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Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst

BACB BCABA

Version Demo

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QUESTION NO: 1

Disruptive behavior occurs at a moderate rate and consistent intensity level throughout the school day. How should the teacher collect data on the behavior?

A. Keep a running tally of the occurrences on the chalk board.

B. Record each occurrence using a portable counter.

C. Use a timer and record the number of minutes for each occurrence.

D. Document whether or not the behavior occurred every hour.

ANSWER: B

Explanation:

Record each occurrence using a portable counter. is appropriate because the relevant measurement dimension is frequency: the number of discrete instances of disruptive behavior. When a response occurs at a moderate rate, the teacher can feasibly record every instance as it happens. A portable counter supports continuous event recording without requiring the teacher to stop instruction, write extensive notes, or rely on memory at the end of a period. The total count can then be converted to a rate by dividing the number of occurrences by the observation time. Rate is particularly useful for comparing behavior across school periods that may differ in length.

The description that intensity is consistent indicates that measurement does not need to focus on changes in severity. Instead, a clearly operationally defined disruptive response can be counted consistently across the school day. The teacher should identify in advance exactly what observable actions constitute an occurrence, use the counter immediately after each instance, and record the observation duration so the data can be summarized accurately. This approach produces objective, repeatable information that can guide evaluation of intervention effects. BACB certification standards include selecting and using appropriate measurement procedures; see the BACB BCBA certification information and the BACB ethics codes for expectations regarding competent, data-based practice.

QUESTION NO: 2

A learner is taught to identify pictures of dogs. After training with several photographs, the learner correctly says, “dog,” when shown a drawing of a dog for the first time. This is an example of

A. stimulus generalization.

B. response generalization.

C. stimulus discrimination.

D. behavioral contrast.

ANSWER: A

Explanation:

Stimulus generalization is correct because the learner emits the same trained response in the presence of a novel stimulus that shares relevant features with the training stimuli. The photographs and drawing differ in specific physical properties, but each depicts a dog and evokes the response “dog.”

Generalization is an important outcome of instruction because meaningful skills should occur with untrained examples, people, materials, and settings when appropriate. Response generalization, in contrast, would involve novel but functionally equivalent responses occurring under similar conditions. See the BCaBA Test Content Outline.

QUESTION NO: 3

Accuracy of measurement refers to the extent to which.

A. the data have high interobserver agreement.

B. the person collecting the data reports that it is accurate.

C. the data match the true values of the events or behavior measured.

D. precise values can be depicted in a graph to show behavior change.

ANSWER: C

Explanation:

Accuracy of measurement refers to the extent to which the data match the true values of the events or behavior measured. In applied behavior analysis, accurate measurement means that the recorded value closely corresponds to what actually occurred. For example, if a learner engaged in a behavior 10 times during an observation and the observer records 10 occurrences using the defined measurement system, the obtained measure accurately represents the true count. Accuracy is essential because assessment decisions, intervention selection, and evaluation of treatment effects all depend on data representing behavior as it occurred rather than artifacts of observation or recording. The BACB's terminology defines accuracy as the extent to which observed values, as obtained through measurement, match the true state of events. This concept applies across measurement dimensions, including frequency, duration, latency, and intensity. Practitioners should use clear operational definitions, appropriate measurement procedures, observer training, and periodic checks of measurement quality to support accurate data collection. See the BACB Test Content Outline and the BACB Fifth Edition Task List for measurement concepts and expectations.

QUESTION NO: 4

A learner is taught to complete a five-step hand-washing routine. The teacher initially prompts and reinforces the first step, then completes the remaining steps for the learner. After the first step is mastered, the teacher teaches the second step, and so on. This procedure is

A. backward chaining.

B. forward chaining.

C. shaping.

D. total-task presentation.

ANSWER: B

Explanation:

forward chaining is correct because instruction begins with the first response in the task sequence. The learner completes the first step independently or with planned prompting, and the teacher completes the remaining steps. Once the initial step is mastered, the next step is taught while the learner continues performing previously mastered steps.

Forward chaining is one method for teaching a behavior chain, which consists of a sequence of discriminated responses in which each response produces a stimulus change that can cue the next response. Backward chaining begins with teaching the final response in the chain, whereas total-task presentation teaches all steps during each teaching opportunity. See the BACB BCaBA certification information for BACB resources concerning skill-acquisition procedures.

QUESTION NO: 5

Tommy is looking at a photo album with his dad. He looks at his dad and then points to a picture of his mom and says, "Mommy." This is an example of.

