

# OPERANT CONDITIONING FUN

Classify each of the following consequences as an example of either

- **positive reinforcement,**
- **negative reinforcement,**
- **positive punishment,**
- **negative punishment,** or
- **extinction.**

HINT: Answer the following questions:

- 1) What is the behavior?
- 2) Does it increase or decrease?
- 3) Is it punishment or reinforcement?
- 4) What is the consequence?
- 5) Is it presented (+) or removed (-)?
- 6) Is it positive or negative?

1. Justin decides to play wrestling with an older boy, Jeff, who lives down the block. They are having fun until Justin decides to get a stick and play swords. He hits Jeff with the stick. Jeff is angry but he simply picks up his book bag and goes in the house. Justin is disturbed that his friend left and never hits Jeff with the stick again.

2. At the dinner table, Christopher, aged 2, pulled his parents together on either side of him and said, "Hey guys. Whas doin'?" Play ball!!!!" Everyone laughed so hard that he continued to do this five or six times at each meal for the next two months.

3. Zachary gets into so much trouble in one afternoon (he poured out all his sister's perfume, climbs out the window onto the roof, and many other similar things in a short period of time.) His mother tells him that he cannot go on the camping trip that his best friend invited him on. He stops misbehaving.

4. Zach's mother tells him that he can earn back the camping trip if he takes out the trash each night, washes the dishes and completes his homework before dinner. He does none of these things but she lets him go on the camping trip anyway. Now when his mother gives him a chore to do, he ignores her. Analyze this example from the point of view of Zach's mother. How is her behavior being controlled.

5. On Monday, Tony slammed the screen door 3 out of 8 times as he left the house. Each time his mother would give him a tongue lashing. "Tony, I have told you 'till I'm blue in the face **DON'T SLAM THE SCREEN DOOR!!**" On Tuesday, Tony slammed the screen door 7 out of 8 times.

6. When Jennifer's mother drops her off at day care each morning, Jennifer screams and yells. When she does this her mother stays and pays attention to her for a few minutes more. Jennifer's screaming and crying goes on for a long time each morning.

7. When 5-year-old Jonathan draws a picture, takes it to his father and says, "Hey, look at my picture," Father looks up from his paper, says, "Uh, huh," and goes back to reading. Jonathan draws a car and takes it to Mama. "Yes, Dear. Now run along and play with your blocks." Jonathan quits drawing pictures.

8. Emily is a very quiet, introverted, hardworking 5th grader who gets straight A's but who never volunteers in class, has only one friend and, in general, seems to be scared to death of people. Her teacher is particularly impressed with Emily's performance on an arithmetic test and announces to the class that since Emily got the highest grade, she will lead the pledge of allegiance every day for a week. Emily's performance on the next arithmetic test is quite poor. The number of correct answers she gives drops to the lowest she has ever had.

9. David, aged 6, wants the toy his 4 year old brother is playing with so he twists his brother's arm until the brother drops the toy. As soon as the toy is free David lets go of his brother's arm and lets the crying child get up off the ground. Over the weeks this little scene repeats itself frequently with David's toy grabbing becoming more frequent and the brother getting faster and faster at giving up and dropping the toy.

## USING CLASSICAL VS OPERANT CONDITIONING

***What procedure (choose either classical or operant conditioning) is being described or has probably resulted in the following behavior patterns? Be able to explain why you chose the model you did.***

1. In order to be able to punish my cat even when I'm not near enough to reach him, I have paired the sound of a clicker with getting squirted with water. Now the sound of the clicker causes him to startle.
2. My cat never gets on the furniture when I am around.
3. When I first start teaching about a concept, I'll praise any answer that is close to the right answer.
4. The smell of fresh bread baking makes my mouth water.
5. In a weight management class, participants earn points for every healthy meal they eat and every period of exercise they complete. Later these points result in refunds of their class fees.
6. When my son has gone for a week without arguing with his sister, he gets to choose which favorite activity he wants to engage in on Friday night.
7. After the bad car accident we had last year, I cringe and break into a sweat at the sound of squealing brakes.
8. To treat alcoholics, we sometimes put a chemical in their drinks that makes them sick. Eventually the taste of alcohol become aversive.
9. Every time someone flushes a toilet in the apartment building, the shower becomes very hot and causes the person to jump back. Over time, the person begins to jump back automatically after hearing the flush, before the water temperature changes.
10. Your father gives you a credit card at the end of your first year in college because you did so well. As a result, your grades continue to get better in your second year.
11. Your car has a red, flashing light that blinks annoyingly if you start the car without buckling the seat belt. You become less likely to start the car without buckling the seat belt.
12. You eat a new food and then get sick because of the flu. However, you develop a dislike for the food and feel nauseated whenever you smell it.
13. An individual receives frequent injections of drugs, which are administered in a small examination room at a clinic. The drug itself causes increased heart rate but after several trips to the clinic, simply being in a small room causes an increased heart rate.
14. A lion in a circus learns to stand up on a chair and jump through a hoop to receive a food treat.
15. A professor has a policy of exempting students from the final exam if they maintain perfect attendance during the quarter. His students' attendance increases dramatically.
16. You check the coin return slot on a pay telephone and find a quarter. You find yourself checking other telephones over the next few days.
17. Your hands are cold so you put your gloves on. In the future, you are more likely to put gloves on when it's cold.
18. John Watson conducted an experiment with a boy named Albert in which he paired a white rat with a loud, startling noise. Albert now becomes startled at the sight of the white rat.