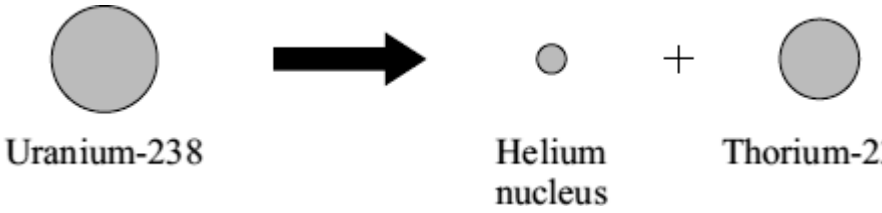
Q1. (a) Some rocks inside the Earth contain uranium-238, a radioactive isotope of uranium. When an atom of uranium-238 decays, it gives out radiation and changes into a thorium-234 atom.



(i) What type of radiation is emitted when a uranium-238 atom decays?

.....

(1)

(ii) From which part of a uranium-238 atom is the radiation emitted?

.....

(1)

(iii) Uranium-235 is another isotope of uranium.

How is an atom of uranium-235 similar to an atom of uranium-238?

.....

(1)

(b) Uranium-238 has a half-life of 4500 million years.

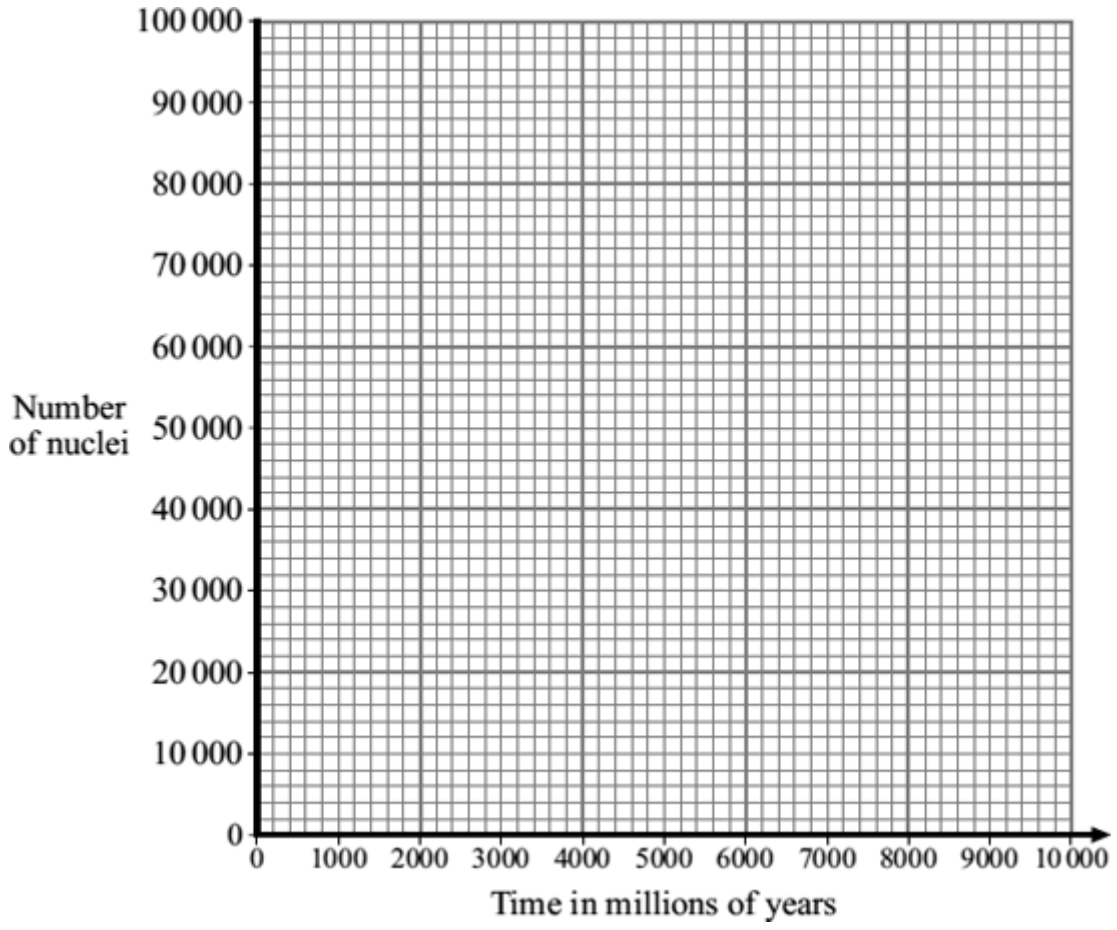
(i) When the Earth was formed, there was twice as much uranium-238 in the rocks as there is now.