A. a tact.

B. transitivity.

C. receptive language.

D. matching to sample.

ANSWER: A

Explanation:

a tact. is correct because Tommy's vocal response, "Mommy," is evoked by a nonverbal stimulus: the photograph of his mother. In Skinner's analysis of verbal behavior, a tact is a verbal operant in which a speaker labels, names, or otherwise identifies an aspect of the environment. The response is typically maintained by generalized conditioned reinforcement delivered by a listener, such as attention, acknowledgment, praise, or continued social interaction. The photograph functions as a representation of a person and can serve as the relevant nonverbal antecedent for a labeling response. Tommy's brief look toward his dad may indicate that he is contacting a listener or seeking social acknowledgment, which is consistent with the social context in which tacts commonly occur. The defining feature is that he independently labels what is depicted rather than responding to an instruction or selecting a comparison stimulus. Tacting is an important verbal-behavior repertoire because it allows a learner to share information about objects, people, events, and features of the environment with others. The BACB's certification standards include knowledge of verbal behavior and the functional relations that define verbal operants. See the BACB BCaBA certification information and the BACB glossary for behavior-analytic terminology and professional resources.

QUESTION NO: 6

A behavior analyst is conducting a communication training session with a child. The behavior analyst says to the child, "Say your name." The child says, "Sarah." and the behavior analyst delivers a reinforcer. What type of verbal operant was the behavior analyst's statement?

A. echoic

B. mand

C. prompt

D. tact

ANSWER: B

Explanation:

The correct answer is *mand*. A mand is verbal behavior whose consequence is specified by the speaker's response. In this interaction, the behavior analyst's statement, "Say your name," functions as a request for a particular listener response: the child stating her name. The child's compliance—saying "Sarah"—provides the outcome requested by the analyst. Thus, when classifying the analyst's own verbal behavior by its function and consequence, the statement is a mand.

Verbal-operant classification depends on the relation between antecedent conditions, the speaker's response, and its consequences rather than simply on the grammatical form of the statement. Here, the analyst's utterance directs the listener to provide a specified verbal response. The subsequent delivery of reinforcement is part of the instructional arrangement used to strengthen the child's response, but it does not alter the functional classification of the analyst's request. BCaBA examination content includes applying behavior-analytic concepts and principles in assessment and intervention contexts, including verbal behavior. See the BACB's BCaBA certification information and the discussion of Skinner's functional analysis of verbal behavior in The Analysis of Verbal Behavior.

QUESTION NO: 7

A behavior analyst is asked to provide direct services requiring daily 1:1 interaction with a teen-aged client. The client does not speak but can communicate fluently using sign language. The behavior analyst knows some sign language but is not fluent. The BEST approach to this situation would be to

A. explain his level of competence in sign language to the family before beginning service.

B. hire a sign language interpreter to attend the sessions.

C. attend a workshop in sign language prior to beginning service.

D. refer the family to a behavior analyst fluent in sign language.

ANSWER: D

Explanation:

“refer the family to a behavior analyst fluent in sign language.

” is the best approach because effective, fluent communication is essential to providing competent and responsive direct behavior-analytic services. In this situation, the client’s primary fluent communication modality is sign language, and daily one-to-one work would require the clinician to understand the client’s communication accurately, establish a collaborative therapeutic relationship, assess preferences and assent, and respond safely and meaningfully during intervention. A practitioner who is not fluent may not yet have the necessary competence to independently provide these direct services at the required level of quality.

The BACB Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts requires behavior analysts to practice within their boundaries of competence, which are based on their education, training, supervised experience, consultation, and professional experience. When the needed skills are outside those boundaries, behavior analysts take appropriate action, including obtaining relevant competence or making an appropriate referral. Connecting the family with a behavior analyst who is fluent in sign language directly addresses the client’s communication needs while supporting effective and ethical service delivery. See the BACB Ethics Codes and the BACB’s Ethics Information resources.

QUESTION NO: 8

Two responses (such as putting on a sweater and lighting a fire) that produce the same result describe.

A. the matching law.

B. functional equivalence.

C. stimulus generalization.

D. response generalization.

ANSWER: B

Explanation:

Functional equivalence. is correct because it describes two or more different responses that produce the same environmental outcome or obtain the same reinforcer. In this example, putting on a sweater and lighting a fire are topographically different behaviors, yet each can result in increased warmth. Their shared consequence or function makes the responses functionally equivalent. In applied behavior analysis, identifying functionally equivalent responses is important because intervention can teach or reinforce an appropriate alternative behavior that serves the same function as a challenging behavior. For example, when a learner’s behavior functions to obtain a break, a functional communication response such as requesting a break can be taught as an effective, socially appropriate alternative that produces the same outcome. This concept is consistent with the BACB emphasis on selecting behavior-change procedures based on assessment of the variables maintaining behavior and teaching functionally equivalent replacement skills. See the BACB Test Content Outline and Cooper, Heron, and Heward’s discussion of functional relations in Applied Behavior Analysis.

