Practice Question Set For A-Level
Subject : Chemistry
Paper-2 Topic: Polymers

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Name of the Student:_____
Max. Marks : 22 Marks **Time : 22 Minutes**

Q1.

Lactic acid, $CH_3CH(OH)COOH$, is formed in the human body during metabolism and exercise. This acid is also formed by the fermentation of carbohydrates such as sucrose, $C_{12}H_{22}O_{11}$.

(a) (i) Give the IUPAC name for lactic acid.

_____

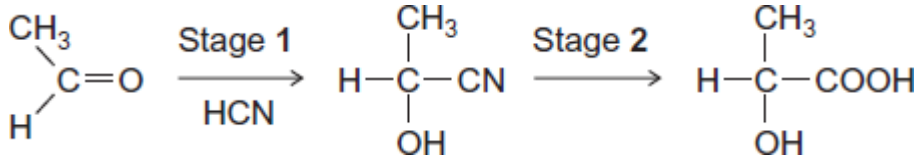
(1)

(ii) Write an equation for the formation of lactic acid from sucrose and water.

_____

(1)

(b) A molecule of lactic acid contains an asymmetric carbon atom.
The lactic acid in the body occurs as a single enantiomer.
A racemic mixture (racemate) of lactic acid can be formed in the following two-stage synthesis.



(i) Name and outline a mechanism for Stage **1**.

Name of mechanism _____

Mechanism

(5)

(ii) Give the meaning of the term *racemic mixture (racemate)*.

_____

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_____

(1)

(iii) Explain how you could distinguish between a racemic mixture (racemate) of lactic acid and one of the enantiomers of lactic acid.

_____

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_____

_____

(2)

(c) A mixture of lactic acid and its salt sodium lactate is used as an acidity regulator in some foods. An acidity regulator makes sure that there is little variation in the pH of food.

(i) Write an equation for the reaction of lactic acid with sodium hydroxide.

_____

(1)

(ii) The acid dissociation constant K_a for lactic acid has the value 1.38×10^{-4} mol dm^{-3} at 298 K.

Calculate the pH of an equimolar solution of lactic acid and sodium lactate.

_____

_____

_____

_____

(2)

(iii) Suggest an alternative name for the term *acidity regulator*.
Explain how a mixture of lactic acid and sodium lactate can act as a regulator when natural processes increase the acidity in some foods.

Name _____

Explanation _____

_____

_____

_____

(3)

(d)

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The cup shown is made from PLA, poly(lactic acid).
PLA is the condensation polymer formed from lactic acid.

The polymer is described as 100% biodegradable and 100% compostable.

Compostable material breaks down slowly in contact with the moist air in a garden bin. This produces compost that can be used to improve soil.

The manufacturers stress that PLA cups differ from traditional plastic cups that are neither biodegradable nor compostable.

(i) Draw a section of PLA that shows **two** repeating units.

(2)

(ii) Name the type of condensation polymer in PLA.

_____

(1)

(iii) An intermediate in the production of PLA is a cyclic compound ($C_6H_8O_4$) that is formed from two PLA molecules.

Draw the structure of this cyclic compound.

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(1)

(iv) Traditional non-biodegradable plastic cups can be made from poly(phenylethene), commonly known as *polystyrene*.

Draw the repeating unit of poly(phenylethene).

(1)

(v) The manufacturers of PLA claim that the material will break down to compost in just 12 weeks.

Suggest **one** reason why PLA in landfill may take longer than 12 weeks to break down.

_____

_____

(1)

(Total 22 marks)

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