

Name: _____

Date: _____

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Important Vocabulary: Waves & Electromagnetic Radiation Unit

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Vocabulary Word	DEFINITION and Examples
Wave	Any disturbance that transmits energy through matter or space.
Medium	A substance that a wave can travel through.
Mechanical Wave	Waves that travel through matter (they require a medium).
Electromagnetic Wave	Waves that can travel through empty space (they don't require a medium).
Transverse Wave	Waves where the particles vibrate with an up and down motion—perpendicular to the direction the wave travels.
Longitudinal Wave	Waves where the particles vibrate back and forth (parallel) along the path that the wave travels.
Trough	The valley, or lowest point, between two crests.
Crest	The peak, or highest point, of a transverse wave.
Amplitude	The maximum distance a wave vibrates from its rest position; the height of the wave.
Wavelength	Distance between two crests or two compressions.
Frequency	The number of waves produced in a given amount of time.
Reflection	When a wave bounces back after striking a barrier.
Refraction	Bending of a wave as it passes at an angle from one substance to another.
Absorption	When atoms in matter absorb light.
Transmission	Passing of light through matter.
Transparent	Matter that easily transmits visible light.
Translucent	Matter that transmits and scatters light.
Opaque	Matter that does not transmit any light.
Electromagnetic Spectrum	The entire range of electromagnetic waves.