AQA GCSE Chemistry | 8462

SPECIFICATION POINT 4.3.3.2

Atom economy

Past-paper questions

Tier	**Higher**
Question groups	**9**
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.

4.3.3.2 Atom economy

Question 01

June 2008 | CHY2H | Original Q8 | Legacy

8 Epoxyethane has the formula C_2H_4O. It is used to make antifreeze and some types of plastic.

When choosing a method of making a chemical, it is important to consider:

- the percentage yield
- the atom economy.

Epoxyethane can be made from ethene by two different methods. The overall equation for each method is shown below.

Method 1

$$\underset{\text{ethene}}{C_2H_4} + Cl_2 + Ca(OH)_2 \rightarrow \underset{\text{epoxyethane}}{C_2H_4O} + CaCl_2 + H_2O$$

Method 2

$$\underset{\text{ethene}}{2C_2H_4(g)} + O_2(g) \overset{\text{catalyst}}{\rightleftharpoons} \underset{\text{epoxyethane}}{2C_2H_4O(g)}$$

8 (a) The table gives the relative formula masses (M_r) of the reactants and products for **Method 1**.

Formula of reactant or product	Relative formula mass (*Mr*)
H_2O	18
C_2H_4	28
C_2H_4O	44
Cl_2	71
$Ca(OH)_2$	74
$CaCl_2$	111

The percentage atom economy can be calculated using:

$$\text{Percentage atom economy} = \frac{M_r \text{ of useful product}}{\text{Total } M_r \text{ of all reactants added together}} \times 100\%$$

The percentage atom economy for **Method 2** is 100%.

4.3.3.2 Atom economy

Question 01 · continued

for mark

8 (a) Calculate the percentage atom economy for **Method 1**.

.....

.....

.....

.....

(2 marks)

8 (b) **Method 2** has the higher atom economy.

Suggest why this is an advantage.

.....

.....

.....

.....

(2 marks)

8 (c) State and explain how an increase in pressure would affect the equilibrium yield of epoxyethane using **Method 2**.

.....

.....

.....

.....

(2 marks)

8 (d) One problem with **Method 2** is that ethene can also react with oxygen to make carbon dioxide and water.

$$C_2H_4 + 3O_2 \rightarrow 2CO_2 + 2H_2O$$

How might this reaction affect the percentage yield of epoxyethane?

.....

.....

(1 mark)

