# Teacher Activity C: Showing units in tables and graphs

On a graph, each axis should include a label that shows the name of the variable and its unit. The same applies to the heading of each column in a table of data. There are different ways of representing this.

a) The following shows data for a trolley rolling down a ramp. Which of the two versions do you think is preferable? Why?
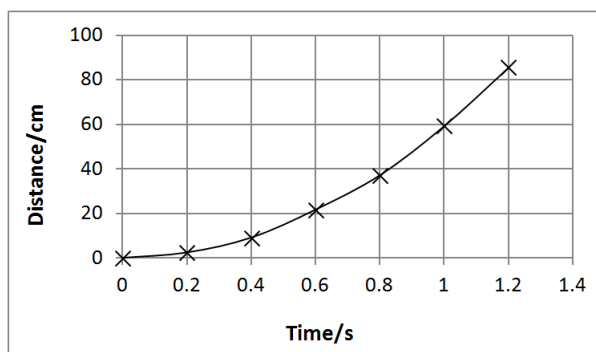
Version 1

Time (s)	Distance (cm)
0.0	0
0.2	2.4
0.4	9.1
0.6	21.7
0.8	37.2
1.0	59.3
1.2	85.6
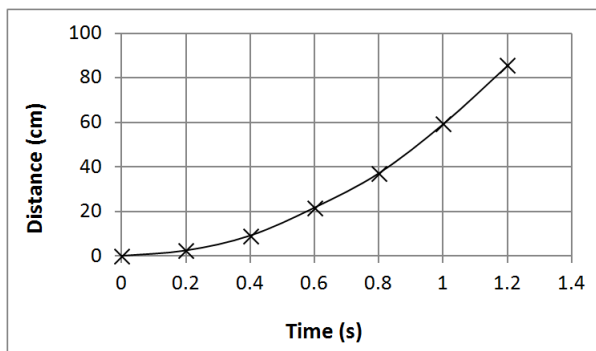
Version 2

Time/s	Distance/cm
0.0	0
0.2	2.4
0.4	9.1
0.6	21.7
0.8	37.2
1.0	59.3
1.2	85.6

b) How would you indicate the unit for density on a table or graph in 11–16 science? What are your reasons?

1) Density (g/cm^3)	3) Density in g/cm^3	5) Density$/g/cm^3$
2) Density $(g\ cm^{-3})$	4) Density in $g\ cm^{-3}$	6) Density$/g\ cm^{-3}$

Further information: *The Language of Mathematics in Science: A Guide to Teachers of 11-16 Science*, Section 3.1 Using tables to collect and present data (pp 23-24) and Section 4.6 Labels and units (p 39)

This activity is part of a series produce by MathsInScience.uk in order to promote engagement with the guidance booklet *The Language of Mathematics in Science: A Guide to Teachers of 11-16 Science*. Note that the activities are intended to stimulate discussion between teachers, and are not intended for student use. MathsInScience.uk is an independent organisation that aims to support the use of mathematics in the secondary science curriculum: see the website www.mathsinscience.uk.