickel catalyst is used in this reaction.

What is the effect of the nickel catalyst on the position of equilibrium?

[1 mark]

Tick (✓) **one** box.

Equilibrium position shifts to the left. ☐

No effect on equilibrium position. ☐

Equilibrium position shifts to the right. ☐

0 9 . 4 The nitrogen needed in the Haber process is obtained from air.

Calculate the approximate volume of air required to obtain 50 dm^3 of nitrogen.

[2 marks]

Volume ~ _____ dm^3

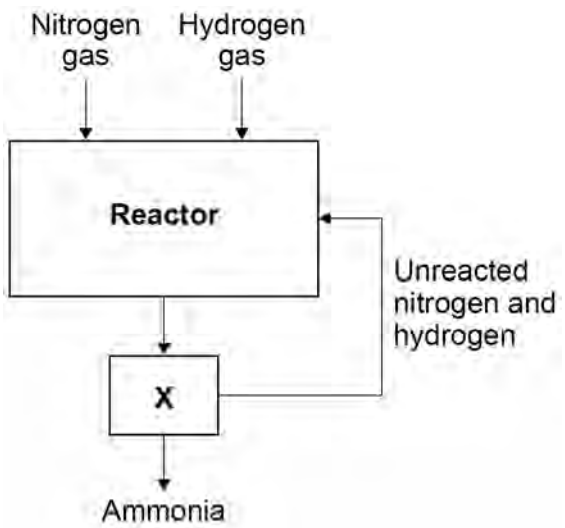
Question 9 continues on the next page

4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 11 · continued

0 9 . 5 **Figure 9** shows how ammonia is produced from nitrogen and hydrogen.

Figure 9



Explain how the mixture of ammonia, nitrogen and hydrogen is separated at **X**.

[3 marks]

4.10.4.2 Production and uses of NPK fertilisers

Question 11 · continued

0 9 . 6 Ammonia is used to produce fertilisers.

Nitrogen is released into the air when bacteria break down fertilisers and dead plant matter.

One of the reactions during the production of hydrogen from methane (natural gas) releases carbon dioxide into the air.

The use of nitrogen to produce ammonia is more sustainable than the use of hydrogen to produce ammonia.

Give **three** reasons why.

[3 marks]

1 _____

_____

2 _____

_____

3 _____

_____

14