What is the age of the Earth?

.....

(1)

(ii) Complete the graph to show how the number of nuclei in a sample of uranium-238 will change with time.
Initially, there were 100 000 nuclei in the sample.



(2)
(Total 6 marks)

Q2. (a) Carbon has three naturally occurring isotopes. The isotope, carbon-14, is radioactive.
An atom of carbon-14 decays by emitting a beta particle.

(i) Complete the following sentences.

The atoms of the three carbon isotopes are the same as each other because

.....

The atoms of the three carbon isotopes are different from each other because

.....

(2)

(ii) What is a beta particle and from what part of an atom is it emitted?

.....

.....

(1)

(b) Carbon-14 is constantly being made in the atmosphere, yet for most of the last million years, the amount of carbon-14 in the atmosphere has not changed.

How is this possible?

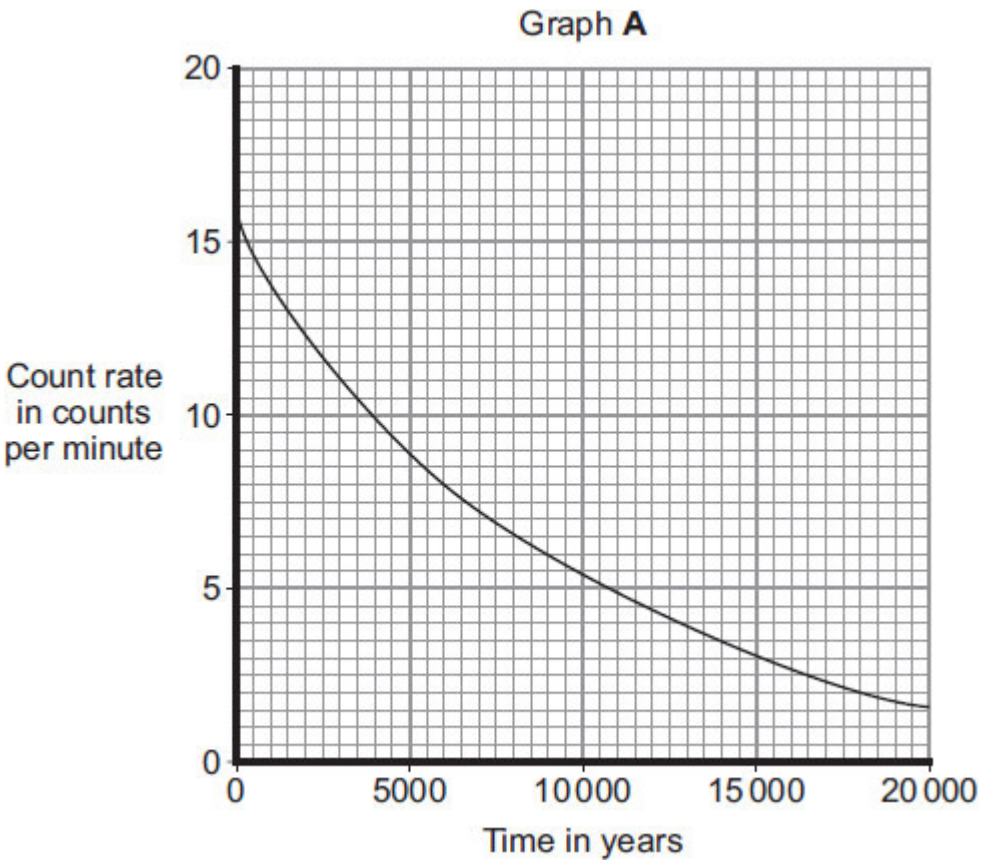
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.....

