

4.1 Biomechanics: movement and impulse

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 10 marks

KEY WORDS base of support • impulse

Objective

Biomechanics: movement and impulse. Supported HL concept preparation; original classroom practice, not an official IB paper or assessed learner work.

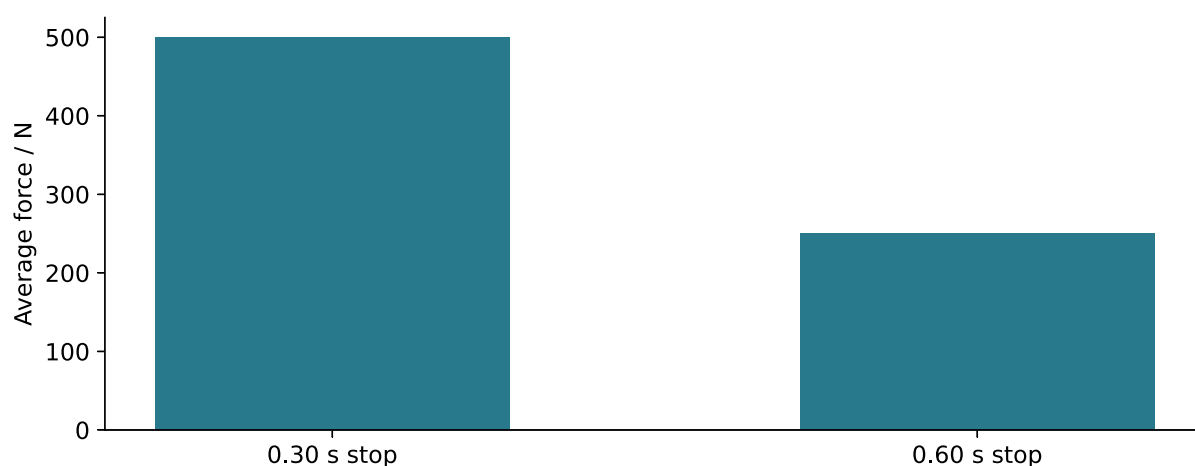
1 Key knowledge and worked examples

■ What would explain this observation?

- Landing with bent knees increases the time over which momentum changes. The movement can reduce average impact force for the same momentum change.
- Start with a prediction. State the quantities or features you would compare, then decide what evidence could distinguish two explanations.

■ Build the model

- Joint movement results from muscle forces acting through lever systems. The centre of mass and **base of support** affect stability. **Impulse** connects force-time evidence to momentum change.
- impulse: Force integrated over time, equal to momentum change; base of support: The area supporting a body.



■ Choose evidence that can test it

- A biomechanical analysis must define the segment, direction and phase of movement. Net force and a single muscle force are not interchangeable. A longer lever arm can change torque without changing applied force.
- Use teacher-approved video of a safe movement with consent. Calibrate distance and time, identify frames consistently, and avoid making medical claims from a two-dimensional recording. Camera perspective can bias apparent joint angles.

■ Work from known quantities

- State the known values and their units. Choose the relation because its assumptions fit this case, then rearrange before substitution.
- Known: momentum changes by 150 kg metres per second. Average force magnitude = momentum change/stopping time. For 0.30 s, force = $150/0.30 = 500$ N. For 0.60 s, force = $150/0.60 = 250$ N. This idealized average excludes the detail of a changing force curve.

Example:

Momentum change is 120 kg metres per second over 0.40 s. Find average force magnitude. Use the same sequence: known quantities → model → relation → substitution → unit and interpretation.

■ Check the conclusion and its limits

- The largest force is not the same as average force. A school movement study should not deliberately create high-impact landings to test a prediction.
- Return to the original observation. Explain what the result supports, which conditions it assumes, and one way to test a competing explanation.

Warn:

A video from one angle proves the cause of a sports injury. This claim is false: The largest force is not the same as average force. A school movement study should not deliberately create high-impact landings to test a prediction.

Key:

Biomechanics: movement and impulse: A biomechanical analysis must define the segment, direction and phase of movement. Net force and a single muscle force are not interchangeable. A longer lever arm can change torque without changing applied force.

2 Practice

2.1 For a fixed momentum change, doubling stopping time does what to average force? Choose one answer.

- **A** Halves it
- **B** Doubles it
- **C** Leaves it unchanged

[1]

2.2 Momentum change is 120 kg metres per second over 0.40 s. Find average force magnitude. Show the relation, substitution and units.

[2]

2.3 Decide whether this claim is true and justify: A video from one angle proves the cause of a sports injury.

[2]

2.4 Force integrated over time, equal to momentum change: write the technical term. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Fictional force curves deliver 120 N s impulse over 0.20 and 0.40 s. Compare average forces. Can peaks or injury risk be inferred? [4]
