# 4.6 Treating Phobias: Systematic Desensitisation and Flooding: 10-minute Pack

AQA 7182 · about 10 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

**At least four answers must be written in full sentences. Allow approximately 10 minutes for this pack.**

**1** Compare cost and time implications of systematic desensitisation versus flooding

**(Total for Question 1 is 4 marks)**

**2** Outline reciprocal inhibition in systematic desensitisation

**(Total for Question 2 is 4 marks)**


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# Mark scheme · 4.6 Treating Phobias: Systematic Desensitisation and Flooding: 10-minute Pack

## Question 1

| | |
|---|---|
| identifies flooding advantage: can be quicker and require fewer sessions, reducing therapist time and cost per patient oe | **M1** |
| explains why this saves cost/time, e.g. prolonged single-session exposure can extinguish fear rapidly compared with many gradual sessions oe | **A1** |
| identifies systematic desensitisation advantage: less distressing so fewer dropouts and better for patients who need gradual support oe | **M1** |
| explains why this may save time/cost indirectly, e.g. reduced dropout and better adherence can lead to fewer repeated or supplementary sessions overall oe | **A1** |

**Answer: Flooding advantage: can be faster and need fewer sessions, lowering direct therapy time and cost. Systematic desensitisation advantage: is less distressing and has lower dropout, which can reduce the need for repeat treatment and indirect costs of failed therapy.**

## Question 2

| | |
|---|---|
| explains reciprocal inhibition as the principle that two opposing responses cannot occur at once, for example relaxation and anxiety oe | **M1** |
| applies it to a dog phobia by stating the patient is taught relaxation and exposed to dog stimuli so relaxation inhibits anxiety oe | **A1** |
| explains the mechanism: repeated pairing of relaxation with exposure weakens the association between the phobic stimulus and the fear response oe | **A1** |
| uses appropriate terminology such as anxiety, relaxation, inhibition and association oe | **B1** |

**Answer: Reciprocal inhibition is the idea that a person cannot be both relaxed and highly anxious at the same time. In treating a fear of dogs the patient is taught relaxation techniques and then gradually exposed to dog-related stimuli while relaxed, so the relaxation response inhibits the fear and repeated pairing weakens the fear association.**


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