3.5 Learning Theory as an Explanation of Attachment: 10-minute Pack

AQA 7182 · about 10 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer each question. At least four longer questions require full sentences. Complete the pack in about 80 minutes.

1 Explain the operant conditioning account of attachment.

(Total for Question 1 is 4 marks)

2 Identify the conditioning process in the applied baby-feeding example.

(Total for Question 2 is 3 marks)

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Mark scheme · 3.5 Learning Theory as an Explanation of Attachment: 10-minute Pack

Question 1

infant crying is a behaviour that can be negatively reinforced when caregiver responds and removes discomfort (e.g. feeding or soothing), making crying more likely in future oe	**M1**
explains negative reinforcement for the infant, e.g. caregiver feeding removes hunger, which is rewarding and strengthens the crying/cry-for-care behaviour oe	**A1**
caregiver behaviour is positively reinforced when responding produces social rewards, affection or the satisfaction of reducing infant distress, encouraging caregiving behaviour oe	**A1**
states that the two-way reinforcement creates a reciprocal pattern of behaviour that maintains the attachment bond over time oe	**A1**

Answer: Infant crying is negatively reinforced because caregiver response removes the infant's discomfort (for example feeding reduces hunger), which increases the likelihood of behaviours that elicit care. Caregivers are positively reinforced by social rewards or by relief at calming the infant, so both parties learn behaviours that maintain attachment.

Question 2

identifies classical conditioning cao	**B1**
justifies by linking Amaka (neutral stimulus) paired with food (UCS) so Amaka becomes a CS eliciting a smiling response oe	**M1**
states the learned response: the baby's smile is now a conditioned response to Amaka because of repeated pairing with feeding oe	**A1**

Answer: Classical conditioning. Amaka was paired with food, so Amaka became a conditioned stimulus and the baby's smile is now a conditioned response.

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