

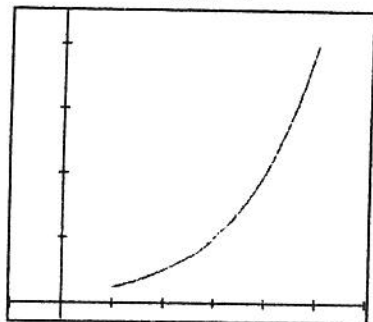
Worksheet 3. Understanding the Relationships Among Velocity, Speed, and Acceleration

Speed is the absolute value of velocity. It tells you how fast something is moving without regard to the direction of movement.

1. What effect does absolute value have on numbers?
2. What effect does taking the absolute value of a function have on its graph?

For each situation below, the graph of a differentiable function giving velocity as a function of time t is shown for $1 \leq t \leq 5$, along with selected values of the velocity function. In the graph, each horizontal grid mark represents 1 unit of time and each vertical grid mark represents 4 units of velocity. For each situation, plot the speed graph on the same coordinate plane as the velocity graph and fill in the speed values in the table. Then, answer the questions below based on both the graph and the table of values.

Situation 1: Velocity graph



time	velocity	speed
1	1	
2	2	
3	4	
4	8	
5	16	

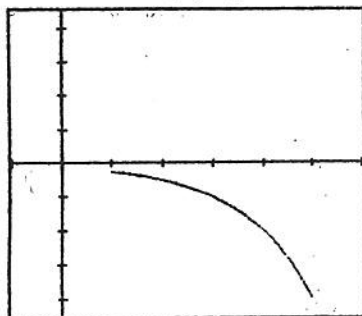
In this situation, the velocity is _____ and _____.
 Positive or negative? Increasing or decreasing?

Because velocity is _____, we know acceleration is _____.
 Increasing or decreasing? Positive or negative?

By examining the graph of speed and the table of values, we can conclude that speed is _____.
 Increasing or decreasing?

Curriculum Module: Calculus: Motion

Situation 2: Velocity graph



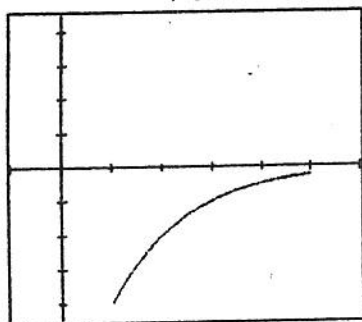
time	velocity	speed
1	-1	
2	-2	
3	-4	
4	-8	
5	-16	

In this situation, the velocity is _____ and _____.
 Positive or negative? Increasing or decreasing?

Because velocity is _____, we know acceleration is _____.
 Increasing or decreasing? Positive or negative?

By examining the graph of speed and the table of values, we can conclude that speed is _____.
 Increasing or decreasing?

Situation 3: Velocity graph



time	velocity	speed
1	-16	
2	-8	
3	-4	
4	-2	
5	-1	

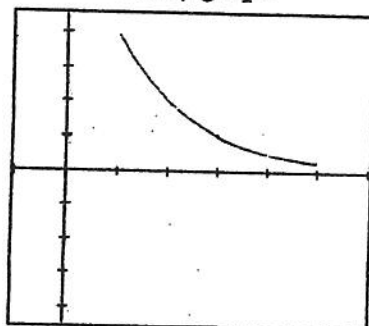
In this situation, the velocity is _____ and _____.
 Positive or negative? Increasing or decreasing?

Because velocity is _____, we know acceleration is _____.
 Increasing or decreasing? Positive or negative?

By examining the graph of speed and the table of values, we can conclude that speed is _____.
 Increasing or decreasing?

Curriculum Module: Calculus: Motion

Situation 4: Velocity graph



time	velocity	speed
1	16	
2	8	
3	4	
4	2	
5	1	

In this situation, the velocity is _____ and _____.
 Positive or negative? Increasing or decreasing?

Because velocity is _____, we know acceleration is _____.
 Increasing or decreasing? Positive or negative?

By examining the graph of speed and the table of values, we can conclude that speed is _____.
 Increasing or decreasing?

Conclusion:

In which situations was the speed increasing? _____

When the speed is increasing, the velocity and acceleration have _____ signs.
 Same or opposite?

In which situations was the speed decreasing? _____

When the speed is decreasing, the velocity and acceleration have _____ signs.
 Same or opposite?

Dixie Ross, Pflugerville High School, Pflugerville, Texas

Curriculum Module: Calculus: Motion

Assessing Students' Understanding (A Short Quiz):

1. If velocity is negative and acceleration is positive, then speed is _____.
2. If velocity is positive and speed is decreasing, then acceleration is _____.
3. If velocity is positive and decreasing, then speed is _____.
4. If speed is increasing and acceleration is negative, then velocity is _____.
5. If velocity is negative and increasing, then speed is _____.
6. If the particle is moving to the left and speed is decreasing, then acceleration is _____.

Dixie Ross, Pflugerville High School, Pflugerville, Texas