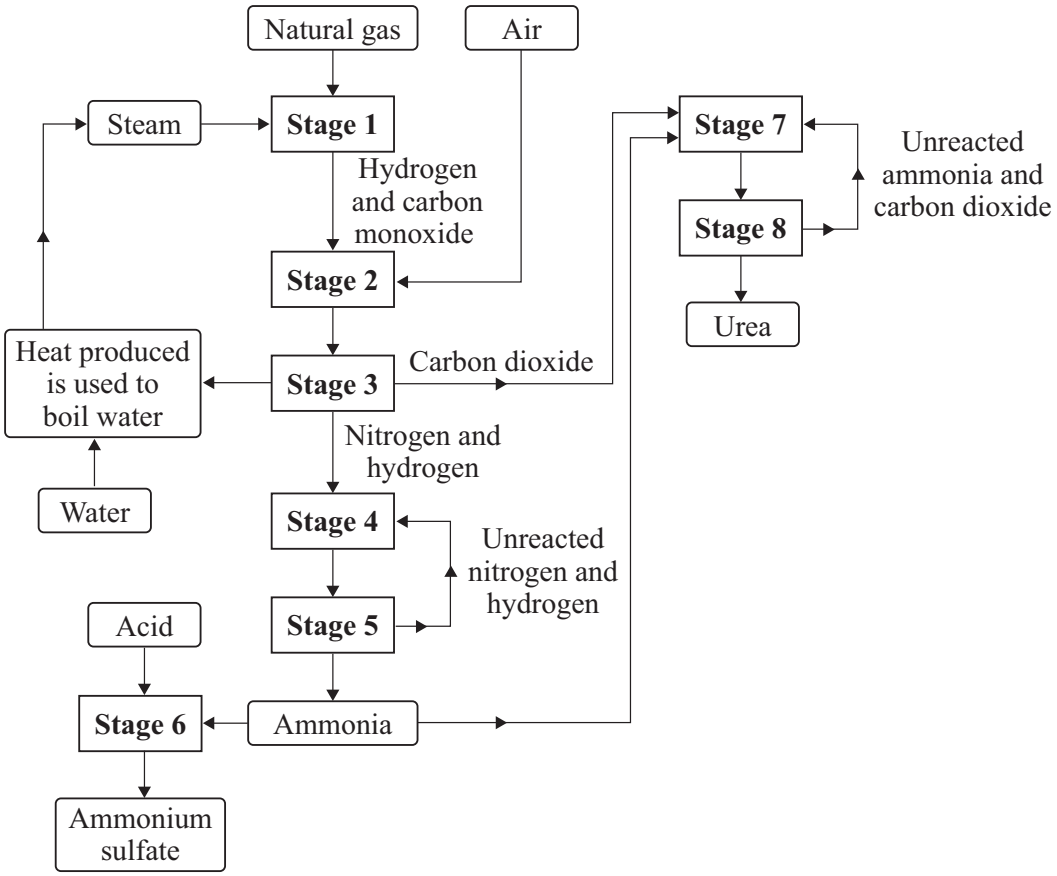
7

4.3.3.2 Atom economy

Question 02

6 Ammonium sulfate and urea are made from ammonia.
These compounds are used by farmers.

The flow diagram shows the stages to make ammonium sulfate and urea.



6 (a) Give **two** examples from the flow diagram of efficient use of energy or materials.

.....

.....

.....

.....

(2 marks)

4.3.3.2 Atom economy

Question 02 · continued

for mark

6 (b) Why do farmers use ammonium compounds?

.....

.....

(1 mark)

6 (c) The equation for a reaction that takes place in **Stage 1** is given below.

Balance this equation by putting the correct number on the dotted line.

$$CH_4 + H_2O \rightarrow CO + \ldots\ldots H_2$$

(1 mark)

6 (d) The equation for the reaction in **Stage 4** is shown below.

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

The forward reaction is exothermic.

6 (d) (i) Explain why, at equilibrium, the yield of ammonia for this reaction is greater at **low** temperatures.

.....

.....

(1 mark)

6 (d) (ii) Explain why a high temperature, 450 °C, is used in **Stage 4**.

.....

.....

(1 mark)

6 (e) Name the acid used in **Stage 6** to make ammonium sulfate.

..... acid

(1 mark)

Question 6 continues on the next page

4.3.3.2 Atom economy

for mark

6 (f) **Stage 7** can be represented by this equation.

$$\underset{\text{ammonia}}{2NH_3} + CO_2 \rightarrow \underset{\text{urea}}{NH_2CONH_2} + H_2O$$

The table gives the relative formula masses (M_r) of the reactants and the products for this reaction.

Formula of reactant or product	Relative formula masses (M_r)
NH_3	17
CO_2	44
NH_2CONH_2	60
H_2O	18

Use information from the table to help you answer (f)(i) and (f)(ii).

6 (f) (i) One factory produces 6000 g of urea each second. Calculate the mass of ammonia needed to make 6000 g of urea.

.....

.....

.....

.....

Mass of ammonia needed = ... g

(3 marks)

6 (f) (ii) Percentage atom economy can be calculated using:

$$\text{Percentage atom economy} = \frac{M_r \text{ of useful product}}{\text{total } M_r \text{ of all reactants added together}} \times 100\%$$

Calculate the percentage atom economy for the reaction in **Stage 7**

.....

.....

.....

Percentage atom economy = ... %

(2 marks)

12

4.3.3.2 Atom economy

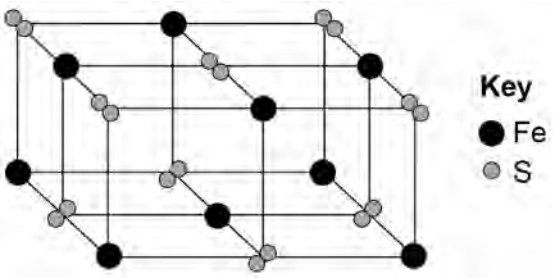
Question 03

0 2 This question is about metals and metal compounds.

0 2 . 1 Iron pyrites is an ionic compound.

Figure 1 shows a structure for iron pyrites.

Figure 1



Determine the formula of iron pyrites.

Use **Figure 1**.

[1 mark]

0 2 . 2 An atom of iron is represented as $^{56}_{26}Fe$

Give the number of protons, neutrons and electrons in this atom of iron.