(1)

(c) Trees take in carbon-12 and carbon-14 from the atmosphere. After the tree dies, the proportion of carbon-14 that the tree contains decreases.

Graph **A** shows the decay curve for carbon-14.



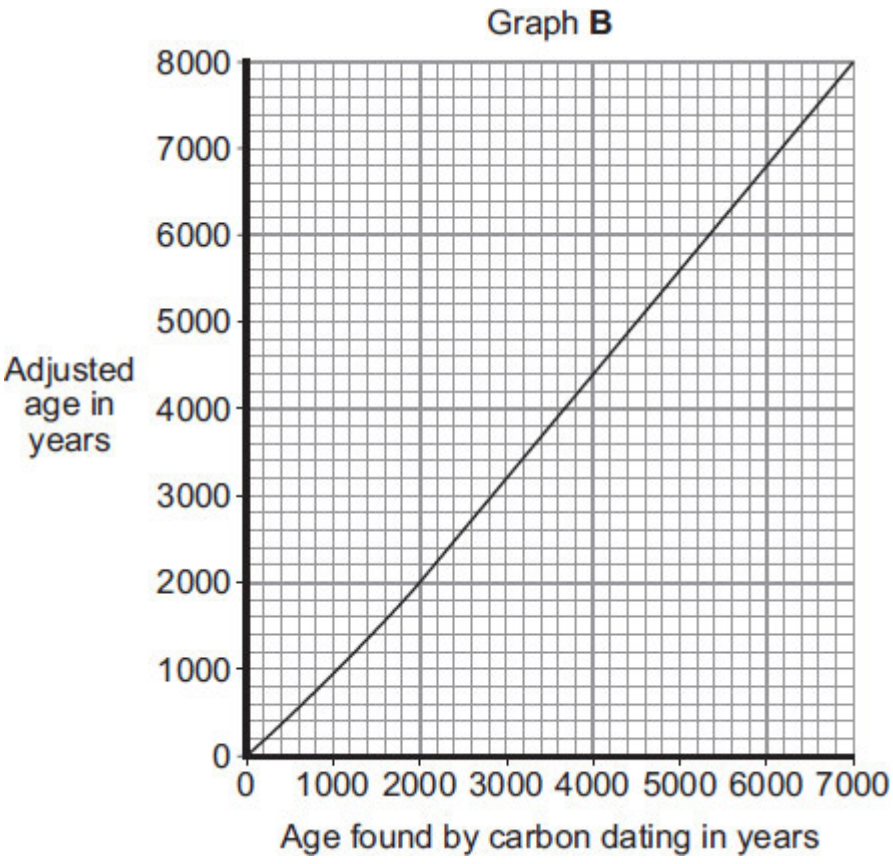
(i) Lake Cuicocha in Ecuador was formed after a volcanic eruption.
Carbon taken from a tree killed by the eruption was found to have a count rate of 10.5 counts per minute.
At the time of the eruption, the count rate would have been 16 counts per minute.

Use graph **A** to find the age of Lake Cuicocha.

Age of Lake Cuicocha = ... years

(1)

(ii) Finding the age of organic matter by measuring the proportion of carbon-14 that it contains is called carbon dating. This technique relies on the ratio of carbon-14 to carbon-12 in the atmosphere remaining constant. However, this ratio is not constant so the age found by carbon dating needs to be adjusted.



Graph **B** is used to adjust the age of an object found by carbon dating.
The value obtained from graph **B** will be no more than 50 years different to the true age of the object.

Use graph **B** and the information above to find the maximum age that Lake Cuicocha could be.

