AQA GCSE Chemistry | 8462

SPECIFICATION POINT 4.8.3.1

Flame tests

Mark schemes and examiner comments

Tier	**Higher**
Question groups	**9**
Available paper years	**2008–2025**

Using this booklet

1. Booklet answer numbers match the question booklet.
2. Use the original question number within marking tables.
3. Examiner comments are included where available.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Where a precise marking extract is unavailable, the full source document is included in an appendix. Any missing mark scheme is explicitly identified.

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Answer 01 · Mark scheme January 2008 | CHY3H | Original Q6 | Legacy

Question 6

question	answers	extra information	mark
(a)(i)		each correct test and one result = **1** mark one other result for any test = **1 mark** this mark can only be awarded once	 1
	Na_2CO_3: HCl → (odourless) gas (1) CO_2 / carbon dioxide (1)		1
	NaCl: $AgNO_3$ → white ppt (1) silver chloride (1)		1
	$NaNO_3$: Al + NaOH → pungent /sharp smell / choking gas (1) NH_3 / ammonia (1)		1
	Na_2SO_4: $BaCl_2$ → white ppt (1) barium sulfate (1)		1
(a)(ii)	all would give a yellow / yellow-orange (flame) / same coloured (flame) / same results **or** they all contain sodium owtte	allow orange (flame)	1
(b)	any **two** from: • fast / quick or comment about speed • small amounts • sensitive / accurate • ease of automation • sample not used up • reliable / efficient • can be left to run / continuous analysis	ignore cost ignore human error accept any valid answer accept operators do not need chemical skills ignore results can be saved	2
total			8

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Answer 02 · Mark scheme

January 2010 | CHY3H | Original Q4 | Legacy

Question 4

question	answers	extra information	mark
4(a)	(acidified) barium chloride / nitrate	incorrect reagent **or** no reagent = **0** marks do **not** accept acidified with sulfuric acid (still allow result mark if correct) allow solution of barium ions / salt **not** barium solution **do not** accept barium hydroxide	1
	(white) precipitate / solid	do **not** accept incorrect colour for precipitate allow barium sulfate (formed) ignore 'it goes white / cloudy'	1
4(b)	(white) precipitate / solid	allow aluminium hydroxide (formed) **do not** allow incorrect colour for precipitate	1
	(precipitate) dissolves (in excess)	allow sodium aluminate (formed) allow goes clear / colourless if incorrect colour precipitate then allow dissolves (in excess)	1
4(c)	any **two** from: • yellow = sodium (alum) • lilac = potassium (alum) • colourless = ammonium (alum)	apply list principle allow orange **or** yellow orange allow purple if no colours given, allow 'different coloured flames' for **1** mark	2
Total			**6**

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Answer 02 · Mark scheme

January 2010 | CHY3H | Original Q4 | Legacy

CHY3H

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Answer 03 · Mark scheme

January 2011 | CHY3H | Original Q5 | Legacy

Question 5

question	answers	extra information	mark
5(a)	limewater / calcium hydroxide (limewater) goes milky / cloudy **or** gives white precipitate / solid	 do **not** allow this mark if lime water added to solution or powder	1 1
5(b)	eg flame colour of (Na) and flame colour of (K) interfere / mask / mix with each other	accept difficult to determine the colour **or** hard to distinguish accept some indication that two distinct colours are not seen	1
5(c)(i)	barium chloride (solution) / $BaCl_2$ white precipitate / white solid	ignore mention of acidification but do **not** allow sulfuric acid. wrong reagent = no mark allow white barium sulfate **or** barium sulfate precipitate	1 1
5(c)(ii)	white precipitate / white solid	ignore goes milky do **not** accept any mention of precipitate dissolving	1
Total			**6**

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Answer 03 · Mark scheme

January 2011 | CHY3H | Original Q5 | Legacy

CHY3H

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

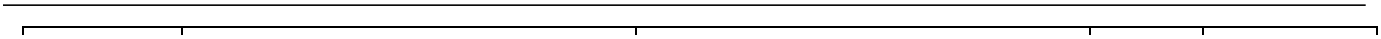
Answer 04 · Mark scheme June 2015 | CH3HP | Original Q7 | Legacy