[3 marks]

Number of protons _____

Number of neutrons _____

Number of electrons _____

0 2 . 3 Iron is a transition metal.

Sodium is a Group 1 metal.

Give **two** differences between the properties of iron and sodium.

[2 marks]

1 _____

_____

2 _____

_____

4.3.3.2 Atom economy

Question 03 · continued

Nickel is extracted from nickel oxide by reduction with carbon.

0 2 . 4 Explain why carbon can be used to extract nickel from nickel oxide.

[2 marks]

0 2 . 5 An equation for the reaction is:

$$NiO + C \rightarrow Ni + CO$$

Calculate the percentage atom economy for the reaction to produce nickel.

Relative atomic masses (A_r): C = 12 Ni = 59

Relative formula mass (M_r): NiO = 75

Give your answer to 3 significant figures.

[3 marks]

Percentage atom economy = _____ %

11

4.3.3.2 Atom economy

Question 04

June 2019 | 8462/2H | Original Q10

1 0 This question is about reversible reactions and equilibrium.

Hydrogen is used to produce ammonia in the Haber process.

The hydrogen is made in two stages.

Stage 1 is the reaction of methane and steam to produce carbon monoxide and hydrogen.

The equation for the reaction is:

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

1 0 . 1 Calculate the atom economy for the formation of hydrogen in **stage 1**.

Relative atomic masses (A_r): H = 1 C = 12 O = 16

[2 marks]

Atom economy = _____ %

4.3.3.2 Atom economy

Question 04 · continued

1 0 . 2 Explain why a low pressure is used in **stage 1**.

Give your answer in terms of equilibrium.

[2 marks]

1 0 . 3 **Stage 2** uses the carbon monoxide produced in **stage 1**.

The carbon monoxide is reacted with more steam to produce carbon dioxide and more hydrogen.

The equation for the reaction in **stage 2** is:

$$CO(g) + H_2O(g) \rightleftharpoons CO_2(g) + H_2(g)$$

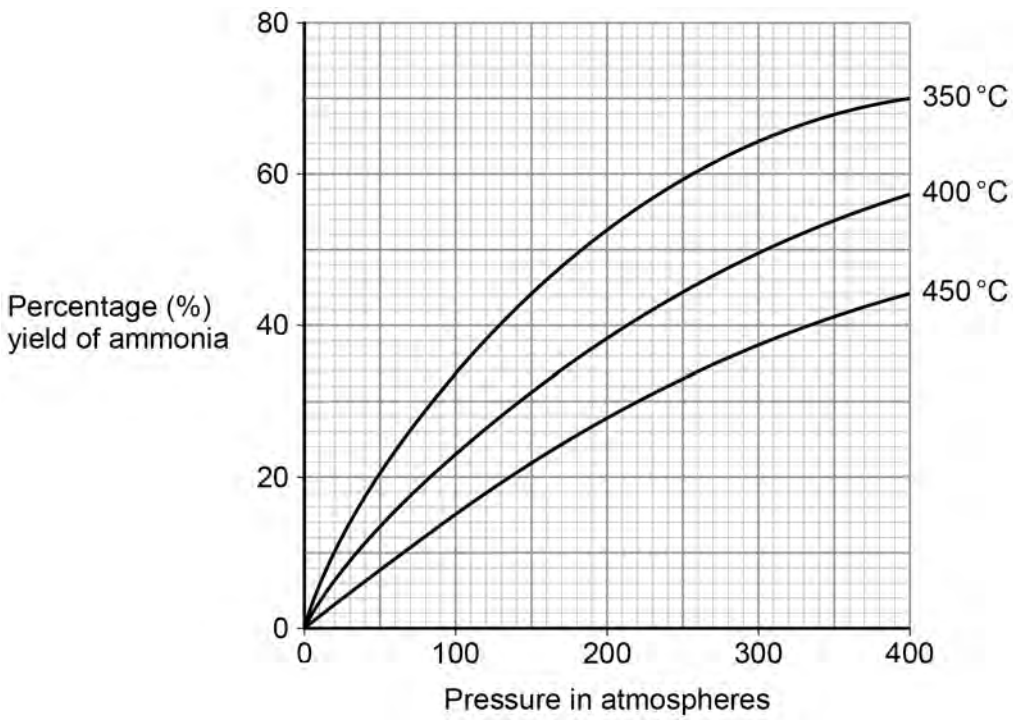
What is the effect of increasing the pressure on the equilibrium yield of hydrogen in **stage 2**?

