

HANDOUT 3

Forms of Reinforcement and Punishment

| | Reinforcement: Behavior increases or strengthens over time (Reinforcer is something given and desired) | Punishment: Behavior decreases or weakens over time (Punisher is something given and aversive) |
|---|--|--|
| Positive: Results in receiving something | | |
| Negative: Results in having something taken away, removed | (Reinforcer is something taken away and aversive) | (Punisher is something taken away and desired) |

HANDOUT 4

Reinforcement and Punishment

Identify the type of operant conditioning illustrated in each example. Consider these questions for each.

- a. What behavior is changing?
- b. Is the behavior increasing (reinforcement) or decreasing (punishment)?
- c. Is something being added to the person's experience (positive) or being subtracted (negative)?

PR = Positive reinforcement

P = Positive punishment

NR = Negative reinforcement

NP = Negative punishment

- _____ 1. When Olivia makes rude noises at the dinner table, she gets her mouth washed out with soap. She doesn't make rude noises that often anymore.
- _____ 2. Little Joey gets yelled at when he acts up in class. Now he's acting up even more.
- _____ 3. Because Tameka earned an A in each of her classes, she doesn't have to do her usual chore of vacuuming this month. She's studying even more now.
- _____ 4. Ray came home past his curfew, so he was not allowed to drive for the following week. He hasn't missed a curfew since.
- _____ 5. Maria put in extra hours at work helping her boss finish a major project. She received a big bonus for her contributions. She's now looking for other ways to contribute at work.
- _____ 6. When Thuy and Gurpreet were running around the living room, they crashed into the Xbox, breaking it. They no longer run through the living room.
- _____ 7. Chandler's girlfriend, Monica, keeps bugging him to take her dancing. He finally agrees, and she quits bugging him. The next time she starts bugging him, he quickly agrees to do whatever it is. (Chandler's behavior is changing.)
- _____ 8. Monica's boyfriend, Chandler, gives in when she starts bugging him about something. Now whenever she wants something, she just starts bugging him. (Monica's behavior is changing.)

HANDOUT 5

Reinforcement Schedules

In real life, continuous reinforcement is rare. Sometimes responses are reinforced, sometimes not. Among the most important schedules of partial reinforcement are the fixed ratio (FR), variable ratio (VR), fixed interval (FI), and variable interval (VI). Identify the schedule in the examples below by writing your answer—FR, VR, FI, or VI—in the spaces on the left.

- _____ 1. Buying state lottery tickets and sometimes winning.
- _____ 2. A hotel maid may take a 15-minute break only after having cleaned three rooms.
- _____ 3. Checking your cell phone to see if you have a new text message when your phone is on silent.
- _____ 4. A baseball player gets a hit approximately every third time at bat.
- _____ 5. Checking the oven to see if chocolate chip cookies are done, when baking time is known.
- _____ 6. A blueberry picker receives \$1 after filling 3 pint boxes.
- _____ 7. A charitable organization makes an average of 10 phone calls for every donation it receives.
- _____ 8. Repeatedly callings a garage mechanic to see if your car is fixed yet. (Assume that the calls have no impact on your mechanic's behavior.)
- _____ 9. A student's final grade improves one level for every three book reviews submitted.
- _____ 10. A dog watches out the window to bark at the postal carrier who arrives every morning promptly at 10:05.

