

**Free-Response Question 1**

*Many people are concerned about the effects of the use of physical punishment to modify the undesirable behavior of children.*

*Part A (6 points). Basing your answer on psychological knowledge, apply each of the following in an argument against the use of physical punishment. (Each of the following receives one "concept/research" point and one "application" point.)*

*Modeling*

*Classical conditioning of fear*

*Displacement*

*Part B (2 points). How would psychologists use the following processes to modify children's undesirable behavior? (Each of the following receives one "application" point.)*

*Positive reinforcement*

*Extinction*

**Question 1 Scoring Guide****General Axioms**

- Application points may be awarded even when the concept/research point is not, BUT in order to receive points, the correct information must be written in the proper context. For example, to get the modeling application points, the student must make it clear that modeling is the subject being discussed.
- Definition of the concept needs more than the words given in the stem (i.e., it is not enough to define the word with the word).
- Incorrect information in a sentence does not disqualify correct information in the same passage.

**PART A (6 points)****Points 1 and 2: Modeling**

*Concept/research:*

Concept point is awarded if any of the following are mentioned:

- Bandura's work (Bandura's work on modeling is enough).
- Bobo studies (does not need to mention Bandura, and attributing the work to someone other than Bandura does not disqualify).
- An accurate overview of modeling theory.
- An example that shows an understanding of the concept where:
  - (a) the parent/guardian/authority figure displays, illustrates, gives an example, OR the child, sees watches, etc., AND

- (b) the child then:  
observationally learns  
imitates  
learns by watching  
copies  
does the same thing  
follows

*Application:*

Application point is awarded if ONE of the following notions are evident:

- Children learn violent behavior from parents/guardians.
- Children learn to deal with or solve problems using physical violence.
- Children learn to be abusive.

**Points 3 and 4: Classical Conditioning of Fear**

*Concept/research:*

Concept/research point is awarded if ANY of the following are mentioned:

- Watson and Little Albert studies.
- Tolman/Rescorla.
- Conditioned Emotional Response.
- Acquisition of fear response presented as appropriate mechanism.
- An example showing that fear is a conditioned response (CR) to the punishment and not just an unconditioned response (UCR or UR) to pain, shown by using such words as “association,” “pairing,” or “generalization,” OR by identifying parents, belts, etc. as a conditioned stimulus (CS). [Note: “conditioned stimulus” or “CS” must be explicitly given.]
- A discussion of classical conditioning, where the UCS, CS, and UCR are properly identified, following or preceded by the mentioning of “fear.”

*Application:*

Application point is awarded for identification of plausible conditioned stimulus, such as:

- Children may learn to fear parents/guardians.
- Children may learn to fear authority figures.
- Children may fear expressing themselves.

**Points 5 and 6: Displacement**

*Concept/research:*

- Defense mechanism.
- Example that shows understanding of redirected anger (e.g., boss → parent → child) ending in presumed violence.
- Proper examples where the parent is displacing are acceptable.

[NOTE: Definition is often found in the application.]

*Application:*

- The CHILD may displace anger/frustration on another target, not the parent/guardian.

[NOTE: The punished individual (i.e., the child) must be the person displacing anger.]

**PART B (2 points)**

**Point 1: Positive Reinforcement**

- Reward desired/proper behavior.
- Increase/strengthen the desired/proper behavior.
- Use a token economy.

**Point 2: Extinction**

- Ignoring (neither rewarding nor punishing) an undesired behavior.
- Removing reward from undesired behavior.
- Not paying attention to the undesired behavior, “bad actions,” etc.

## Sample Student Responses

### EXCELLENT ESSAY (8 points)

Modeling is when a person imitates the behaviors they witness. It can train an individual to behave that way, an unfortunate side effect of punishment. If a child witnesses or experiences a role model physically abusing ~~themselves or others~~ <sup>themselves or others</sup>, they will learn that that is an appropriate manner in which to behave and will exhibit those behaviors. Children of abusive parents will see parents as a model and can grow up into abusive ~~models~~ spouses or parents. This increases the physical abuse going on with every generation if the abusive parents raise multiple children who model after them in their own families.