[1 mark]

Question 10 continues on the next page

Figure 10 shows the percentage yield of ammonia produced at different temperatures and pressures in the Haber process.

Figure 10



A temperature of 450 °C and a pressure of 200 atmospheres are used in the Haber process.

1 0 . 4 A student suggested that a temperature of 350 °C and a pressure of 285 atmospheres could be used instead of those used in the Haber process.

Determine how many times greater the percentage yield of ammonia obtained would be.

Use **Figure 10**.

[3 marks]

Percentage yield = _____ times greater

4.3.3.2 Atom economy

Question 04 · continued

10.5 A pressure of 285 atmospheres is **not** used in the Haber process instead of 200 atmospheres.

Give **one** reason why.

[1 mark]

10.6 How does **Figure 10** show that the forward reaction in the Haber process is exothermic?

[1 mark]

10.7 World production of ammonia is now about 30 times greater than it was in 1950.

Suggest why the demand for ammonia has increased.

[2 marks]

12

4.3.3.2 Atom economy

Question 05

November 2020 | 8462/1H | Original Q3

0 3 This question is about silver iodide.

Silver iodide is produced in the reaction between silver nitrate solution and sodium iodide solution.

The equation for the reaction is:

$$AgNO_3(aq) + NaI(aq) \rightarrow AgI(s) + NaNO_3(aq)$$

0 3 . 1 A student investigated the law of conservation of mass.

This is the method used.

1. Pour silver nitrate solution into a beaker labelled **A**.
2. Pour sodium iodide solution into a beaker labelled **B**.
3. Measure the masses of both beakers and their contents.
4. Pour the solution from beaker **B** into beaker **A**.
5. Measure the masses of both beakers and their contents again.

Table 3 shows the student's results.

Table 3

	Mass before mixing in g	**Mass after mixing in g**
Beaker **A** and contents	78.26	108.22
Beaker **B** and contents	78.50	48.54

Explain how the results demonstrate the law of conservation of mass.

You should use data from **Table 3** in your answer.

[2 marks]

4.3.3.2 Atom economy

Question 05 · continued

0 3 . 2 Suggest how the student could separate the insoluble silver iodide from the mixture at the end of the reaction.

[1 mark]

The student purified the separated silver iodide.

This is the method used.

1. Rinse the silver iodide with distilled water.

2. Warm the silver iodide.

0 3 . 3 Suggest **one** impurity that was removed by rinsing with water.

[1 mark]

0 3 . 4 Suggest why the student warmed the silver iodide.

[1 mark]

Question 3 continues on the next page

4.3.3.2 Atom economy

Question 05 · continued

0 3 . 5 Calculate the percentage atom economy for the production of silver iodide in this reaction.

The equation for the reaction is:

$$AgNO_3(aq) + NaI(aq) \rightarrow AgI(s) + NaNO_3(aq)$$

Give your answer to 3 significant figures.

Relative formula masses (M_r): $AgNO_3 = 170$ NaI = 150 AgI = 235 $NaNO_3 = 85$

[4 marks]

Percentage atom economy (3 significant figures) = _____ %

0 3 . 6 Give **one** reason why reactions with a high atom economy are used in industry.

[1 mark]

10

4.3.3.2 Atom economy

Question 06

November 2021 | 8462/1H | Original Q3

0 3 This question is about the extraction of metals.

Element **R** is extracted from its oxide by reduction with hydrogen.

The equation for the reaction is:

$$3\,H_2 + \mathbf{R}O_3 \rightarrow \mathbf{R} + 3\,H_2O$$

0 3 . 1 The sum of the relative formula masses (M_r) of the reactants ($3\,H_2$ + $\mathbf{R}O_3$) is 150

Calculate the relative atomic mass (A_r) of **R**.

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

[2 marks]

Relative atomic mass (A_r) of **R** = _____

0 3 . 2 Identify element **R**.

You should use:

- your answer to **question 03.1**
- the periodic table.

[1 mark]

Identity of **R** = _____

4.3.3.2 Atom economy

Question 06 · continued

0 3 . 3 Carbon is used to extract tin (Sn) from tin oxide (SnO_2).

The equation for the reaction is:

$$SnO_2 + C \rightarrow Sn + CO_2$$

Calculate the percentage atom economy for extracting tin in this reaction.