QUESTION NO: 9

Mark is a 28-year-old man with multiple physical disabilities. The doctor and physical therapist have recommended a variety of positions to benefit Mark's overall health. When Mark is placed in a prescribed position, he yells, arches his back, and bites his wrist. Subsequently, Mark slips out of position. The behavior analyst seeks to help Mark tolerate his positions. Which statement BEST defines a treatment goal?

A. Mark will tolerate his recommended positions.

B. Mark will not yell during positioning.

C. Mark will be placed in his recommended positions for the prescribed amount of time.

D. Mark will maintain all recommended positions for the prescribed amount of time.

ANSWER: D

Explanation:

“Mark will maintain all recommended positions for the prescribed amount of time.” best defines a treatment goal because it specifies a meaningful, observable outcome directly tied to the health-related purpose of intervention. The target response is maintaining each medically recommended position, and the performance criterion is the prescribed duration. This allows the behavior analyst, Mark, caregivers, and the medical team to determine consistently whether the goal has been met. It also supports objective measurement during treatment: staff can record the position presented, whether Mark remains in it, and the duration maintained. Because the positions and durations are determined by the doctor and physical therapist, the goal appropriately incorporates interdisciplinary recommendations while identifying a behavior-analytic outcome that can be monitored and evaluated. A well-designed behavioral objective describes what the individual will do under relevant conditions and includes measurable criteria for successful performance. This goal can be further individualized in a treatment plan by listing the specific recommended positions and their corresponding durations, along with mastery and generalization criteria. BACB examination content emphasizes defining behavior in observable and measurable terms and selecting goals that can be evaluated with data. See the BACB BCaBA Test Content Outline and BACB Ethics Information.

QUESTION NO: 10

Which does NOT increase the effectiveness of punishment?

A. availability of alternative responses

B. inability to avoid the punisher

C. intermittent delivery of the punisher

D. reinforcement frequency for alternative behavior

ANSWER: C

Explanation:

Intermittent delivery of the punisher does not increase punishment effectiveness because a consequence must be delivered consistently, contingent on each occurrence of the target response, to establish a clear response–consequence relation. When the punisher follows only some instances of behavior, the individual may continue responding because the behavior is sometimes not followed by the punishing event. Consistent implementation also allows the supervising behavior analyst to evaluate whether the intervention is producing a meaningful reduction in the target behavior.

In applied behavior-analytic practice, punishment-based procedures should be selected and implemented only under appropriate supervision, after assessment, and with safeguards that protect the client. These safeguards include reinforcement-based components that build and strengthen socially appropriate alternative behavior. The BACB Ethics Code requires behavior analysts to prioritize reinforcement-based procedures and to ensure that any restrictive or punishment-based procedure is justified, monitored, and implemented with informed consent and appropriate oversight. See the BACB Ethics Codes and the BACB Test Content Outline.

QUESTION NO: 11

A DRO was implemented for a young child with developmental delays to address reduction in the behavior of hair pulling. The child also has excessive levels of nose picking, and skin picking. Data collection needs to include rates of these behaviors as well due to the possible effects of behavioral:

A. conduct.

B. contrast.

C. rehearsal.

D. repercussion.

ANSWER: B

Explanation:

Behavioral contrast is correct. Behavioral contrast refers to a change in responding that occurs in relation to a change in reinforcement conditions associated with an intervention. When a differential reinforcement of other behavior procedure is used to reduce hair pulling, the reinforcement contingency for hair pulling changes: reinforcement is delivered for intervals without that target response rather than following the target response. Because nose picking and skin picking may be related forms of behavior or may be affected by the same environmental variables, their rates should be measured throughout treatment. Monitoring them helps the practitioner determine whether behavior changes extend beyond the directly treated response and whether the overall pattern of responding changes as the reinforcement contingency is altered. This is particularly important when selecting, implementing, and evaluating differential-reinforcement procedures because data-based decision making requires measurement of clinically relevant behavior changes, not only the initially targeted behavior. Behavioral contrast is a well-established experimental finding in applied behavior analysis and underscores the value of monitoring relevant responses during intervention. The BCaBA examination content outline emphasizes selecting measurement procedures and using data to evaluate the effectiveness of behavior-change procedures. See the BACB BCaBA Test Content Outline and the foundational research on behavioral contrast.

QUESTION NO: 12

Which method is the BEST to use when presenting categorical data from a functional analysis?

