

**Assumed Knowledge** Factorisation of expressions. Simple techniques of integration.

**Objectives**

(7a) To be able to recognise a differential equation as a separable equation.

(7b) To be able to solve a separable equation by separation of variables.

(7c) To be able to perform integrations using trigonometric substitutions.

**Preparatory Questions**

1. Which of the following differential equations are separable? Write those that are in separated form.

(i)  $\frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{x^2y}{(x^2 + 1)^{1/2}}$

(ii)  $\frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{a^2e^y}{(a^2 - x^2)^{3/2}} - \frac{e^y}{(a^2 - x^2)^{1/2}}$

(iii)  $\frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{x + \cos y}{x^3\sqrt{x^2 - 16}}$ .

**Practice Questions**

2. Find the general solutions of

(i)  $\frac{dy}{dx} = 1 + y^2$

(ii)  $\frac{dy}{dx} = y \cos x$

(iii)  $(1 + x)\frac{dy}{dx} + y^2 = 0$

3. Evaluate the following integrals by making the given substitution:

(i)  $\int \frac{x^2}{(a^2 - x^2)^{3/2}} dx, \quad x = a \sin u.$

(ii)  $\int \frac{x^2}{(x^2 + 1)^{1/2}} dx, \quad x = \sinh t.$

4. (Suitable for group work and discussion.) An animal population has a net growth rate per unit population which varies with the seasons, being positive in summer and negative in winter. Let  $x(t)$  be the size of the population at time  $t$ , which is measured in years. The following differential equation is suggested as a model for this situation:

$$\frac{dx}{dt} = (k \cos 2\pi t)x \quad (k \text{ a positive constant}).$$

(i) What is the period of  $\cos 2\pi t$ ?

(ii) What time of year do you think  $t = 0$  represents ?

- (iii) Can you explain why  $x$  has been multiplied by  $(k \cos 2\pi t)$  in this model?
- (iv) Solve the equation to find  $x(t)$ , given that  $x = x_0$  at  $t = 0$ .
- (v) Does  $x(t)$  have a limiting value as  $t \rightarrow \infty$ ?
- (vi) What are the maximum and minimum values of  $x$  and when do they occur?

### More Questions

5. (i) Find the general solution of

$$\frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{\operatorname{cosec} y}{\sqrt{x^2 + 4}}.$$

- (ii) Find the particular solution of

$$\frac{dx}{dt} = \frac{x^2}{\cos^2 t}$$

if  $x = 1$  when  $t = 0$ .

6. Find the general solutions of all the separable equations in Question 1.

7. (i) Given  $y = A\sqrt{x^2 + 1}$ , where  $A$  is an arbitrary constant, show by substitution that it satisfies the differential equation  $\frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{xy}{x^2 + 1}$ .

- (ii) Since the general solution of a first-order differential equation depends on one arbitrary constant, we see that the solution given in part (i) is the general solution of  $\frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{xy}{x^2 + 1}$ . Now find the particular solution satisfying the initial condition  $y(0) = 1$ .

- (iii) Sketch the family of solution curves given in part (i), indicating the behaviour of solutions for  $A > 0$ ,  $A = 0$  and  $A < 0$ . Indicate also on your sketch the particular solution found in part (ii).

### Answers to Selected Questions

1. (i) Separable:  $\frac{1}{y} \frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{x^2}{(x^2 + 1)^{1/2}}$ . (ii) Separable:  $e^{-y} \frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{x^2}{(a^2 - x^2)^{3/2}}$ .

- (iii) Not separable.

2. (i)  $y = \tan(x - C)$  (ii)  $y = Ae^{\sin x}$  (iii)  $y = \frac{1}{\ln|1 + x| + C}$

3. (i)  $\frac{x}{\sqrt{a^2 - x^2}} - \sin^{-1} \frac{x}{a} + C$  (ii)  $\frac{1}{2}x\sqrt{1 + x^2} - \frac{1}{2}\sinh^{-1} x + C$

5. (i)  $-\cos y = \sinh^{-1} \frac{x}{2} + C$  (ii)  $x = \frac{1}{1 - \tan t}$

6. (i)  $\ln|y| = \frac{1}{2}x\sqrt{1 + x^2} - \frac{1}{2}\sinh^{-1} x + C$  (ii)  $-e^{-y} = \frac{x}{\sqrt{a^2 - x^2}} - \sin^{-1} \frac{x}{a} + C$