

**MODULE 28 OPERANT CONDITIONING'S APPLICATIONS, AND COMPARISON TO CLASSICAL CONDITIONING**

**APPLICANTS OF OPERANT CONDITIONING**

- Skinner envisioned a day when “teaching machines and textbooks” would shape learning in small steps, immediately reinforcing correct responses.
- In sports, players may experience partial reinforcement for what becomes a superstitious behavior.
- At work, Skinner said, “How much richer would the whole world be if reinforcers in daily life were more effectively contingent on productive work?”
- Parents should remember that when you notice your child doing something right and affirm them for it, the child’s behavior will increase.
- Using OC in your daily life: 1. State your goal in measurable terms and announce it. 2. Monitor how often you engage in your desired behavior. 3. Reinforce the desired behavior and 4. Reduce the rewards gradually.

**CONTRASTING CLASSICAL AND OPERANT CONDITIONING**

- **RESPONDENT BEHAVIORS** is behavior that occurs as an automatic response to some stimulus. **OPERANT BEHAVIOR** is behavior that operates on the environment, producing consequences.

**BE ABLE TO ANSWER:** Salivating in response to a tone paired with food is a \_\_\_\_\_ behavior; pressing a bar to obtain food is a \_\_\_\_\_ behavior.

**PRACTICE FRQ:** Explain two differences between classical and operant conditioning.

# Examples of Operant Conditioning

- 1, 2, 3

TABLE 7.4 Comparison of Classical and Operant Conditioning

	Classical Conditioning	Operant Conditioning
Basic idea	Organism learns associations between events it doesn't control.	Organism learns associations between its behavior and resulting events.
Response	Involuntary, automatic.	Voluntary, operates on environment.
Acquisition	Associating events; NS is paired with US and becomes CS.	Associating response with a consequence (reinforcer or punisher).
Extinction	CR decreases when CS is repeatedly presented alone.	Responding decreases when reinforcement stops.
Spontaneous recovery	The reappearance, after a rest period, of an extinguished CR.	The reappearance, after a rest period, of an extinguished response.
Generalization	The tendency to respond to stimuli similar to the CS.	Organism's response to similar stimuli is also reinforced.
Discrimination	The learned ability to distinguish between a CS and other stimuli that do not signal a US.	Organism learns that certain responses, but not others, will be reinforced.
Cognitive processes	Organisms develop expectation that CS signals the arrival of US.	Organisms develop expectation that a response will be reinforced or punished; they also exhibit latent learning, without reinforcement.
Biological predispositions	Natural predispositions constrain what stimuli and responses can easily be associated.	Organisms best learn behaviors similar to their natural behaviors; unnatural behaviors instinctively drift back toward natural ones.