A. a bar graph

B. anecdotal report

C. scatter plot

D. standard celeration chart

ANSWER: A

Explanation:

a bar graph is the best method for displaying categorical data because it visually separates distinct categories and allows clear comparison of the measured outcome across them. In a functional analysis, the assessment conditions—such as attention, escape, tangible, play/control, or alone—are categorical variables rather than points on a continuous numerical scale. A bar graph can summarize a value for each condition, such as mean response rate, percentage of intervals with problem behavior, or total responding across sessions, with one bar assigned to each condition. This makes differences among conditions readily apparent and can help a practitioner communicate which environmental contingency was associated with the highest level of responding. Clear visual display is important in behavior analysis because graphing supports interpretation of data and communication of assessment results to treatment teams and stakeholders. The BACB's examination content includes selecting and interpreting appropriate graphic displays for behavior-analytic data; matching the display to the type of data supports accurate interpretation. Guidance on graph selection also recognizes bar graphs as appropriate for comparing values across discrete categories. See the BACB Test Content Outline and the CDC overview of bar charts.

QUESTION NO: 13

Angela nurses her newborn infant when he cries. Rates of crying increase. The presentation of the milk functions as a(n)

A. unconditioned reinforcer.

B. discriminative stimulus.

C. establishing operation.

D. conditioned reinforcer.

ANSWER: A

Explanation:

The presentation of the milk functions as an **unconditioned reinforcer**. A reinforcer is identified functionally: it is a consequence that follows a behavior and increases that behavior's future rate. Here, milk is presented after the infant cries, and crying subsequently increases. Thus, milk has reinforced crying in this situation. Milk is an unconditioned reinforcer because its reinforcing effectiveness does not depend on a learning history. Food and nourishment are biologically significant consequences that can reinforce behavior without first being paired with another reinforcer. For a newborn, milk also addresses a basic physiological need, making it an especially clear example of an unconditioned reinforcer. This example illustrates positive reinforcement: a stimulus is added following crying, and the behavior of crying increases. The term "functions as" is important because it directs attention to the observed behavioral effect—the increased future occurrence of crying—rather than merely the physical form of the consequence. General descriptions of operant conditioning explain that consequences which increase behavior are reinforcers; see OpenStax Psychology: Operant Conditioning. BACB terminology resources are available through the BACB Glossary.

QUESTION NO: 14

Data were collected on the percentage of intervals at the end of which Thomas was present at his workstation. Which is the BEST method for displaying these data?

A. cumulative record

B. equal-interval line graph

C. scatterplot

D. standard behavior (semilogarithmic) chart

ANSWER: B

Explanation:

equal-interval line graph is the best display because the dependent variable is a percentage calculated for each observation period or session. Each plotted point can show the percentage of sampled intervals in which Thomas was at his workstation, while the horizontal axis shows successive sessions, days, or other equally spaced measurement opportunities. Connecting the points produces a clear visual display of changes in level, trend, and variability over time. Those features are central to visual analysis in applied behavior analysis and allow a practitioner to evaluate whether intervention-related changes in workstation presence are meaningful and sufficiently stable.

The wording "at the end of" an interval describes momentary time sampling: the observer records whether the behavior or condition is occurring at the moment each interval ends. The resulting percentage is a discontinuous, session-based measure rather than an accumulating total. Accordingly, a conventional equal-interval line graph appropriately represents the repeated percentage values without implying that the values must continually accumulate. The BACB identifies graphing and visual analysis of data as core measurement and assessment competencies; see the BACB BCaBA resources and the BACB's BCaBA Test Content Outline.

QUESTION NO: 15

A teacher tells students that completing assignments will help them to do well on the exam. How can the teacher ensure that this will be an effective

rule?

A. Provide a review session covering the assignments prior to the exam.

B. Provide assignments that are closely related to the material on the exam.

C. Provide various reinforcers for those who complete the assignments.

D. Provide various reinforcers for those who do well on the exam.

ANSWER: B

Explanation:

“Provide assignments that are closely related to the material on the exam.” is correct because the teacher’s statement is a rule describing a response–outcome relation: completing assignments is expected to contribute to better exam performance. For that rule to function effectively, the specified behavior must genuinely increase the learner’s likelihood of contacting the stated outcome. Assignments should therefore practice the same concepts, discriminations, and response forms that the exam measures. When completing the assignments builds the relevant skills and those skills are assessed on the exam, students can experience a consistent correspondence between following the rule and improved performance. This correspondence supports rule-governed behavior and makes the rule accurate, credible, and useful for guiding study behavior. In applied behavior analysis, instructional activities should be selected and evaluated according to their meaningful relation to the target performance, including whether they produce socially significant learning outcomes. This reflects the BACB’s emphasis on using behavior-analytic procedures to improve important behavior and on monitoring whether interventions produce the intended effects. See the BACB BCBA Test Content Outline and the discussion of rule-governed behavior in The Analysis of Verbal Behavior.

