the expressions

$$q(t) = Q(1 - e^{-t/RC}) \tag{28.14}$$

$$I(t) = \frac{\mathcal{E}}{R} e^{-t/RC} \tag{28.15}$$

where $Q = C\mathcal{E}$ is the maximum charge on the capacitor. The product RC is called the **time constant** τ of the circuit. If a charged capacitor is discharged through a resistor of resistance R, the charge and current decrease exponentially in time according to the expressions

$$q(t) = Qe^{-t/RC} \tag{28.17}$$

$$I(t) = -\frac{Q}{RC} e^{-t/RC} \tag{28.18}$$

where Q is the initial charge on the capacitor and $Q/RC = I_0$ is the initial current in the circuit. Equations 28.14, 28.15, 28.17, and 28.18 permit you to analyze the current and potential differences in an RC circuit and the charge stored in the circuit's capacitor.

QUESTIONS

1. Explain the difference between load resistance in a circuit and internal resistance in a battery.
2. Under what condition does the potential difference across the terminals of a battery equal its emf? Can the terminal voltage ever exceed the emf? Explain.
3. Is the direction of current through a battery always from the negative terminal to the positive one? Explain.
4. How would you connect resistors so that the equivalent resistance is greater than the greatest individual resistance? Give an example involving three resistors.
5. How would you connect resistors so that the equivalent resistance is less than the least individual resistance? Give an example involving three resistors.
6. Given three lightbulbs and a battery, sketch as many different electric circuits as you can.
7. Which of the following are the same for each resistor in a series connection—potential difference, current, power?
8. Which of the following are the same for each resistor in a parallel connection—potential difference, current, power?
9. What advantage might there be in using two identical resistors in parallel connected in series with another identical parallel pair, rather than just using a single resistor?
10. An incandescent lamp connected to a 120-V source with a short extension cord provides more illumination than the same lamp connected to the same source with a very long extension cord. Explain why.
11. When can the potential difference across a resistor be positive?
12. In Figure 28.15, suppose the wire between points g and h is replaced by a 10-Ω resistor. Explain why this change does not affect the currents calculated in Example 28.9.

13. Describe what happens to the lightbulb shown in Figure Q28.13 after the switch is closed. Assume that the capacitor has a large capacitance and is initially uncharged, and assume that the light illuminates when connected directly across the battery terminals.
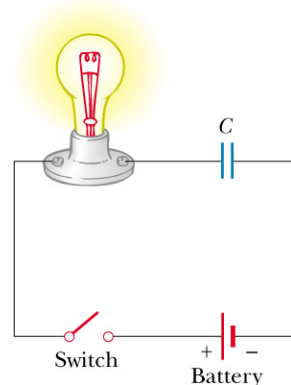

Figure Q28.13

14. What are the internal resistances of an ideal ammeter? of an ideal voltmeter? Do real meters ever attain these ideals?
15. Although the internal resistances of all sources of emf were neglected in the treatment of the potentiometer (Section 28.5), it is really not necessary to make this assumption. Explain why internal resistances play no role in the measurement of $\mathcal{E}_x$.