Classical conditioning conditions reflexive responses (such as salivation, eye blinking, or in this case, fear). A natural response to attack is fear and that response ~~model~~ (an unconditioned response) can be associated with the slamming of a door (signaling the arrival of the abusive parent), the presence of empty beer bottles, etc. If these conditioned stimuli are paired with physical abuse (an unconditioned stimulus), the conditioning of fear results. A person carrying fear as a response to so many things would be less likely to live a fulfilling, happy life.

Displacement is a defense mechanism in which an emotion directed at one person is suppressed and then released against someone else who is undeserving, but poses no threat of any kind. If a student were angry at a teacher, for example, it would be inappropriate to express that anger so they would turn it on their friends instead.

Similarly, abuse victims would build up resentment and hostility that they couldn't express to their dominating parents. They could instead displace that rage onto someone who couldn't fight back - smaller classmates, younger students, and eventually their own children. The inability to control their surroundings would require control to be established elsewhere.

Positive reinforcement, on the other hand, would leave a child without physical abuse. Positive reinforcement rewards correct/desired behavior with something of value to the child. For example, if a child refuses to take a bath, you could reward them with new bath toys every time they did bathe. These would be secondary reinforcers (objects of no immediate necessity to survive). Primary reinforcements (food and other necessities) could be used as well - every time the child eats their green beans, they get dessert. The schedule of reinforcement would be most effective if variable.

ratios were used - for every x number of green beans, chocolate is rewarded x, however, varies randomly. This is a reliable method of reinforcement.

Extinction is when the behavior stops occurring. To speed that up, a psychologist could take away something to encourage the behavior to stop or simply ignore it. By providing no reaction, the child gets no feedback and stops acting out.

#### Comments:

##### A. Modeling: (2 points)

1. Concept: The modeling concept point was awarded for the phrase "imitate the behavior they witness."
2. Application: The application point was awarded for stating that the child will "exhibit" abusive behavior as an adult.

##### B. Classical Conditioning of Fear: (2 points)

1. Concept: The student identifies fear as an unconditioned response arising from punishment and states that it can be "associated" with several plausible conditioned stimuli (identified as such).
2. Application: The application point was awarded because the author stated that a person conditioned to fear "so many things would be less likely to live a fulfilling, happy life."

##### C. Displacement: (2 points)

1. Concept: The concept point was awarded for identifying displacement as a defense mechanism.
2. Application: The application point was awarded for the statement that the punished child would "displace that rage on to someone who couldn't fight back. . ."

##### D. Positive Reinforcement: (1 point)

The positive reinforcement point was awarded for the example of rewarding a child for taking a bath rather than punishing him for refusing to do so.

##### E. Extinction: (1 point)

The extinction point was awarded for saying a psychologist could extinguish an undesirable (inferred) behavior by "simply ignoring it."

### EXCELLENT ESSAY (7 points)

Modeling is the process by which a subject imitates ~~what~~ or adopts whatever is being portrayed by another figure usually of higher social status or authority. Modeling would be bad because the children might try and replicate the punishment received on others without cause. Another reason is that in the case of abuse, here modeling would be harmful if repeated and possibly carried into technique when child reaches parenthood. Classical Conditioning of fear would be the process of at the punishment being the reason for fear and then that being associated with the giver of the punishment. This would be bad because it could drive the child to be afraid or even terrified of the parent, guardian or dominant figure to the point of division of relationship, especially tragic with the child-parent relationship. Displacement is when anger or aggression is taken out on a lesser object or thing or animal instead of the right place. Physical punishment could be bad in displacement two ways. One, the child could receive punishment become angered and take out his anger or displace it on the dog. This would be bad because of it defeating the whole purpose of punishment. Two, the parent might be displacing feelings in the outlet of physical punishment possibly leading to abuse or harsh punishment's. Positive reinforcement is when you reward for behaviors that are wanted and not rewarding for undesired behaviors. The

psychologists could use positive reinforcement by rewarding the child when they do something good and not bad. Therefore telling the child conclude for themselves that the undesired behavior receives no reward and they want a reward so do good behavior get reward. Do bad behavior and receive nothing. Extinction is the termination of ~~and~~ an undesired behavior or action so that it no longer exists. Psychologists could use extinction to encourage the child to come to a point where through ~~stop~~ therapy, they no longer attain an undesired behavior.

