

Question 24 (4 marks)

Assess the impact of atomic absorption spectroscopy (AAS) on the scientific understanding of the effects of trace elements.

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AAS has allowed scientists to test minute traces of elements in samples of water, earth and fertilisers and other solutions. Without AAS, scientists could not determine what causes particular effects in examples such as humans and plants. AAS could test very very small amounts of these elements and this can in turn be used to determine elements that produce ~~that~~ particular effects on subjects. Scientists did not have any way to determining minute traces of elements before AAS was introduced. AAS has opened up a whole new field on the scientific understanding of the effects of trace elements eg. particular amounts that are acceptable, limits to the amounts of lead that is allowed in drinking water. The impact of AAS to science was very great.