Show clearly how you obtain your answer.

.....

.....

Maximum age of Lake Cuicocha = ... years

(2)
(Total 7 marks)

Q3.(a) Atoms of the isotope bismuth-212 decay by emitting either an alpha particle or a beta particle.
The equation represents what happens when an atom of bismuth-212 decays by beta emission into an atom of polonium-212.

$$^{212}_{83}\text{Bi} \longrightarrow {}^{212}_{84}\text{Po} + \text{beta particle}$$

(i) The bismuth atom and the polonium atom have the same mass number (212).

What is the *mass number* of an atom?

.....

(1)

(ii) Beta decay does **not** cause the mass number of an atom to change.

Explain why not.

.....

.....

.....

.....

(2)

(b) When an atom of bismuth-212 emits an alpha particle, the atom decays into an atom of thallium.

An alpha particle is the same as a helium nucleus.
The symbol below represents an alpha particle.

$$^{4}_{2}\text{He}$$

(i) The equation below represents the alpha decay of bismuth-212.

Complete the equation by writing the correct number in each of the two boxes.

$$^{212}_{83}\text{Bi} \longrightarrow \square \quad \square \quad \text{Tl} + {}^{4}_{2}\text{He}$$

(2)

(ii) It is impossible for the alpha decay of bismuth-212 to produce the same element as the beta decay of bismuth-212.

Explain why.

.....

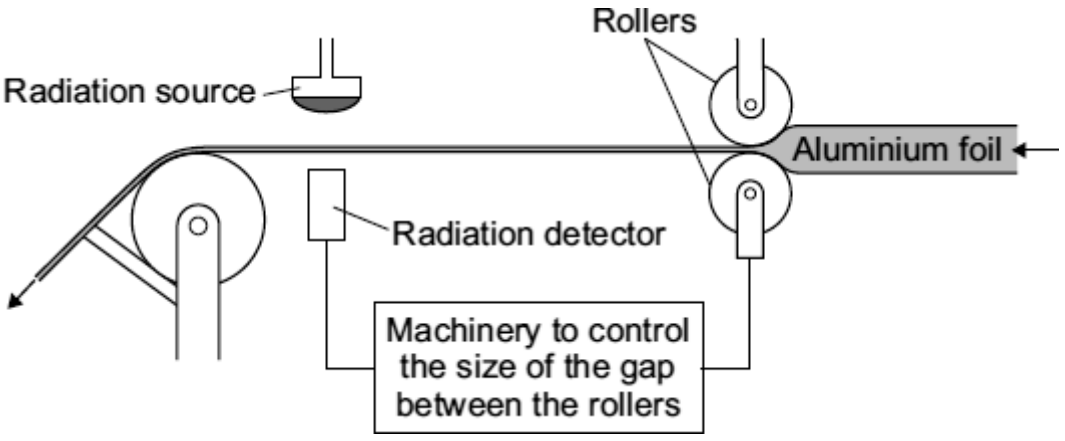
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(2)
(Total 7 marks)

Q4. The diagram shows a system used to control the thickness of aluminium foil as it is being rolled. A radiation source and detector are used to monitor the thickness of the foil.



(a) Which type of source, alpha, beta or gamma, should be used in this control system?

.....

Explain why each of the other two types of source would **not** be suitable.

.....

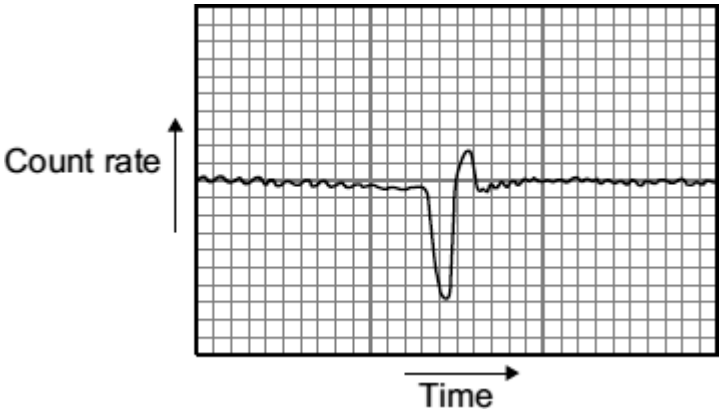
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(3)

(b) The chart shows how the count rate recorded by the detector varies over a short period of time.



