

Physics Command words



Command words appear in every exam question. They are instructions telling you what you should include in your answer.

Task: complete the command word table below to help you gain a clearer understanding of the meaning of these words.

<i>Command word</i>	<i>Subject specific meaning</i>	<i>Create a exam style question which incorporates the command word</i>
<i>Calculate</i>	<i>Work out the value of something</i>	Calculate the force exerted by the stone on the spring.
Annotate		
Apply		
Comment		
Compare		
Complete		
Construct		
Derive		
Design		
Determine		
Distinguish		

Physics Command words



<i>Command word</i>	<i>Subject specific meaning</i>	<i>Create a exam style question which incorporates the command word</i>
Explain		
Identify		
List		
Measure		
Outline		
Solve		
Write		
Show		
Predict		

Command words by levels of complexity – Student task



Task: consider which categories in the table below the words on the right should go in.

Knowledge and understanding	Application	Analysis	Evaluation

- Why

Give

Explain

Assess

Identify

What is meant by

Apply

Calculate

Examine

Give an example

Using examples

With reference to the evidence

How

What

Show how

Discuss

Name

Using

Outline

Draw on your knowledge

State

Would you agree

Using your knowledge

What trends

Demonstrate

List
- Analyse

Justify

Discuss

What factors

Identify

Organise

Contrast

Advise

Evaluate

Consider

Explain why

To what extent

Assess the extent

Weigh up

Suggest

calculate

Predict

Do you think

How far

Examine

Show how

Evaluate the suggestion

Critically assess

Assess the relative importance

Define

Compare

Describe

Which

Explain

Command words by levels of complexity



Knowledge and understanding	Application	Analysis	Evaluation
Define Describe Explain Give List Identify Outline State What is meant by Name	Apply Calculate Demonstrate Examine Give an example Using examples With reference to the evidence How Show how Why Which Using Draw on your knowledge Using your knowledge What trends Explain	Analyse Calculate Compare Contrast Discuss Explain Show how Which What factors Examine Identify Organise What	Advise Evaluate Assess Consider Discuss Explain why To what extent Assess the extent Weigh up Suggest Justify Predict Do you think How far Would you agree Why Evaluate the suggestion Critically assess Assess the relative importance

Command word meanings – Student task



Task: write down the meanings of the command words.

<i>Word</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Word</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
Analyse		Evaluate	
Annotate		Explain	
Apply		Explore	
Argue		Give	
Assess		Identify	
Calculate		Justify	
Comment		Label	
Compare		List	
Consider		Name	
Contrast		Outline	
Criticise		Predict	
Debate		Relate	
Define		Show	
Design		Sketch	
Determine		State	
Draw		Suggest	
Estimate			

Command word meanings



Word	Meaning	Word	Meaning
Analyse	Separate information into components and identify their characteristics	Evaluate	Judge from available evidence
Annotate	Add notation or labelling to a graph, diagram or other drawing	Explain	Give reasons
Apply	Put into effect in a recognised way	Explore	Investigate without preconceptions about the outcome
Argue	Present a reasoned case	Give	Produce an answer from recall or from given information
Assess	Make an informed judgement	Identify	Name or otherwise characterise
Calculate	Work out the value of something	Justify	Support a case with evidence
Comment	Present an informed opinion	Label	Provide appropriate names on a diagram
Compare	Identify similarities and/ or differences	List	List a name of features or points without further elaboration
Consider	Finish a task by adding to given information	Name	Identify using a recognised technical term
Contrast	Identify differences	Outline	Set out main characteristics
Criticise	Access worth against explicit expectations	Predict	Give a plausible outcome
Debate	Present different perspectives on an issue	Relate	Give a technical term or its equivalent
Define	Specify meaning	Show	Provide structured evidence to reach a conclusion
Design	Set out something will be done	Sketch	Draw approximately
Determine	Use given data or information to obtain an answer	State	Express in clear terms
Draw	Produce a diagram	Suggest	Present a possible case
Estimate	Assign an approximate value		