

SCIENCE · CHAPTER 1

Matter in Our Surroundings

A 1-page guide for parents · 90-second read.

EXPECTED MARKS

A well-prepared student should comfortably score 5-6 out of 6 here. Below 3 usually means the particle model never really clicked — worth a short re-teaching session before the next chemistry chapter, which assumes it.

TIME TO MASTER

6-8 hrs

HELPLINE

70330 05444

WHAT THIS CHAPTER IS, IN PLAIN ENGLISH

This is your child's first proper Chemistry chapter. It explains that everything around us — air, water, a chair — is 'matter', and that all matter is made of tiny particles that are constantly moving and have spaces between them. From this single idea your child learns WHY solids are hard, liquids flow, and gases can be squeezed; what really happens when ice melts or water boils; and the everyday science of why sweating cools us and why a clay pot keeps water cool. It is a scoring chapter (about 4-6 marks) because most answers follow from one model — the particle model.

5 QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CHILD

- Why does the temperature stay at 0 °C while ice is melting, even though we keep heating it?
- Why does sweating make you feel cooler?
- Why can a gas be compressed easily but a liquid cannot?
- What is sublimation? Name one thing that sublimates (hint: mothballs / camphor).
- What is 25 °C in Kelvin? (Answer should be 298 K — they add 273.)

WEAK-SPOT INDICATORS

- Thinks the heat during melting raises the temperature (it doesn't — that's latent heat).
- Believes evaporation happens only at boiling point (it happens at all temperatures, from the surface).
- Cannot draw or describe the particle arrangement in solids vs liquids vs gases.
- Forgets to add 273 when converting Celsius to Kelvin, or thinks 0 K equals 0 °C.

WHEN TO WORRY — AND WHAT TO DO

If your child can recite definitions but cannot EXPLAIN 'why evaporation cools' or 'why temperature is constant during melting' in their own words, they will lose the 3-mark reasoning questions that this chapter is built around. The fix is to ask 'why' out loud at home, not to re-copy the textbook. This chapter rewards understanding the one particle model, not memorising ten separate facts.

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