Use the graph to explain how the thickness of the foil changes, and how the control system responds to this change.

.....

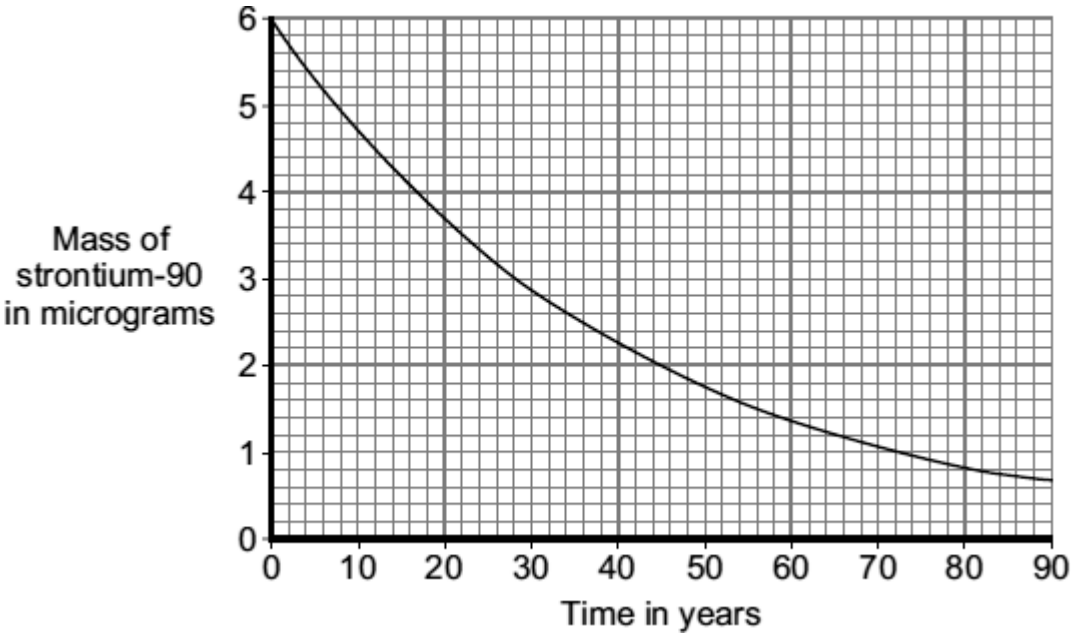
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(2)

(c) When first used, the radiation source contains 6 micrograms of strontium-90. The graph shows how the mass of the strontium-90 will decrease as the nuclei decay.



The control system will continue to work with the same source until 75 % of the original strontium-90 nuclei have decayed.

After how many years will the source need replacing?

Show clearly your calculation and how you use the graph to obtain your answer.

.....

.....

.....

Number of years = ...

(2)
(Total 7 marks)

Q5. In 2011 an earthquake caused severe damage to a nuclear power station in Japan.

The damage led to the release of large amounts of radioactive iodine-131 ($^{131}_{53}I$) into the atmosphere.

(a) The table gives some information about an atom of iodine-131 ($^{131}_{53}I$).

Complete the table.

mass number	131
number of protons	53
number of neutrons	

(1)

(b) Complete the sentence.

The number of protons in an atom is called the proton number or

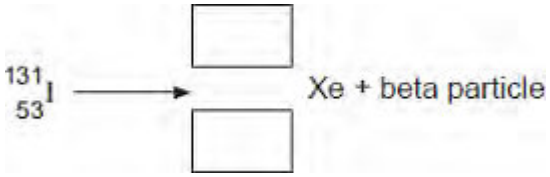
the ..... number.

