Phet Energy Lab Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Objective: Using two phet simulators (skate park and pendulum lab), investigate the relationship between kinetic energy, potential energy, thermal energy, and total mechanical energy within a system.

Part 1: Energy skate park:

1. Do a google search for “energy skate park basics phet.” Click the first search result (will open to a colorado.edu web page) and launch the simulator.

2. Click “intro” and take some time to play with the skater and her track. Click the pie chart and bar graph buttons to display these.

3. What is the relationship between:

a) The skater’s height and the total energy of the system?

b) The skater’s mass and the total energy of the system?

c) The skater’s height and the mass of the skater?

d) The kinetic energy and potential energy of the system?

4. How does the total energy of the system change as the skater moves?

5. Click the “friction” button at the bottom of the page. Set the skater to moving again in a half pipe.

6. Now that there is friction in the system, how does the total energy of the system change? How does the friction impact the kinetic and potential energy in the system?

7. Click on “playground” at the bottom of the page. Build a custom skate track for your skater and sketch it below. Label the points at which the skater has the most KE, the most PE, and equal KE/PE. How does the shape of the track you built impact the relationships between kinetic, potential, thermal and total energy in the system?

Part 2: Pendulum lab

1. Do a google search for “phet pendulum lab.” Click the first search result (will open a colorado.edu web page) and launch the simulator.

2. Click “lab” button and spend a bit of time playing with the simulator. Make sure to open the energy graph and to click the “velocity” and “acceleration” buttons in the top left.

3. Like you did for the energy skate park portion, explain the relationship between kinetic energy, potential energy, thermal energy, and total energy of the pendulum. How are these relationships different for the pendulum than they were for the skater?

4. Change the length of the rope. Make it both longer, then shorter.

a) How does this affect the swing height of the pendulum?

b) How does this affect the period (time of one full swing) of the pendulum?

b) How does this affect the total energy of the pendulum?

5. Change the mass of the pendulum. Make it both heavier, then lighter.

a) How does this affect the swing height of the pendulum?

b) How does this affect the period (time of one full swing) of the pendulum?

c) How does this affect the total energy of the pendulum?

6. Change the gravity of the system. Make it less (moon), then more (Jupiter).

a) How does this affect the swing height of the pendulum?

b) How does this affect the period (time of one full swing) of the pendulum?

c) How does this affect the total energy of the pendulum?

7. How does adding friction to the system affect the above situations?

Conclusion: Using your experiences with the phet simulators, answer the following:

1. Explain the concept of kinetic energy. What gives an object more or less KE?

2. Explain the concept of potential energy. What gives an object more or less PE?

3. In your own words, explain the Law of Conservation of Energy