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
7(a)	**X:** Fe^{2+} / iron(II), SO_4^{2-} / sulfate	allow iron(II) sulfate **or** $FeSO_4$	1	**AO1/ AO2** 3.4.1.a/c/e/f
	Y: Na^+ / sodium, I^- / iodide	allow sodium iodide **or** NaI	1	
	Z: Fe^{3+} **/** iron(III), Br^- / bromide	allow iron(III) bromide **or** $FeBr_3$	1	
		correct identification of any two ions = one mark correct identification of any four ions = two marks		
7(b)	any **five** from: method 1 • weighing is accurate • not all barium sulfate may be precipitated • precipitate may be lost • precipitate may not be dry • takes longer • requires energy method 2 • accurate • works for low concentrations	allow converse arguments allow not all the barium hydroxide has reacted allow reliable / precise	5	**AO3** 3.4.1.a/c/e/f
Total			**8**	

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

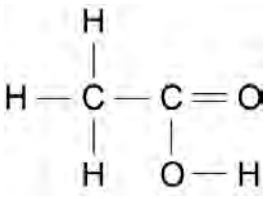
Answer 04 · Mark scheme

June 2015 | CH3HP | Original Q7 | Legacy



4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Answer 05 · Mark scheme June 2016 | CH3HP | Original Q1 | Legacy

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / SpecRef
1(a)(i)	fizz / effervescence / bubbles	allow calcium carbonate decreases in size or dissolves	1	AO2/AO3 3.4.1d, 3.6.2b
	because carbon dioxide produced / released	allow because gas produced / released	1	
	limewater turns cloudy / milky / white		1	
	because (a precipitate of or solid) calcium carbonate forms	allow because of carbon dioxide if not already credited	1	
1(a)(ii)		allow –OH do not allow lower case 'h'	1	AO1 3.6.2a
1(a)(iii)	acid	must be in this order ignore any name of an acid	1	AO1 3.6.2b
	ester(s)		1	
1(b)	white (precipitate) no change no change no change	all four correct 2 marks any two correct 1 mark	2	AO2 3.4.1e,f
1(c)(i)	lilac red	must be in this order allow purple	1 1	AO1 3.4.1a
1(c)(ii)	colours are masked / changed by each flame colour		1	AO3 3.4.1a
Total			**12**	

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Answer 05 · Mark scheme

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / SpecRef
2			6	2AO1 / 3AO2 / 1AO3 3.4.1g

Marks awarded for this answer will be determined by the Quality of Written Communication (QWC) as well as the standard of the scientific response. Examiners should also refer to the information on page 5 and apply a 'best-fit' approach to the marking.

0 marks	Level 1 (1–2 marks)	Level 2 (3–4 marks)	Level 3 (5–6 marks)
No relevant content.	There is a simple description of using some of the apparatus.	There is a description of an experimental method including addition of acid to alkali which may include an indicator or colour change and may include a measurement of volume.	There is a description of titrations that would allow a comparison to be made between the two solutions of hydrochloric acid.

examples of chemistry points made in the response could include:

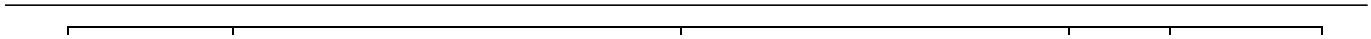
- acid in burette **or** flask
- alkali/sodium hydroxide **or** acid in burette or flask
- volume of acid **or** alkali measured using the pipette
- indicator in flask
- white tile under the flask
- slow addition
- swirling/mixing
- colour change of indicator
- burette volume measured

Total		6

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Answer 05 · Mark scheme

June 2016 | CH3HP | Original Q1 | Legacy



4.8.3.1 Flame tests

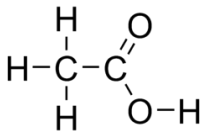
Answer 06 · Mark scheme

June 2017 | CH3HP | Original Q3 | Legacy

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
3(a)(i)	any **one** from: • for undiscovered elements • so elements with similar properties were in same column / group	ignore so they fit the pattern	1	**AO1** 3.1.1b
3(a)(ii)	any **one** from: • they have different properties from elements above them • they are (transition) metals .	ignore electronic configuration ignore they did not fit the pattern allow transition elements	1	**AO1** 3.1.1a,b
3(b)(i)	7 electrons in outer shell / highest energy level	ignore gain of 1 electron	1	**AO2** 3.1.2b
3(b)(ii)	for bromine: outer shell closer to nucleus stronger force of attraction (to nucleus) electron more easily gained to outer shell	'outer' must be mentioned once for 3 marks. comparatives required. ignore references to bromide / iodide allow converse for iodine allow fewer shells allow smaller atom allow less shielding	1 1 1	**AO1** **AO2** 3.1.3g,h