(1)

(c) An atom of iodine-131 decays into an atom of xenon (Xe) by emitting a beta particle.

(i) The decay of iodine-131 can be represented by the equation below.

Complete the equation by writing the correct number in each of the **two** boxes.



(2)

(ii) A sample of rainwater contaminated with iodine-131 gives a count rate of 1200 counts per second.

Calculate how many days it will take for the count rate from the sample of

rainwater to fall to 75 counts per second.

Half-life of iodine-131 = 8 days

Show clearly how you work out your answer.

.....

.....

..... days

(2)

(iii) If people drink water contaminated with iodine-131, the iodine-131 builds up in the thyroid gland. This continues until the thyroid is saturated with iodine-131 and cannot absorb any more. The radiation emitted from the iodine-131 could cause cancer of the thyroid.

In Japan, people likely to be drinking water contaminated with iodine-131 were advised to take tablets containing a non-radioactive isotope of iodine.

Suggest why this advice was given.

.....

.....

.....

.....

(2)

(Total 8 marks)

Q6. Food irradiation is a process that exposes food to radiation. Irradiation can be used to kill the bacteria that cause food poisoning or to slow down the ripening of fresh fruit and vegetables. Frozen foods and food inside packaging can also be irradiated.

(a) The table gives information about five radioactive isotopes.

Isotope	Half-life	Radiation emitted
Caesium-134	2.1 years	beta
Cobalt-60	5.3 years	gamma
Curium-242	160 days	alpha
Strontium-90	28 years	beta
Technetium-99	6 hours	gamma

Which of these radioactive isotopes would be most suitable for irradiating food?

.....

Explain the reasons for your choice.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

(3)

(b) Many people think that food should not be irradiated. Consumer groups have said that they are worried about the nutritional value and safety of eating irradiated foods.

(i) Suggest **one** reason why some people may be concerned about the safety of eating irradiated food.

.....

.....

(1)

(ii) Independent scientific committees in several countries, including Sweden, Canada and the UK, have concluded that it is safe to eat irradiated food.

These scientific committees need to be independent from government influence.

Suggest why.

.....

.....

(1)

(iii) One group of scientists has compared the vitamin content of non-irradiated foods with irradiated foods.

The table below gives the data obtained for 1 kg of cooked chicken.

Vitamin	Non-irradiated food in milligrams	Irradiated food in milligrams
B6	1.22	1.35
B12	21.00	28.00
E	3.30	2.15
Niacin	58.00	55.50
Riboflavin	2.10	2.25

Considering only the data in the table, is it valid to conclude that irradiated food is less nutritional than non-irradiated food?

Explain your answer.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

(2)

(iv) In a restaurant, meals with ingredients that have been irradiated must be clearly identified on the menu.

It is important that people eating in a restaurant are given this information.

Suggest why.

.....

.....

(1)

(c) The isotope caesium-137 decays by emitting beta radiation.
Caesium-137 has a half-life of 30 years.

(i) What is a beta particle, and from which part of an atom is a beta particle emitted?

.....

.....

(1)

(ii) A sample containing caesium-137 has a count rate of 600 counts per minute.

Calculate how long it would take for the count rate from the sample to fall to 75 counts per minute.

Show clearly how you work out your answer.

.....

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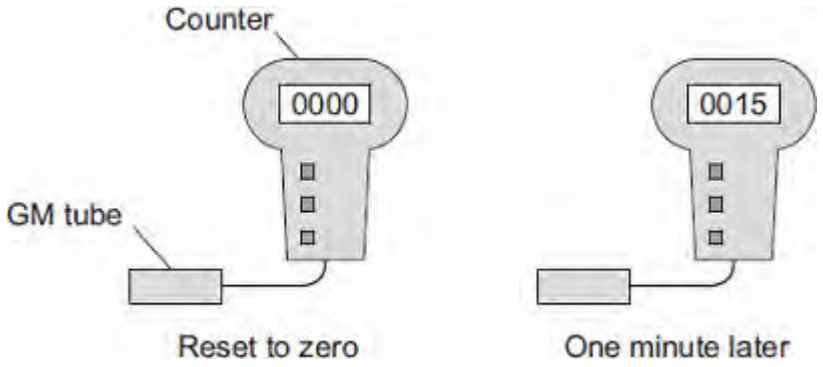
Time taken = ... years

(2)

(Total 11 marks)

Q7.(a) A teacher used a Geiger-Műller (GM) tube and counter to measure the *background radiation* in her laboratory.

