

Ses #6 SP 713

In the *Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments*:

Walk through the exhibit areas for an overview of the areas of physical sciences and eras of time that the instruments represent.

Look closely at the Geometrical and Military Compass of Galileo. What do you notice about it, on the basis of your experience using a paper version of it in class?

Look at the other sighting instruments and sundials in the same case. Try to imagine their use. Consider the instruments' design, materials, and make-up.

Choose an instrument from any part of the gallery to look at closely, sketch, and take notes about. Choose one that intrigues you, even if you do not know its use and function.

Assignment for Ses #6

Write about the instrument that you selected to look at closely: its features, possible uses, connection to measurement, its design, materials, artistry, its relation to other instruments in the collection...

Write from your experiences with the historical science books: what surprised you; what you noticed about how science was expressed; the feel and sound of the paper and bindings; the format of the printed page; the different techniques for illustration; the markings by hand and handwriting in books; the evidences of politics and authority in the books; the artistry. Describe aspects of the observations, science, and context that you began to notice more, or wonder about, through the experience of looking at the books...

Read

Under Galileo Motion

Galileo Dialogue, excerpts on motion

Read the excerpts relating to examples that were significant in Galileo's experimenting and analysis: inclined plane; pendulum; ship, fall of an object from a tower; differing responses of heavy and light objects. In the excerpts, Simplicio typically presents the outlook derived from Aristotle, against which Galileo (Salviati/ Our Academician) is arguing. Sagredo is the curious and insightful layperson. The excerpts contribute to Galileo's larger purpose in the *Dialogue* to discuss /demonstrate the earth's motion.

How do these examples extend your curiosity about motion? What might you investigate or seek to observe, as a take-off from the examples and methods Galileo presents?

MIT OpenCourseWare
<http://ocw.mit.edu>

EC.050 Recreate Experiments from History: Inform the Future from the Past: Galileo
January IAP 2010

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: <http://ocw.mit.edu/terms>.