Relative atomic masses (A_r): C = 12 O = 16 Sn = 119

[3 marks]

Percentage atom economy = _____ %

Question 3 continues on the next page

Question 06 · continued

0 3 . 4 Tungsten (W) is a metal.

Tungsten is extracted from tungsten oxide (WO_3).

All other solid products from the extraction method must be separated from the tungsten.

Table 2 shows information about three possible methods to extract tungsten from tungsten oxide.

Table 2

Method	Reactant	Relative cost of reactant	Products
1	Carbon	Low	Tungsten solid Carbon dioxide gas Tungsten carbide solid
2	Hydrogen	High	Tungsten solid Water vapour
3	Iron	Low	Tungsten solid Iron oxide solid

Evaluate the three possible methods for extracting tungsten from tungsten oxide.

[4 marks]

10

4.3.3.2 Atom economy

Question 07

June 2022 | 8462/2H | Original Q7

0 7 Ammonia is produced in the Haber process.

The raw materials for the Haber process are nitrogen and hydrogen.

The equation for the reaction is:

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

0 7 . 1 Give the sources of the nitrogen and of the hydrogen used in the Haber process.

[2 marks]

Nitrogen _____

Hydrogen _____

0 7 . 2 How does the equation for the reaction show that the atom economy of the forward reaction is 100%?

[1 mark]

_____

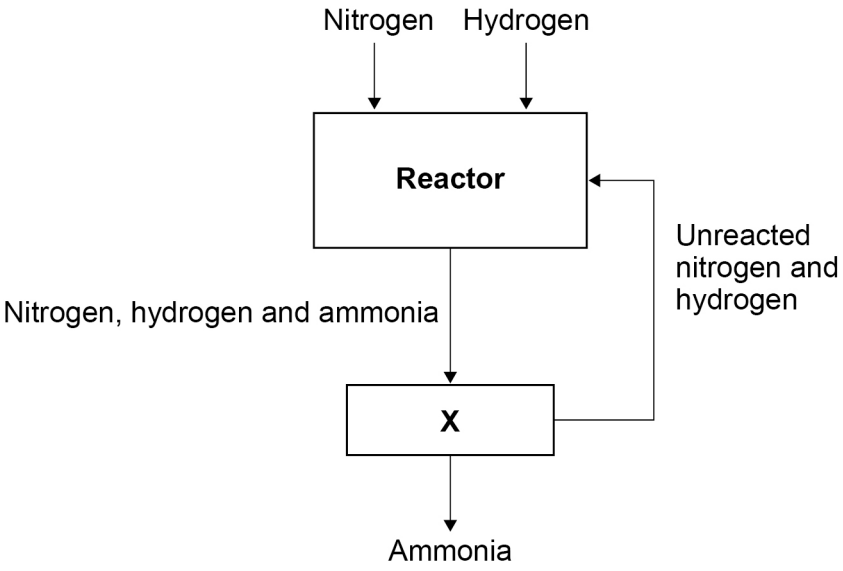
_____

4.3.3.2 Atom economy

Question 07 · continued

0 7 . 3 **Figure 4** represents the Haber process.

Figure 4



Explain how the ammonia produced is separated from the unreacted nitrogen and hydrogen in **X**.

[2 marks]

Question 7 continues on the next page

4.3.3.2 Atom economy

Question 07 · continued

The Haber process uses a temperature of 450 °C and a pressure of 200 atmospheres.

Table 6 shows the percentage yield of ammonia produced at 450 °C using different pressures.

Table 6

Pressure in atmospheres	Percentage (%) yield of ammonia
60	9
120	18
180	25
240	31
300	36
360	40
420	43

Question 07 · continued

0 7 . 4 Complete **Figure 5**.