The teacher reset the counter to zero, waited one minute and then took the count reading. The teacher repeated the procedure two more times.



(i) Background radiation can be either from natural sources or from man-made sources.

Name **one man-made** source of background radiation.

.....

(1)

(ii) The three readings taken by the teacher are given in the table.

Count after one minute
15
24
18

The readings given in the table are correct.

Why are the readings different?

.....

.....

(1)

(b) Some scientists say they have found evidence to show that people living in areas of high natural background radiation are less likely to develop cancer than people living in similar areas with lower background radiation.

The evidence these scientists found does not definitely mean that the level of background radiation determines whether a person will develop cancer.

Suggest a reason why.

.....

.....

(1)

(c) An atom of the isotope radon-222 emits an alpha particle and decays into an atom of polonium.

An alpha particle is the same as a helium nucleus. The symbol below represents an alpha particle.

$$^{4}_{2}\text{He}$$

(i) How many protons and how many neutrons are there in an alpha particle?

Number of protons = ...

Number of neutrons = ...

(2)

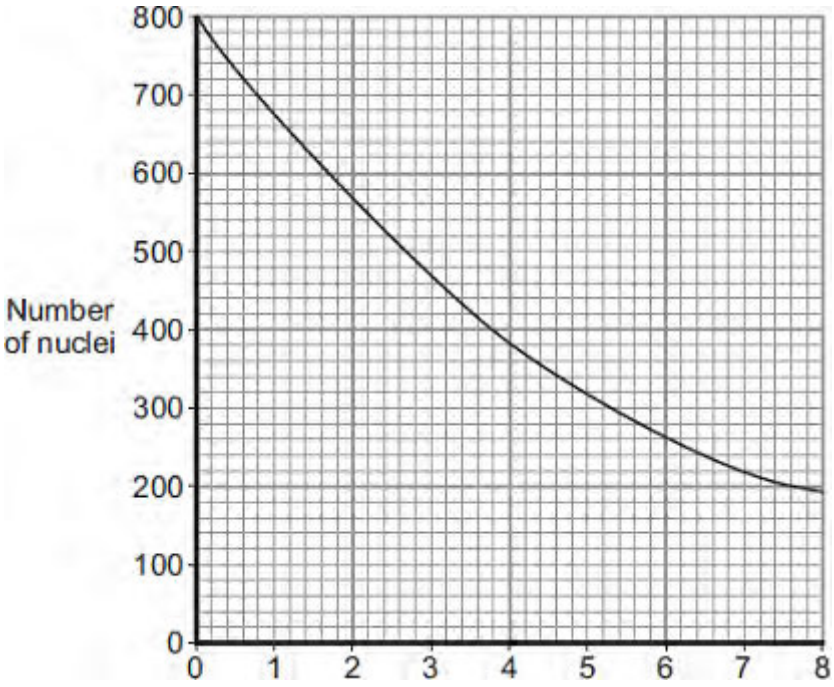
(ii) The decay of radon-222 can be represented by the equation below.

Complete the equation by writing the correct number in each of the **two** boxes.

$$^{222}_{86}\text{Rn} \longrightarrow \square \quad \square + \text{Po} + \text{alpha particle}$$

(2)

(d) The graph shows how, in a sample of air, the number of radon-222 nuclei changes with time.



Use the graph to find the half-life of radon-222.

Show clearly on the graph how you obtain your answer.

Half-life = ... days

(2)

(Total 9 marks)