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Answer 06 · Mark scheme

3(c)(i)	yellow precipitate	allow yellow or dark yellow or light yellow or pale yellow allow dark yellow or light yellow or pale yellow precipitate allow dark yellow or light yellow or pale yellow ppt allow dark yellow or light yellow or pale yellow solid do **not** allow yellow solution	1	**AO1** 3.4.1e
3(c)(ii)	green precipitate	allow green or dark green or light green or pale green or dirty green allow dark green or light green or pale green or dirty green precipitate allow dark green or light green or pale green or dirty green ppt allow dark green or light green or pale green or dirty green solid do **not** allow green solution	1	**AO1** 3.4.1b
3(d)	one colour obscures the other	allow colours mix / blend allow only one colour seen	1	**AO3** 3.4.1a
3(e)(i)		allow -OH in the structure without the -O-H bond shown	1	**AO1** 3.6.2a

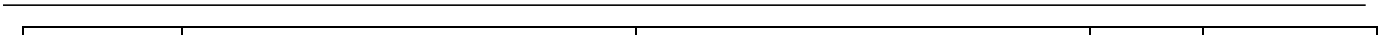
4.8.3.1 Flame tests

3(e)(ii)	weak acid (because) ethanoic acid is not fully ionised / dissociated	allow converse for hydrochloric acid allow (the solution) has a lower concentration of hydrogen ions allow (produces) fewer hydrogen ions. do **not** allow ionising	1 1	**AO3** 3.6.2a,b
Total			**12**	

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Answer 06 · Mark scheme

June 2017 | CH3HP | Original Q3 | Legacy



4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Answer 07 · Mark scheme

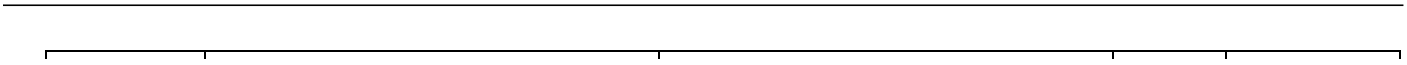
June 2018 | 8462/2H | Original Q1

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
01.1	yellow	allow orange allow orange-yellow	1	AO1 4.8.3.1
01.2	copper (ion)	allow Cu^{2+} allow copper (II) allow barium (ion) allow Ba^{2+}	1	AO1 4.8.3.1
01.3	(flame) colours are masked	allow (flame) colours mix / blend allow only see one colour allow cannot see two colours at once ignore hard to distinguish	1	AO1 4.8.3.1
01.4	Li^+ Na^+		1 1	AO2 4.8.3.7
01.5	bromide (ion)	allow Br^- ignore bromine	1	AO1 4.8.3.4
01.6	add barium chloride (solution) add hydrochloric acid white precipitate produced	allow barium nitrate (solution) allow nitric acid allow acidified do **not** accept sulfuric acid dependent on use of a barium compound	1 1 1	AO1 4.8.3.5
Total			9	

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Answer 07 · Mark scheme

June 2018 | 8462/2H | Original Q1



4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Answer 08 · Mark scheme

November 2020 | 8462/2H | Original Q1

Question 1

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
01.1	green	allow blue-green	1	AO1 4.8.3.1 RPA 7
01.2	did not clean the metal wire (between tests) **or** copper sulfate (solution) is still present (so) colours are mixed / blended / masked		1 1	AO3 4.8.3.1 RPA 7
01.3	(copper sulfate solution) blue precipitate (calcium iodide solution) white precipitate	allow blue solid allow white solid	1 1	AO1 4.8.3.2 RPA 7
01.4	barium chloride (solution)	allow barium nitrate (solution)	1	AO1 4.8.3.5 RPA 7
01.5	silver nitrate (solution) yellow precipitate	 allow yellow solid allow pale yellow precipitate / solid	1 1	AO1 4.8.3.4 RPA 7
Total			8	

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Answer 09 · Mark scheme

June 2025 | 8462/2H | Original Q6

Question 6

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
06.1	calcium (ions) **or** magnesium (ions)	allow Ca^{2+} (ion) allow Mg^{2+} (ion) allow zinc / Zn^{2+} (ion)	1	AO1 4.8.3.2 RPA7

