

Practice Questions

Directions: Each of the questions or incomplete statements below is followed by five suggested answers or completions. Select the one that is best in each case.

1. Just before something scary happens in a horror film, they often play scary-sounding music. When I hear the music, I tense up in anticipation of the scary event. In this situation, the music serves as a
 - (A) US.
 - (B) CS.
 - (C) UR.
 - (D) CR.
 - (E) NR.
2. Try as you might, you are unable to teach your dog to do a somersault. He will roll around on the ground, but he refuses to execute the gymnastic move you desire because of
 - (A) equipotentiality.
 - (B) preparedness.
 - (C) instinctive drift.
 - (D) chaining.
 - (E) shaping.
3. Which of the following is an example of a generalized reinforcer?
 - (A) chocolate cake
 - (B) water
 - (C) money
 - (D) applause
 - (E) high grades
4. In teaching your cat to jump through a hoop, which reinforcement schedule would facilitate the most rapid learning?
 - (A) continuous
 - (B) fixed ratio
 - (C) variable ratio
 - (D) fixed interval
 - (E) variable interval

5. The classical conditioning training procedure in which the US is presented before the CS is known as
- (A) backward conditioning.
 - (B) aversive conditioning.
 - (C) simultaneous conditioning.
 - (D) delayed conditioning.
 - (E) trace conditioning.
6. Tina likes to play with slugs, but she can find them by the shed only after it rains. On what kind of reinforcement schedule is Tina's slug hunting?
- (A) continuous
 - (B) fixed-interval
 - (C) fixed-ratio
 - (D) variable-interval
 - (E) variable-ratio
7. Just before the doors of the elevator close, Lola, a coworker you despise, enters the elevator. You immediately leave, mumbling about having forgotten something. Your behavior results in
- (A) positive reinforcement.
 - (B) a secondary reinforcer.
 - (C) punishment.
 - (D) negative reinforcement.
 - (E) omission training.
8. Which researcher studied latent learning?
- (A) Kohler
 - (B) Bandura
 - (C) Tolman
 - (D) Watson
 - (E) Skinner
9. Many psychologists believe that children of parents who beat them are likely to beat their own children. One common explanation for this phenomenon is
- (A) modeling.
 - (B) latent learning.
 - (C) abstract learning.
 - (D) instrumental learning.
 - (E) classical conditioning.

10. When Tito was young, his parents decided to give him a quarter every day he made his bed. Tito started to make his siblings' beds also and help with other chores. Behaviorists would say that Tito was experiencing
- (A) internal motivation.
 - (B) spontaneous recovery.
 - (C) acquisition.
 - (D) generalization.
 - (E) discrimination.
11. A rat evidencing abstract learning might learn
- (A) to clean and feed itself by watching its mother perform these activities.
 - (B) to associate its handler's presence with feeding time.
 - (C) to press a bar when a light is on but not when its cage is dark.
 - (D) the layout of a maze without hurrying to get to the end.
 - (E) to press a lever when he sees pictures of dogs but not cats.
12. With which statement would B. F. Skinner most likely agree?
- (A) Pavlov's dog learned to expect that food would follow the bell.
 - (B) Baby Albert thought the white rat meant the loud noise would sound.
 - (C) All learning is observable.
 - (D) Pigeons peck disks knowing that they will receive food.
 - (E) Cognition plays an important role in learning.
13. Before his parents will read him a bedtime story, Charley has to brush his teeth, put on his pajamas, kiss his grandmother good night, and put away his toys. This example illustrates
- (A) shaping.
 - (B) acquisition.
 - (C) generalization.
 - (D) chaining.
 - (E) a token economy.
14. Which of the following is an example of positive reinforcement?
- (A) Buying a child a video game after she throws a tantrum.
 - (B) Going inside to escape a thunderstorm.
 - (C) Assigning a student detention for fighting.
 - (D) Getting a cavity filled at the dentist to halt a toothache.
 - (E) Depriving a prison inmate of sleep.

15. Lily keeps poking Jared in Mr. Clayton's third-grade class. Mr. Clayton tells Jared to ignore Lily. Mr. Clayton is hoping that ignoring Lily's behavior will
- (A) punish her.
 - (B) extinguish the behavior.
 - (C) negatively reinforce the behavior.
 - (D) cause Lily to generalize.
 - (E) make the behavior latent.

