5.3 The Behaviourist Approach: Operant Conditioning and Skinner's Research: 10-minute Pack

AQA 7182 · about 10 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions.

1 Define operant conditioning.

(Total for Question 1 is 2 marks)

2 Outline positive reinforcement and give a pet example.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

3 Classify slot machine schedule and explain persistence.

(Total for Question 3 is 3 marks)

4 Identify one application of operant conditioning.

(Total for Question 4 is 1 mark)

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Mark scheme · 5.3 The Behaviourist Approach: Operant Conditioning and Skinner's Research: 10-minute Pack

Question 1

states operant conditioning is learning through the consequences of behaviour oe	**B1**
states behaviour is strengthened by reinforcement or weakened by punishment oe	**B1**

Answer: Operant conditioning is learning in which behaviour is shaped by its consequences; behaviours that are reinforced are more likely to occur again and behaviours that are punished are less likely to occur.

Question 2

states positive reinforcement is receiving a reward after a behaviour which increases the likelihood of the behaviour recurring oe	**B1**
gives an example, e.g. giving a dog a treat when it sits oe	**B1**

Answer: Positive reinforcement is when a reward is presented after a behaviour, increasing the chance the behaviour will be repeated; for example, giving a dog a treat when it sits.

Question 3

identifies variable ratio schedule (reinforcement after an unpredictable number of responses) cao	**M1**
explains that the unpredictability maintains high response rates oe	**A1**
explains that variable ratio schedules produce high resistance to extinction, which helps explain why gambling behaviour persists oe	**A1**

Answer: This is a variable ratio schedule: reinforcement occurs after an unpredictable number of responses. Because rewards are unpredictable, response rates stay high and behaviour shows strong resistance to extinction, explaining the persistence of gambling.

Question 4

identifies a valid application, e.g. token economy systems in prisons or psychiatric hospitals, where tokens are given for desirable behaviour and exchanged for privileges oe	**B1**

Answer: Token economy systems in institutions, where desirable behaviours are reinforced with tokens that can be exchanged for rewards.

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