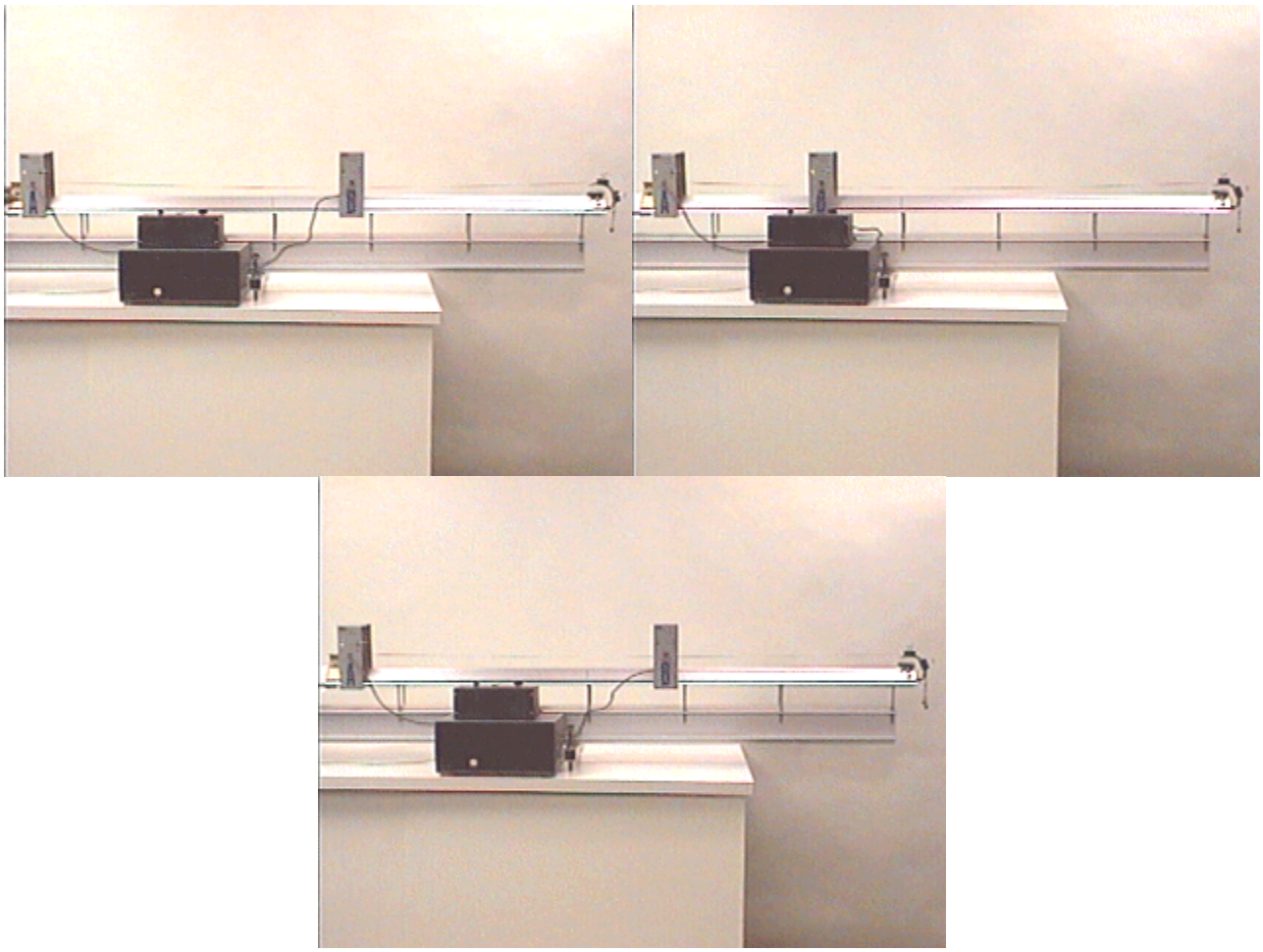
Question #123

Here is a follow-up question to Question #119.

A mass *M* on a level air track is connected by a string passing over a pulley to a much smaller mass *m*<<*M*, as seen in the photograph at the left below.



Releasing *M* allows *m* to accelerate it along the air track. The timer measures the time taken for a flag on the top of the air track glider to travel from photocell gate "A" to gate "B," which turns out to be exactly 2.00 seconds. See a video of the action by clicking your mouse on the photograph at the left above.

We have two small problems for you this week.

Part 1:

Suppose that the same experiment is performed with distance *D* being decreased to *D*/2, as seen in the photograph at the center above. How long will the glider take to travel from photocell gate "A" to gate "B"?

The time taken for mass *m* to accelerate mass *M* a distance *D*/2 from A to B will be:

- (a) 4 seconds.
- (b) 2.83 seconds
- (c) 2 seconds (the same).
- (d) 1.41 seconds.
- (e) 1 second.

Part 2:

Now suppose that the same experiment is performed with mass *m* being increased to 2*m*, as seen in the photograph at the right above. How long will the glider take to travel from photocell gate "A" to gate "B"?

The time taken for mass 2*m* to accelerate mass *M* a distance of *D* from A to B will be:

- (a) 4 seconds.
- (b) 2.83 seconds
- (c) 2 seconds (the same).
- (d) 1.41 seconds.
- (e) 1 second.

Click here for Answer #123 after October 7, 2002.

Question of the Week

Outreach Index Page

Lecture-Demonstration Home Page

For questions and comments regarding the *Question of the Week* contact
Dr. Richard E. Berg by e-mail or using phone number or regular mail address
given on the Lecture-Demonstration Home Page.