QUESTION NO: 16

In order to obtain the GREATEST increase in the value of an identified reinforcer after satiation has occurred, the behavior analyst should.

A. deliver the reinforcer non-contingently.

B. reduce the magnitude of the reinforcer.

C. thin the schedule of reinforcement.

D. temporarily remove the reinforcer.

ANSWER: D

Explanation:

“*temporarily remove the reinforcer.*” is correct because removal of access to a stimulus that has functioned as a reinforcer can establish or strengthen its current reinforcing value. Following satiation, the individual has had sufficient recent contact with the stimulus that its effectiveness as a consequence is reduced. Temporarily withholding that stimulus creates deprivation, an antecedent condition that functions as a motivating operation. Deprivation increases the value of the stimulus as a reinforcer and evokes behavior that has previously produced access to it. The longer-term clinical implication is that a behavior analyst should plan access carefully, balancing sufficient restriction to restore the reinforcer’s effectiveness with ethical, individualized, and humane intervention practices. This is especially important when using tangible items, preferred activities, attention, or edible stimuli, because the same event may have different motivating effects depending on the person’s recent history of access. BACB terminology identifies motivating operations as environmental events that alter the effectiveness of consequences and alter the current frequency of behavior that has produced those consequences. See the BACB BCBA Test Content Outline and the BACB Ethics Code resources.

QUESTION NO: 17

Susan recorded data on a student's fidgeting behavior in the following way: She divided a 10-minute recording period into 10-second intervals and recorded in each interval a "+" if the target behavior occurred at least once. The percentage of intervals of target behavior occurrence was about 45%. The data resulting are most likely to be an

A. accurate measure of inter-response times.

B. inaccurate measure of inter-response times.

C. overestimate of the occurrence of the behavior.

D. underestimate of the occurrence of the behavior.

ANSWER: C

Explanation:

“Overestimate of the occurrence of the behavior” is correct because the procedure described is partial-interval recording. In partial-interval recording, the observer marks an interval when the target response occurs at any point during that interval, even if it occurs only briefly. Thus, a 10-second interval containing only a momentary instance of fidgeting receives the same “+” as an interval in which fidgeting occurs throughout all 10 seconds. The resulting percentage reflects the proportion of intervals in which behavior occurred at least once; it does not directly represent the proportion of total time spent fidgeting. For behavior such as fidgeting that may occur in brief, discontinuous episodes, this measurement system tends to produce a value higher than the actual duration of behavior across the observation period. The reported 45% therefore is most appropriately interpreted as an estimate that likely exceeds the behavior’s true temporal occurrence. BACB instructional resources identify partial-interval recording as a discontinuous measurement procedure and note its tendency to overestimate behavior occurrence. See the BCaBA Test Content Outline and the BACB overview of behavior analysis.

QUESTION NO: 18

When implementing punishment procedures, the behavior analyst:

A. must include a reinforcement procedure.

B. can use punishment alone if a reinforcement procedure was not effective.

C. does not have to include a reinforcement procedure if consented to by the client.

D. is required to introduce a reinforcement procedure if the problem behavior increases.

ANSWER: A

Explanation:

“must include a reinforcement procedure” is correct because punishment-based interventions must not be implemented as stand-alone behavior-reduction plans. The BACB Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts directs behavior analysts to recommend reinforcement-based procedures rather than punishment whenever possible and, when punishment procedures are necessary, to combine them with reinforcement procedures. This requirement reflects the goal of teaching and strengthening socially significant, adaptive replacement behavior while reducing the behavior of concern. A reinforcement component identifies what the learner can do instead, specifies meaningful consequences for that alternative response, and supports durable behavior change rather than merely suppressing responding. In practice, the analyst should select reinforcement based on assessment, ensure it is feasible for the client and implementers, and monitor both the target behavior and the replacement behavior throughout treatment. The intervention plan should also include ongoing data review and safeguards consistent with the client’s dignity, welfare, and individualized needs. Consent does not remove the professional obligation to use reinforcement in conjunction with punishment. This approach is consistent with the BACB’s ethical standard on selecting behavior-change interventions and its emphasis on effective, least-restrictive, reinforcement-based treatment. See the BACB Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts and the BACB Ethics Standards.

