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A Study of the Effectiveness of Problem Solving on Achievement in College Physics

C. J. Lapp
State University of Iowa

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TEMPERATURE CHANGES ACCOMPANYING THE ADIABATIC EXTENSION AND COMPRESSION OF METALS

GRANT O. GALE

The metals in the form of vertical wires are extended and compressed by the addition and removal of a load within the elastic limit. The temperature change is a transient effect, the magnitude of which was originally worked out by Lord Kelvin to be

$$\theta = \frac{tep}{Jk\rho}$$

where θ = temperature change

p = stress

t = temperature (Kelvin)

e = linear coefficient of expansion

J = mechanical equivalent of heat

k = specific heat (C_p)

ρ = density

A modified Carey Foster resistance bridge is used, comparing the resistance of the wire with a standard. Since the effect is of short duration, the wire is inside a polished stainless steel tube to permit more time to balance the bridge, as the method used is practically a null method.

Allowance is made for changes in resistance due to tension. So far the results are satisfactory although the changes on compression have been larger than those on extension in the case of steel wire. After a cyclical loading-unloading of the wire, the two values have come pretty well together. Similar results were found for tungsten and nickel.

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS,
GRINNELL COLLEGE,
GRINNELL, IOWA.

A STUDY OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROBLEM SOLVING ON ACHIEVEMENT IN COLLEGE PHYSICS

C. J. LAPP

A study was made between matched pairs of students from two separate years. One year the students were assigned problems but no check-up was made as to whether the problems were solved. The next year the same textbook and lessons were used, but the students were required to hand in six solved problems three times per week. The criterion of success was the scores made on the

Coöperative Physics Test. Approximately 130 matched pairs of students were studied consisting of various levels of ability.

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS,
STATE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA,
IOWA CITY, IOWA.

A STUDY OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MATHEMATICAL VERSUS PHYSICAL SOLUTIONS IN PROBLEM SOLVING IN COLLEGE PHYSICS

C. J. LAPP

An experiment has been conducted in an attempt to determine if there is a significant difference between the achievements of two matched groups of students each having differential treatment with respect to problem solving as measured by a standard final examination. The Physical Solution method gave unquestionably statistically significant results for the upper one-third of the groups. There was no significant difference in the low group which fact tended to hide a small but significant difference from the whole group.

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS,
STATE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA,
IOWA CITY, IOWA.

QUANTITATIVE SPECTROGRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF PLANT TISSUE

L. T. EARLS

Quantitative spectrographic analysis of corn leaf as a typical plant tissue has been carried out for several elements (Mg, Ca, Si), using a 1100-volt AC arc between carbon electrodes as a source. Tests have been made on various internal standards excitation conditions, etc., attempting to increase accuracy and reproducibility. Data and variations typical of the present status of the investigation are presented.

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS,
IOWA STATE COLLEGE,
AMES, IOWA.