

Light and the Electromagnetic Spectrum

Textbook pages 152-165

Before You Read

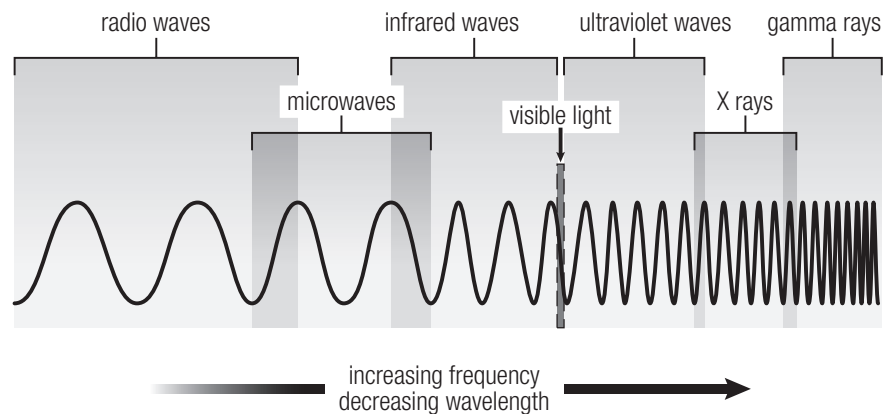
Choose a technology that uses invisible waves, such as microwave ovens, radio, X rays, or wireless Internet connections. Explain how the technology affects your life.

Mark the Text

Identify Details

Highlight the names of different types of waves as you read them. Say their names aloud. Underline the names of technologies that depend on the waves.

What is the electromagnetic spectrum?



Light that you can see is an example of a form of energy called **radiant energy**. This energy spreads out, or radiates, from its source in all directions. The Sun is a source of radiant energy. Radiant energy is not just visible light. The Sun and other sources of energy also give off energy in waves you cannot see. These waves transport energy by the vibration of electrical and magnetic fields. That is why these waves, including visible light waves, are known as **electromagnetic radiation**.

The spectrum of electromagnetic radiation is known as the **electromagnetic spectrum**. The electromagnetic spectrum includes radio waves, which can have wavelengths that are kilometres long. It also includes gamma rays, which can have wavelengths smaller than an atom. The spectrum includes all the electromagnetic waves in between. ✓

Reading Check

1. What larger spectrum of waves is the visible spectrum part of?

What waves have wavelengths longer than visible light?

- ◆ **Radio waves** have the longest wavelengths in the electromagnetic spectrum. Radio waves are used for broadcasting radio and television signals. Radio waves are also used in medicine. They allow us to see inside our bodies using magnetic resonance imaging (MRI).
Microwaves are a type of radio wave. As well as being used in microwave ovens, microwaves are also used to communicate with satellites.
- ◆ **Infrared waves** have wavelengths longer than red light in the visible spectrum. Heat lamps used by restaurants to keep food warm emit invisible infrared waves as well as red light. Infrared waves are also used in remote controls for televisions and for reading CD-ROMs. Infrared waves are also called heat radiation. ✓

What waves have wavelengths shorter than visible light?

- ◆ **Ultraviolet waves** have wavelengths shorter than violet light in the visible spectrum. Your body needs to absorb ultraviolet waves to make vitamin D. Too much exposure to ultraviolet waves, though, can result in sunburns and skin cancer. Ultraviolet waves are used to kill bacteria found in food, water, and on medical tools.
- ◆ **X rays** have shorter wavelengths and higher energy and frequencies than ultraviolet waves. X rays are used to photograph bones and teeth, to check the inside of baggage at airports, and to check jet engines and other machines for damage.
- ◆ **Gamma rays** have the shortest wavelengths, the highest energy, and the highest frequency of the electromagnetic spectrum. Gamma rays are used in radiation therapy to kill cancer cells.

✓ Reading Check

2. What are three uses for infrared waves?

Use with textbook pages 152-160.

The electromagnetic spectrum

Write a use for each electromagnetic radiation stated below. In the box provided, draw a picture to illustrate your example.

1. Radio waves

Use: _____

2. Microwaves

Use: _____

3. Infrared waves

Use: _____

4. Ultraviolet rays

Use: _____

5. X rays

Use: _____

6. Gamma rays

Use: _____

Use with textbook pages 152–160.

True or false?

Read the statements given below. If the statement is true, write “T” on the line in front of the statement. If it is false, write “F” and rewrite the statement to make it true.

1. _____ Radiant energy spreads out from its source in all directions.

2. _____ Electromagnetic radiation includes only visible light waves.

3. _____ Microwaves are a type of infrared wave.

4. _____ X rays have more energy than gamma rays.

5. _____ Radio waves, microwaves, and ultraviolet waves all have longer wavelengths than visible light.

6. _____ Both X rays and gamma rays have higher frequencies than ultraviolet rays.

7. _____ Communicating with satellites is an application of gamma rays.

8. _____ The Sun radiates both visible energy and invisible energy.

Use with textbook pages 152–160.

More than meets the eye

Vocabulary

electromagnetic radiation	radiant energy
electromagnetic spectrum	radio waves
frequency	ultraviolet rays
gamma rays	visible light
infrared waves	wavelength
microwaves	X rays

Use the terms in the vocabulary box to fill in the blanks. Use each term only once.

1. The _____ represents the different forms of electromagnetic radiation.
2. Light is classified as _____ because electrical and magnetic fields vibrate in a light wave.
3. _____ is energy that travels by radiation. An example of this is light.
4. Heat radiation, also known as _____, cannot be seen by your eyes but can be felt by your skin.
5. Microwaves are one type of _____.
6. _____ can be used to communicate with satellites.
7. Because _____ have the highest energy of all electromagnetic radiation, they are the most damaging to human tissue.
8. Compared to all other types of electromagnetic radiation, radio waves have the lowest _____.
9. An overexposure to _____ can result in sunburns and skin cancer.