QUESTION NO: 19

The behavior analyst has had good results with an intervention she designed that makes access to video games contingent upon playing with other children. She now wants to compare the effects of differing amounts of video game access time. She should conduct a

A. changing criterion study.

B. nonparametric study.

C. parametric study.

D. reversal study.

ANSWER: C

Explanation:

A **parametric study** is appropriate because the intervention has already demonstrated beneficial effects and the analyst's next question concerns the value, or magnitude, of one intervention parameter: the amount of time the child may access video games. In a parametric analysis, the analyst systematically varies quantitatively different values of an independent variable while measuring the resulting effects on the target behavior. Here, video-game access is the reinforcer contingent on playing with peers, and the analyst can compare specific durations of access (for example, shorter versus longer access periods) to identify a value that produces clinically meaningful peer play efficiently. This process supports individualized, data-based treatment refinement rather than merely determining whether the contingency works at all. The analysis should use clearly defined access-time values, ongoing measurement of peer-play behavior, and visual inspection of the resulting data to guide selection of an effective and practical duration. Systematically evaluating treatment parameters is consistent with the applied behavior-analytic emphasis on using measurement and experimental logic to select effective interventions. The BACB identifies experimental design and data-based decision making as core areas of behavior-analytic practice; see the BACB BCaBA certification information and the BACB Test Content Outline.

QUESTION NO: 20

Wilma argues with her coworker, who shares the same workstation. Even though Wilma and her coworker can articulate the workplace rules, repeated instructions to cease this behavior have gone unheeded and they are becoming enemies. What would be the MOST appropriate antecedent-based solution?

A. Instruct the coworker to stay away from Wilma.

B. Give Wilma breaks away from her coworker whenever arguments begin.

C. Assign Wilma to a different workstation.

D. Place signs in the workstations identifying appropriate workplace behavior.

ANSWER: C

Explanation:

Assign Wilma to a different workstation. is the most appropriate antecedent-based solution because it changes the environmental condition that reliably precedes the arguments: prolonged access to the same shared workspace. Antecedent interventions are implemented before a target behavior occurs and are designed to prevent or reduce the likelihood of that behavior by altering relevant setting events, stimuli, tasks, or response opportunities. Here, both employees already know the workplace rules, and repeated verbal reminders have not changed the pattern. Separating the workstations therefore addresses the practical context in which the conflict occurs rather than relying on additional instructions after the conflict risk is already present. This is an example of modifying the physical or social environment to reduce opportunities for the problem behavior and support more successful work performance. In practice, a behavior analyst would also monitor whether the reassignment reduces arguments and consider assessment information about the variables maintaining the behavior so that any broader intervention remains individualized and effective. The BACB's task-list framework includes selecting and implementing antecedent-based procedures as part of behavior-change programming. See the BACB BCBA Test Content Outline and the BACB Ethics Code resources.

QUESTION NO: 21

A behavior analyst begins intervention for one student's vocal disruptions in mathematics, then later introduces the same intervention for the student's vocal disruptions in science and, finally, in art. This arrangement is a multiple baseline design across

A. behaviors.

B. participants.

C. settings.

D. response topographies.

ANSWER: C

Explanation:

settings is correct because the same target behavior is measured in different environmental contexts: mathematics, science, and art. The intervention is introduced at different times in each setting while measurement continues in the others. If vocal disruptions decrease only after intervention begins in each respective class, the staggered changes support a functional relation.

A multiple baseline across behaviors would involve different response classes, such as vocal disruptions and out-of-seat behavior. A multiple baseline across participants would involve applying the intervention sequentially with different individuals. Multiple-baseline designs are useful when withdrawing a successful intervention would be impractical or unethical. See the Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis discussion of single-case research for foundational information on experimental analysis in applied settings.

QUESTION NO: 22

The purpose of including untaught items or tasks within a Discrete Trial Instruction program is to assess:

A. context.

B. fluency.

C. generalization.

D. mastery.

ANSWER: C

Explanation:

Including untaught items or tasks in a Discrete Trial Instruction program is used to assess **generalization**. Generalization occurs when a learner demonstrates a skill accurately under conditions that differ from the specific teaching conditions. For example, after being taught to identify several examples of a category, presenting a new, untrained example tests whether the learner responds based on the relevant feature or concept rather than only memorizing the items used during instruction. Similarly, varying materials, people, settings, or instructions can show whether the learned response transfers beyond the original training arrangement.

In DTI, programs should be designed not only to establish correct responding to directly taught targets but also to evaluate whether that responding occurs with novel stimuli and in relevant natural conditions. Including untaught exemplars provides data on this transfer and can guide the supervising behavior analyst in determining whether additional teaching, multiple-exemplar training, or programming for generalization is needed. The BACB defines generalization as the occurrence of behavior outside the training conditions, including responding to untrained stimuli. See the BACB BCBA Task List (6th ed.) and the Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies glossary resources.

QUESTION NO: 23

Frequency would be the MOST appropriate measure for which scenario?

