

3.2: Interpretation

We conclude that the nucleus of mass $m \approx Am_N$ contains Z positively charged nucleons (protons) and $N = A - Z$ neutral nucleons (neutrons). These particles are bound together by the “nuclear force”, which changes the mass below that of free particles. We shall typically write ${}^A\text{El}$ for an element of chemical type El, which determines Z , containing A nucleons.

This page titled [3.2: Interpretation](#) is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by [Niels Walet](#) via [source content](#) that was edited to the style and standards of the LibreTexts platform.