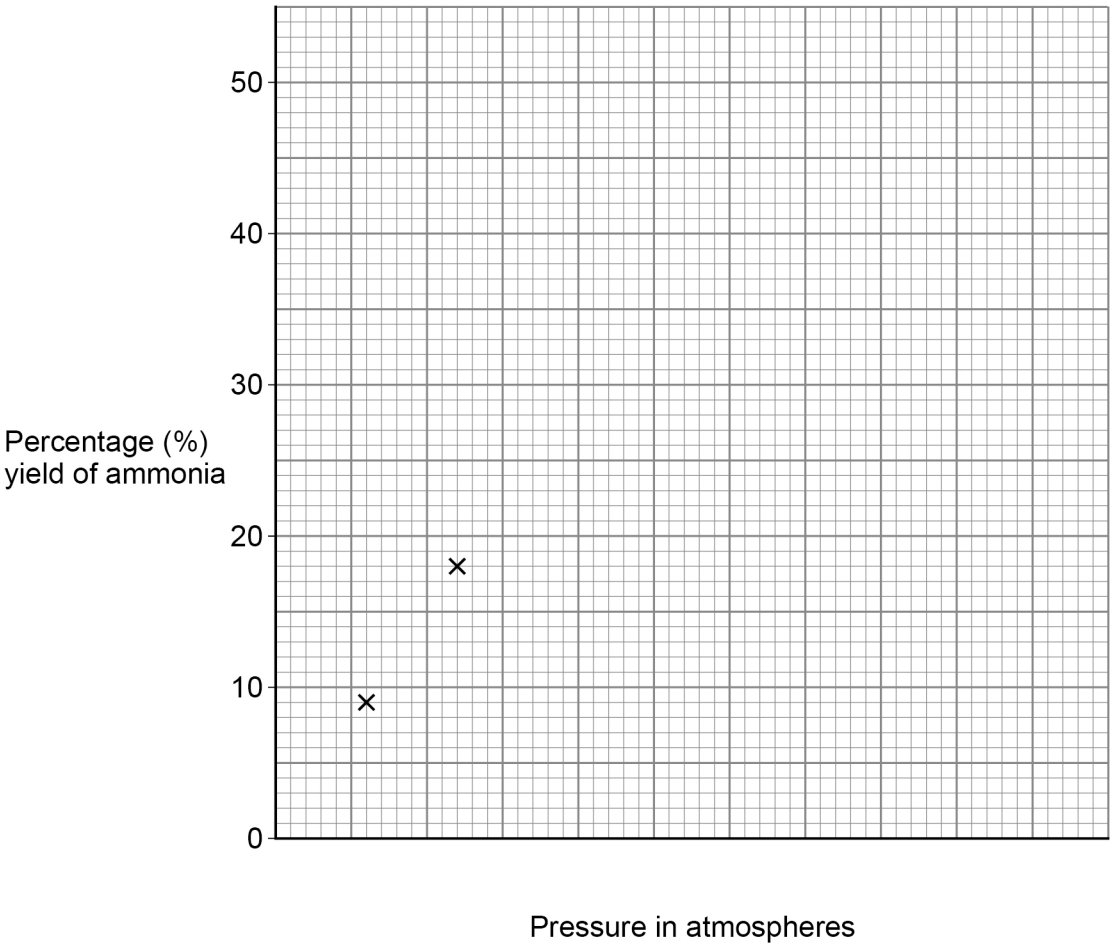
The first two points have been plotted.

You should:

- use a suitable scale for the *x*-axis
- plot the remaining data from **Table 6**
- draw a line of best fit.

[4 marks]

Figure 5



0 7 . 5 Determine the percentage yield of ammonia at 450 °C and 500 atmospheres.

Show your working on **Figure 5**.

[2 marks]

Percentage yield = _____ %

4.3.3.2 Atom economy

Question 07 · continued

0 7 . 6 The equation for the production of ammonia in the Haber process is:

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

The forward reaction is exothermic.

The conditions used are:

- a temperature of 450 °C
- a pressure of 200 atmospheres
- the presence of an iron catalyst.

Explain why these conditions are chosen for economical production of ammonia in the Haber process.

You should include references to the rate of reaction and the position of equilibrium.

[6 marks]

17

4.3.3.2 Atom economy

Question 08

June 2023 | 8462/1H | Original Q9

0 9 This question is about displacement reactions.

Iron is extracted from iron oxide by a displacement reaction with carbon.

The equation for the reaction is:

$$Fe_2O_3 + 3C \rightarrow 2Fe + 3CO$$

0 9 . 1 Which substance in the equation is reduced?

Give **one** reason for your answer.

Answer in terms of oxygen.

[2 marks]

Substance reduced _____

Reason _____

_____

0 9 . 2 Which expression shows how to calculate the mass of carbon needed to produce 1 mole of iron from iron oxide?

Relative atomic mass (A_r): C = 12

[1 mark]

Tick (✓) **one** box.

$\frac{1}{3} \times 12$ g ☐

$\frac{3}{2} \times 12$ g ☐

1×12 g ☐

3×12 g ☐

Question 9 continues on the next page

Question 08 · continued

A student investigated displacement reactions of four different metals represented by **A**, **B**, **C** and **D**.