A. The behavior analyst wants to reduce the number of times Jack hits Jill.

B. Jack wants his employees to increase the number of kits made in one hour.

C. Jack's parents want him to reduce his persistent hand flapping.

D. Jill wants to increase her son's compliance with room-cleaning requests.

ANSWER: A

Explanation:

The behavior analyst wants to reduce the number of times Jack hits Jill. is the best use of frequency because hitting is typically a discrete response with a clear beginning and end, allowing each occurrence to be counted reliably. Frequency is the simple count of how many times a behavior occurs during an observation period. For this goal, recording every instance of hitting provides a direct, sensitive measure of whether intervention is reducing the total number of responses. The measurement system should also include an operational definition of hitting—such as forceful contact of Jack's hand, foot, or an object with Jill's body—so that observers count the same events consistently. The observation period should be documented alongside the count. If observation periods differ substantially in length, the count can later be converted to rate, but frequency remains the appropriate foundational measure when the concern is the total number of discrete hitting events. Selection of measurement procedures based on the dimensions and characteristics of behavior is consistent with the BACB examination content addressing measurement, data display, and interpretation. See the BACB BCBA Test Content Outline and the BACB Ethics Code resources.

QUESTION NO: 24

Specifying the hand with which Linda eats, writes, and works is an example of.

A. response function.

B. an operant class.

C. a stimulus class.

D. response topography.

ANSWER: D

Explanation:

response topography. is correct because topography refers to the observable physical form or structure of a response—what the behavior looks like and how the person performs it. Identifying whether Linda uses her right hand or left hand while eating, writing, or working describes a consistent physical characteristic of her responding. This is directly observable and can be defined objectively, such as "Linda holds the utensil in her right hand" or "Linda writes using her left hand." In applied behavior analysis, clear behavioral descriptions commonly include topographical features when those features are relevant to measurement, skill instruction, prompting, or treatment integrity. Specifying the hand used does not identify the outcome produced by the action; instead, it identifies the form of the action. This distinction is useful because behaviors with similar outcomes can have different topographies, and a behavior analyst may need to teach, measure, or modify a particular form of responding. ABA terminology describes response topography as the physical form of behavior; see the terminology resources from the Behavior Analyst Certification Board and the behavior-analytic text overview at Pearson's Applied Behavior Analysis.

QUESTION NO: 25

A married couple wants a behavior analyst to assist them in creating a happier home life for their family. The behavior analyst should.

A. provide counseling to the couple related to the problems that they identify as most important.

B. refer the family to another professional, since this type of issue is not amenable to applied behavior analysis.

C. set up contracts between the parents and children that require the parents to reinforce appropriate behavior using things that the children identify as important to them.

D. explain how behavior analysis could be used to assist the family so that they can make an informed decision about proceeding.

ANSWER: D

Explanation:

The behavior analyst should explain how behavior analysis could be used to assist the family so that they can make an informed decision about proceeding. A broad request for a “happier home life” does not itself identify specific, observable behavior-change goals or establish that behavior-analytic services are desired, appropriate, and within the practitioner’s scope of competence. The analyst’s initial role is therefore to describe the nature of behavior-analytic services in understandable language, including how concerns could be assessed, how socially meaningful goals might be collaboratively defined, what interventions could involve, and the limits of those services. This discussion supports informed consent by giving the couple sufficient information to decide voluntarily whether to pursue services. If they elect to proceed, the analyst can then conduct assessment and work with relevant stakeholders to identify measurable goals and interventions that fit the family’s values, context, and needs. The BACB Ethics Code requires behavior analysts to obtain informed consent before implementing behavior-change services and to practice within their boundaries of competence. Clear explanation at the outset also promotes client dignity, choice, and collaboration in selecting goals that are meaningful to the family. See the BACB Ethics Codes and the BACB guidance on informed consent and ethical practice.

QUESTION NO: 26

When a teacher is nearby, DeShawn completes independent work and receives praise. When the teacher leaves the area, DeShawn stops working and looks around the room. The teacher's presence is most likely functioning as a

A. conditioned reinforcer.

B. discriminative stimulus.

C. establishing operation.

D. unconditioned stimulus.

ANSWER: B

Explanation:

discriminative stimulus is correct because the teacher's presence signals that independent work is likely to produce praise. A discriminative stimulus is an antecedent stimulus in the presence of which a response has historically been reinforced. DeShawn's higher rate of work while the teacher is nearby suggests that his work behavior is under stimulus control by the teacher's presence.

The teacher's presence is not itself a reinforcer in the described contingency because it occurs before the behavior. It also is not necessarily a motivating operation; the scenario identifies a relation in which the antecedent signals the availability of reinforcement for work. See the BACB overview of behavior analysis for information about behavior and environmental variables.