#### Comments:

##### A. Modeling: (2 points)

- 1 and 2. Concept and Application: The modeling points were awarded for concept (process of imitating what is portrayed) and application ("child might try and replicate punishment on others . . .").

##### B. Classical Conditioning of Fear: (2 points)

1. Concept. The concept point for classical conditioning was awarded for the statement that through classical conditioning, punishment produces fear which then is "associated with the giver of the punishment." The rubric requires that the concept point is awarded for an example if it is clear that the fear was initially elicited by punishment but becomes a conditioned response which is associated with a plausible conditioned stimulus.
2. Application. The application point was awarded because the conditioned fear of the parent would be "tragic." (Note that many examples of conditioned fear to a parent presume that this outcome is negative. In these cases the point was awarded if it could be inferred that this fear conditioning was undesirable.)

##### C. Displacement: (2 points)

1. Concept: The concept of displacement is identified as anger "taken out on a lesser object." This statement in isolation is not acceptable because the origin of the anger is not identified (it could be inherent in the individual, e.g., Type A personality). The example of a punished child becoming angered and displacing it on to the dog clearly shows the origin of the anger to be situational (i.e., tied to the punishing event).
2. Application: The example also earns the application point.

##### D. Displacement: (1 point)

The reinforcement point was awarded for the statement "rewarding the child when they do something good . . ."

##### E. Extinction: (1 point)

The extinction point was not awarded because no mechanism for producing extinction of undesirable behavior was provided (such as ignoring or withholding reward).



### GOOD ESSAY (5 points)

The use of physical punishment to modify undesirable behavior has long been a topic of debate.

One such proponent against physical punishment would be the notion of modeling. If someone ~~was~~ was physically punished for bad behavior, they might in turn, become violent attempting to model the behavior.

In classical conditioning of fear, a person has been physically punished before may become afraid of the person who is punishing the person. An example of this is when a child may become afraid of a parent.

A third proponent against physical punishment is the notion of possible displacement. A person being physically punished may in turn displace this punishment on someone else. An example of this would be an older brother, who was punished by his parents, now punishes his younger brother.

A much better way to treat undesirable behavior would be through positive reinforcement. Instead of punishing the bad things, psychologists reward the good things. An example of this would be giving a child extra play time when he/she gets an "A" on a test.

Another ~~thing~~ thing psychologist could use to modify undesirable behavior would be extinction. Psychologists would slowly modify behavior (shaping) until it is gone or extant.

**Comments:**

**A. Modeling: (2 points)**

1. Concept: No concept point for modeling was given because the mechanism was not provided.
2. Application: An application point was awarded because within the paragraph addressing modeling, the student states that the punished child "might, in turn, become violent."

**B. Classical Conditioning of Fear: (2 points)**

1. Concept: The concept of classical conditioning of fear was not provided.
2. Application: The application point was awarded for the statement "a child may become afraid of a parent."

**C. Displacement: (2 points)**

- 1 and 2. Concept and Application: Displacement points were awarded for the definition of displacement followed by an appropriate example. "A person being physically abused may in turn displace this punishment on someone else. An example of this would be an older brother, who was punished by his parents, now punishes his younger brother." (Note that the application point was awarded because the older brother is the punished child who is displacing.)

**D. Reinforcement: (1 point)**

The reinforcement point was awarded for "reward the good things" in proper context.

**E. Extinction: (1 point)**

The term "extinction" was mentioned but not used in an application.