**UNIT 6**

**THEORIES OF LEARNING**

The unit on learning is made up of four parts:Classical Conditioning, Operant Conditioning, Observational or Social Learning and Cognitive Learning.

**CLASSICAL CONDITIONING:** Classical Conditioning is learning based on making associations or connections between seemingly unrelated things, because those things occur at the same time. CLASSICAL CONDITIONING IS BASED ON ANTECEDENTS (things that come BEFORE).

***DIRECTIONS: Define/explain the following terms/people.***

Ivan Pavlov: *(remember Pavlov was a physiologist, not a psychologist)*

Unconditioned Stimulus:

Unconditioned Response:

Neutral Stimulus:

Conditioned Stimulus:

Conditioned Response:

Another important person associated with classical conditioning is the behaviorist John B. Watson. ***Explain the experiments of Watson and the meaning of the following terms.***

John B. Watson:

Generalization:

Discrimination:

Extinction:

Spontaneous Recovery:

*Why were Watson’s experiments with Little Albert unethical?*

**OPERANT CONDITIONING***:* Operant Conditioning is learning that results from the actions we perform and the CONSEQUENCES (things that come AFTER) that result from our actions.

Operant Conditioning is the result of *The Law of Effect.* *The Law of Effect* is the result of the work of Edward (E.L.) Thorndike. *The Law of Effect* says that if you do something, and the results are good, you are likely to perform that action again. For example, if you get good grades (your action) and your parents give you money (the consequence), you are MORE LIKELY (not guaranteed, of course) to perform the action again. Or, if you get bad grades (your action) and your parents ground you for two weeks (the consequence), you are LESS LIKELY to perform that action again. *The Law of Effect* became the basis for B.F. Skinner’s *Operant Conditioning.*

***DIRECTIONS: Define/explain the following terms or ideas.***

Premack Principle- (named after David Premack)

Overjustification-

Positive (added) Reinforcement-

Negative (taken away) Reinforcement-

Punishment-

**REINFORCERS**

Primary Reinforcer-

Secondary Reinforcer-

***DIRECTIONS: Decide which type of reinforcer is being used in the following scenarios.***

1. Parent: Eat your broccoli and you can have ice cream.

2. Teacher: If you complete all of your homework, you will get a token for a free night of homework.

3. Boss: If you work for a year without missing a day, you will get a raise.

4. Parent: If you get straight A’s, you will get $200.

5. Teenager: If you help me with my math homework, I will be your friend.

**REINFORCEMENT SCHEDULES**

In Operant Conditioning, there are different ways in which reinforcements (getting something you want) are delivered. B.F.Skinner did experiments with rats and pigeons in his “Skinner Box”. Below are examples of different reinforcement schedules.

Fixed = stays the same Ratio = # of responses

Variable = changes Interval = amount of time

***DIRECTIONS****: For the following scenarios, decide which type of reinforcement schedule is being used: Fixed Ratio (FR), Fixed Interval (FI), Variable Ratio (VR), or Variable Interval (VI)*

1. You work at a job that pays you every Friday.

2. Your friend gets a free sandwich after buying ten sandwiches.

3. You are waiting for an important piece of mail, but the mailman comes at a different time everyday.

4. You play the lottery in hopes of winning. *(Hint: On which schedule would you win the lottery?)*

5. A pigeon gets a food pellet every ten seconds after pressing a metal bar.

6. A rat gets a food pellet after pressing a metal bar ten times.

7. You play a slot machine in hopes of hitting the jackpot.

8. A pigeon gets a food pellet after pressing a metal bar. The first pellet comes after 10 seconds, the next pellet comes after 40 seconds, and the third one comes after 60 seconds.

9. A pigeon gets a food pellet after pressing a metal bar. The first pellet comes after the rat pushes the bar 5 times, the next pellet comes after the rat pushes the bar 20 times, the third pellet comes after the rat pushes the bar 10 times.

**SOCIAL/OBSERVATIONAL LEARNING:** Albert Bandura performed studies that demonstrated that we don’t always need reinforcement to learn things. Sometimes just observing others is enough for us to learn how to do things.

***DIRECTIONS: Answer the following questions.***

1. Explain Bandura’s “Bobo doll” experiment.

2. Define *modeling*.

3. List a few things you have learned simply by observing other people.

4. Think about Bandura’s Bobo doll experiment. Do you think that kids today would react in the same way that the subjects in Bandura’s experiment acted? Why?

5. Do you think people are just as likely to imitate *pro-social*  (kind, good behavior) acts as they are to imitate *anti-social* (mean, bad behavior) acts?

MARTIN SELIGMAN: Learned Helplessness