Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_\_

**Skittlium’s Half Life**

**Purpose:** To simulate radioactive decay with Skittles

You will be given a sample of a radioactive element known as Skittlium. The bold “S” printed across the front surface of the atom easily distinguishes radioactive members of this atom. (The S mark)

**Materials:**

* **Plastic cup**
* **Paper towels**
* Skittlium atoms

**Procedure:**

1. Collect the cup and paper towels from the front of the room.
2. Collect the Skittlium from your teacher.
3. Count out **the number** of Skittlium atoms in your packet and place them in your cup.
4. Total the number of Skittlium atoms of all the members of the group and write this number on the blank line above the data table
5. Shake your cup and dump out the Skittlium atoms onto your paper towels.
6. Carefully separate any Skittlium atoms whose **S is showing. These are stable atoms and can be eaten.**
7. Carefully count the remaining Skittlium atoms which are still radioactive, add the total for your group and record this number in the data table.
8. Put the radioactive Skittlium atoms back in the cup and repeat steps 5-7. Each time removing the stable atoms and counting the number of radioactive atoms.
9. Repeat steps 5 and 7 until you have 1 or 2 Skittlium atoms left in your cup.
10. Once your group has completed their data table for the group data, have one person bring a copy of the group data to the teacher and pick up graph paper for the group.
11. Graph the data in your data table on a piece of graph paper. (Make sure to label your graph correctly and include an appropriate scale)
12. Once all of the groups have reported their findings to the teacher, the teacher will post the class data on a chart.
13. Fill in the class data table and graph the data for the class data.
14. Complete the analysis questions.
15. Answer the analysis questions.

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**Group Data Class Data**

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**Analysis Questions:** Answer using complete Sentences and Complete thoughts (CSIQ!).

1. Define what the term “**half-life**” means and explain how we modeled this process in this lab. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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1. What trends do you notice when you graph your data? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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1. What trends do you notice when you graph the class data? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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1. Should the trends look similar between your data and the class data? Explain why the graphs might appear to show different trends. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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1. If you started with 1000 units of a radioactive element that has a half-life of 2,500 years, how many half-lives will the material have gone through in 7500 years? (**Show your work in the space below and explain your answer**)

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1. How many of the units will be left after this 7500 years? (**Show your work below and explain your answer**)

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1. What percentage of parent/daughter material will remain after 7,500 years? Explain your answer.

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