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
06.2	(test) add excess sodium hydroxide (solution) (result) with sodium hydroxide the (white) precipitate dissolves	 allow with sodium hydroxide a colourless solution is produced	1 1	AO1 4.8.3.2 RPA7

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
06.3	Ca^{2+}	ignore calcium	1	AO1 4.2.1.2 4.8.3.1 RPA7

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
06.4	Cl^-	ignore chloride	1	AO1 4.2.1.2 4.8.3.4 RPA7

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Answer 09 · Mark scheme

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
06.5	(test) (bubble the gas through) limewater	allow (bubble the gas through) calcium hydroxide solution	1	AO1 4.8.2.3 4.8.3.3 RPA7
	(result) (which) turns milky / cloudy	MP2 is dependent upon MP1 being awarded	1	

Question	Answers	Extra information	Mark	AO / Spec. Ref.
06.6		allow converse argument		
	(using ethanoic acid) the rate of reaction is lower		1	
	(because) ethanoic acid is a weak(er) acid		1	
	(so) the concentration of hydrogen ions is lower	allow (so) ethanoic acid is (only) partially ionised	1	
	(and) the frequency of collisions is lower		1	

Total Question 6	11

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Answer 07 · Examiner comments

June 2018 | 8462/2H | Original Q1

Question 1 (standard demand)

01.1 80% of students gave yellow or orange. There was a lot of variety in the wrong answers with all the colours of the spectrum represented.

01.2 This was well answered. Copper was the most common answer given although a few gave barium and gained credit.

01.3 60% of students achieved this mark. Popular incorrect responses implied that the flame colours were similar or the same.

01.4 87% of students could correctly identify both of the ions in the flame emission spectrum.

01.5 33% of students identified the correct answer as bromide. A few put bromine but many seemed to guess.

01.6 The test for sulfate ions was not well known with many students gaining only the acidification mark. 27% of students achieved full marks.

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Answer 08 · Examiner comments

November 2020 | 8462/2H | Original Q1

Question 1 (standard demand)

01.1 The majority of students were able to answer this item.

01.2 Most students were aware that the wire should be cleaned, though many suggested the wire (loop) should be sterilised. Far fewer were able to describe the effect on the results with many just repeating the third line of the question stem.

01.3 Few of the students were able to give correct precipitate colours for both copper and calcium ions. There was no real pattern in the incorrect responses, but green or brown were often seen.

01.4 Few students were able to name barium chloride (solution). Many unsuitable reagents were named, including silver nitrate

01.5 Some students were able to name the solution. Those who gave the correct solution sometimes gave the result for a different halide ion.

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Answer 09 · Examiner comments

Question 6

06.1 Three quarters of students correctly identified either calcium or magnesium. A few students gained credit for zinc.

06.2 Just over a quarter of students scored both marks on this item. Many students repeated the information given to them in the stem of the question, stating that they would add sodium hydroxide and observe a white precipitate, which did not gain marks. Some described adding more sodium hydroxide, without specifying that this should be until excess and whilst these students were not awarded the first marking point, they still had access to the second marking point.
Descriptions of the result were often vague. Some responses stated that 'the precipitate would dissolve' but failed to identify the reagent. Others simply said, 'it' will redissolve, become clear, or turn colourless, which was insufficient. There was a misconception that the aluminium dissolves, rather than the precipitate.

06.3 Both the correct symbol and the charge on the ion were required to gain the mark for this item. A quarter of students did this. Many others wrote the name, or the symbol without a charge.

06.4 As with 06.3, both the symbol and the charge on the ion were needed to gain the mark. As with 06.3, a quarter of students answered this correctly. Similar mistakes, writing the name or a symbol without a charge were commonly seen.

06.5 Around two thirds of students gained both marks on this item. A small number of students described adding limewater to solution C, rather than bubbling the gas produced through limewater.

06.6 Around half of students identified ethanoic acid as a weak acid and stated that the rate of reaction was lower. Fewer students were able to describe a lower concentration of hydrogen ions, with some describing fewer hydrogen ions without making any reference to volume. Credit was given to those who described ethanoic acid as partially ionised, however, there was the misconception that less hydrogen ions were ionised. Only a minority of students made a correct reference to the frequency of collisions.