ANSWERS TO PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. (B) The music before a scary event in a horror movie serves as a CS. It is something we associate with a fear-inducing event (the US). In this example, preparing to be scared is the CR and the fear caused by the event in the movie is the UR. There is no such thing as a NR.
2. (C) Instinctive drift limits your pet's gymnastic abilities. Instinctively, your dog will perform certain behaviors and will drift toward these rather than learning behaviors that go against his nature. Equipotentiality is the opposite position that asserts that any animal can be conditioned to do anything. Preparedness refers to a biological predisposition to learn some things more quickly than others. Preparedness explains why teaching a dog to fetch a stick is easier than teaching it to do a somersault. Chaining is when one has to perform a number of discrete steps in order to secure a reward. Shaping is the process one might use in teaching a dog any new trick. Shaping is when you begin by reinforcing steps preceding the desired response.
3. (C) Money is a generalized reinforcer because it can be exchanged for so many things that it is reinforcing to virtually everybody. Chocolate cake (food) and water are examples of primary reinforcers, while applause and high grades are examples of secondary reinforcers.
4. (A) In teaching your cat to jump through a hoop, continuous reinforcement would result in the most rapid learning. New behaviors are learned most quickly when they are rewarded every time. However, once the skill has been learned, partial reinforcement will make the behaviors more resistant to extinction.
5. (A) The classical conditioning training procedure in which the US is presented first is known as backward conditioning since, in most other procedures, the CS is presented first. The term aversive conditioning does not have anything to do with the order of the presentation of US and CS but rather indicates that the UR and CR are unpleasant. Simultaneous conditioning, as the name suggests, is when the CS and US are presented at the same time. Delayed conditioning is when the CS is presented first and overlaps the presentation of the US. In trace conditioning, the CS is presented first and the CS and US do not overlap. The US is then presented after a short time has elapsed.

6. (D) Tina's slug hunting is rewarded on a variable-interval schedule. The passage of time is a key element in when she is reinforced because the slugs appear only after it rains. Since rain does not fall on a fixed schedule (for example, every third day), she is on a VI schedule. If she were on a continuous schedule, she would find slugs whenever she looked. If the slugs appeared every three days, Tina would be on a fixed-interval schedule. If she needed to turn over three rocks to find a slug, she would be on a fixed-ratio schedule. If the number of rocks she needed to turn over varied, she would be on a variable-ratio schedule.
7. (D) Exiting the elevator to avoid Lola is negatively reinforced. Your behavior, leaving the elevator, is reinforced by the removal of an aversive stimulus (Lola). Remember that reinforcement (including negative reinforcement) always increases the likelihood of a behavior as opposed to punishment, which decreases the likelihood of a behavior.
8. (C) Tolman is known for his work on latent learning, learning that occurs in the absence of a reward but remains hidden until a reward is made available. Tolman's study involved three groups of rats running a maze under various contingencies of reinforcement.
9. (A) Many psychologists believe that children of parents who beat them are likely to beat their own children. One common explanation for this phenomenon is modeling. Modeling, or observational learning, is the idea that people or animals can learn from watching and copying the behavior of others.
10. (D) Tito's new bed-making and chore-doing regime indicates that he is generalizing. Just as a rat will press other levers in other cages, Tito is performing more chores in an attempt to maximize his rewards. Behaviorists minimize the role of internal motivation; they believe that the environment motivates. Spontaneous recovery would be if Tito began making his bed again after his parents had stopped rewarding him and he had returned to his slovenly ways. Acquisition occurred when Tito initially learned to make his bed to earn the quarter. By assuming Tito's parents do not reward him for making the rest of the family's beds, he will learn ultimately to discriminate and make only his own bed.
11. (E) A rat evidencing abstract learning would learn to press a bar when shown pictures of dogs but not pictures of cats. In this example, the rat has learned the abstract concept of dog. Learning to clean and feed itself by watching its mother would be an example of modeling. Learning to associate a person's presence with food is classical conditioning. Learning to respond only when a light is on is an example of discrimination training. Making a cognitive map of a maze without hurrying through the maze is an example of latent learning.

12. (C) B. F. Skinner believed that all learning was observable. He did not believe that learning had a cognitive component but, rather, took a radical behaviorist position that behavior was all there was. All the other choices suggest learning has a cognitive component (expectation, thought, knowing, cognition), and therefore Skinner would disagree with them.
13. (D) Charley needs to chain together a series of behaviors in order to get a reward (the bedtime story). Shaping is reinforcing approximations of a desired behavior, usually in an effort to teach it. Acquisition, in operant conditioning, is the learning of a behavior. Generalization is when one performs similar behaviors to those that will result in reinforcement. A token economy uses generalized reinforcers to control people's behavior.
14. (A) Buying a child a video game after she throws a tantrum is an example of positively reinforcing a behavior you probably do not want (the tantrum). This example raises an important point: the word *positive* in positive reinforcement refers to the addition of a reinforcer and not to the goodness or badness of the act that is being reinforced. Going inside to escape a thunderstorm and getting a cavity filled at the dentist to halt a toothache are both examples of negative reinforcement (removing something unpleasant). Assigning a student detention for fighting is an example of punishment (adding something unpleasant), depriving someone of sleep is an example of omission training (removing something pleasant).
15. (B) Mr. Clayton is hoping that ignoring Lily's behavior will extinguish the behavior. Something that is not reinforced is put onto an extinction schedule.