A, **B**, **C** and **D** are **not** the actual chemical symbols for the metals.

The student:

- added each metal to aqueous solutions of the metal nitrates
- observed whether a reaction took place.

Table 6 shows information about three of the reaction mixtures.

Table 6

Reaction	Metal	Metal nitrate solution	Equation
1	**A**	**B**NO_3	**A** + 2**B**NO_3 → 2**B** + **A**$(NO_3)_2$
2	**C**	**A**$(NO_3)_2$	2**C** + 3**A**$(NO_3)_2$ → 3**A** + 2**C**$(NO_3)_3$
3	**C**	**D**$(NO_3)_2$	no reaction

0 9 . 3 The ionic equation for **Reaction 1** is:

$$\mathbf{A} + 2\mathbf{B}^{+} \rightarrow 2\mathbf{B} + \mathbf{A}^{2+}$$

Why is this a redox reaction?

[1 mark]

Tick (✓) **one** box.

A gains electrons and $\mathbf{B}^{+}$ loses electrons. ☐

A loses electrons and $\mathbf{B}^{+}$ gains electrons. ☐

Both **A** and $\mathbf{B}^{+}$ gain electrons. ☐

Both **A** and $\mathbf{B}^{+}$ lose electrons. ☐

Question 08 · continued

0 9 . 4 Which of the four metals has the greatest tendency to form positive ions?

Use **Table 6**.

[1 mark]

Tick (✓) **one** box.

A ☐ **B** ☐ **C** ☐ **D** ☐

0 9 . 5 The nitrate ion has the formula NO_3^-

Which of the four metals could be aluminium?

Explain your answer.

Use **Table 6**.

[3 marks]

Metal _____

Explanation _____

_____

_____

_____

Question 9 continues on the next page

4.3.3.2 Atom economy

Question 08 · continued

0 9 . 6 Metal **X** is extracted from an oxide of metal **X** by reaction with hydrogen.

The equation for the reaction is:

$$\mathbf{X}O_3 + 3H_2 \rightarrow \mathbf{X} + 3H_2O$$

The percentage atom economy for obtaining metal **X** by this method is 77.3%.

Calculate the relative atomic mass (A_r) of metal **X**.

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

[4 marks]

Relative atomic mass (A_r) = _____

12

4.3.3.2 Atom economy

Question 09

June 2025 | 8462/1H | Original Q3

0 3 This question is about metals and metal oxides.

Tin (Sn) is extracted from tin oxide using carbon.

The equation for the reaction is:

$$SnO_2 + C \longrightarrow Sn + CO_2$$

0 3 . 1 Which substance is reduced in this reaction?

Give **one** reason for your answer.

Answer in terms of oxygen.

[2 marks]

Substance reduced _____

Reason _____

_____

0 3 . 2 Why can carbon be used to extract tin from tin oxide?

[1 mark]

_____

_____

Question 3 continues on the next page

4.3.3.2 Atom economy

Question 09 · continued

0 3 . 3 Cadmium (Cd) can be extracted by the reaction of cadmium oxide with carbon.

The equation for the reaction is:

$$CdO + C \longrightarrow Cd + CO$$

Calculate the percentage atom economy for the production of cadmium in this reaction.

Relative atomic masses (A_r): C = 12 Cd = 112

Relative formula mass (M_r): CdO = 128

[3 marks]

Percentage atom economy = _____ %

0 3 . 4 Tungsten is a transition metal.

Potassium is a Group 1 metal.

Give **two** differences between the properties of tungsten and the properties of potassium.

[2 marks]

1 _____

2 _____

Question 09 · continued

Tungsten oxide reacts with hydrogen to give tungsten (W) and water.

0 3 . 5 The equation for the reaction is:

$$WO_3 + 3\,H_2 \longrightarrow W + 3\,H_2O$$

The law of conservation of mass states:

'The mass of the products equals the mass of the reactants during a chemical reaction.'

Show that the equation obeys the law of conservation of mass.

Relative atomic mass (A_r): W = 184

Relative formula masses (M_r): H_2 = 2 WO_3 = 232 H_2O = 18

[2 marks]

0 3 . 6 The reaction producing tungsten has a high atom economy.

Why is it important to use reactions with a high atom economy in industry?

[1 mark]

11