QUESTION NO: 27

A child diagnosed with autism engages in hand flapping almost continuously at home, day care and school. An intervention is devised to alleviate this challenging behavior. Which type of experimental design would be BEST?

A. reversal

B. multi-element

C. withdrawal

D. multiple baseline

ANSWER: D

Explanation:

multiple baseline is the best design because the hand flapping occurs in three naturally distinct settings: home, day care, and school. A multiple-baseline-across-settings design allows the practitioner to collect ongoing measurement in each setting and introduce the intervention in a staggered sequence rather than beginning it everywhere at once. Experimental control is demonstrated when hand flapping decreases only in the setting where intervention has been introduced, while it remains at baseline levels in the settings that have not yet received intervention. Replicating this pattern across the three settings strengthens the conclusion that the intervention, rather than an outside event or ordinary variation, produced the behavior change.

This approach is especially appropriate when withdrawing a potentially beneficial intervention would be undesirable or when behavior may not readily return to prior levels after effective treatment. It also directly addresses the practical goal of showing that the intervention works across the child's everyday environments. Single-case experimental designs, including multiple-baseline arrangements, support data-based demonstration of a functional relation and are consistent with the BACB's emphasis on using systematic, objective data to guide behavior-analytic services. See the BACB Test Content Outline and the BACB Ethics Code resources.

QUESTION NO: 28

A child with food refusal behaviors accepts one bite out of the ten bites that her caregiver offered. What measure should be used to record this behavior?

A. duration

B. latency

C. percent of occurrence

D. trials to criterion

ANSWER: C

Explanation:

percent of occurrence is the appropriate measure because bite acceptance is being evaluated across a clearly defined number of discrete opportunities. The caregiver offered 10 bites, creating 10 opportunities for the child to accept a bite. The child accepted 1 bite, so the percentage is calculated by dividing accepted bites by bites offered and multiplying by 100: 1 ÷ 10 × 100 = 10%. Recording this as a percentage standardizes the data and permits meaningful comparisons when the number of bites offered differs across meals, therapists, settings, or days. For example, accepting 1 bite during a 5-bite meal and accepting 1 bite during a 10-bite meal represent different levels of responding; percentage captures that distinction. This measurement is especially useful in feeding intervention because treatment decisions commonly depend on changes in the proportion of presented food items or bites that are accepted. BACB examination content includes selecting and using measurement systems that match the dimensions and opportunities associated with behavior; see the BACB BCaBA certification resources and the BCaBA Test Content Outline.

QUESTION NO: 29

A stimulus is defined as

A. a change in behavior brought about by alterations of the physical environment.

B. a change in the environment that can affect behavior.

C. a change in the environment that elicits a response with or without prior conditioning.

D. any environmental event exclusive of private events.

ANSWER: B

Explanation:

The correct definition is *"a change in the environment that can affect behavior."* In behavior analysis, a stimulus is an environmental change or event that may influence an organism through its sensory systems. "Environment" is interpreted broadly: it includes events outside the person, such as sounds, objects, instructions, and the behavior of other people, as well as events occurring within the body that can be contacted by sensory receptors. A stimulus need not produce an immediate, observable behavior change every time it occurs. Its defining feature is that it is an environmental event capable of affecting behavior under relevant conditions. For example, a teacher's spoken direction, the presentation of a preferred item, or a loud noise may each function as a stimulus because each can alter the likelihood, form, timing, or occurrence of behavior. This definition supports accurate observation and measurement of antecedents and consequences when analyzing relations between environmental events and behavior. The Behavior Analyst Certification Board describes behavior analysis as a science focused on environmental variables and behavior; see BACB: About Behavior Analysis. A complementary general psychology definition of stimulus is available from the American Psychological Association Dictionary of Psychology.

QUESTION NO: 30

A behavior analyst is conducting research on the accuracy of a student's responding to written math problems based on the final answer with no scoring of intermediate calculations. Which is the BEST method for obtaining accurate inter-observer agreement results?

A. Researcher and observer sit together to score the student's work.

B. Photocopies of the student's work are scored independently by researcher and observer.

C. The student's scratch paper is scored if researcher and observer do not agree on a response.

D. Researcher scores the student's work and the observer reviews the researcher's scores for accuracy.

ANSWER: B

Explanation:

Photocopies of the student's work are scored independently by researcher and observer. is the best method because it permits two observers to apply the same operational scoring criterion—the correctness of each final answer—to precisely the same permanent products while remaining independent. Permanent-product measurement is appropriate when the target response leaves a durable, measurable outcome, such as a completed written math worksheet. Each scorer can examine every item, record whether the final answer meets the defined accuracy criterion, and then calculate interobserver agreement from those independently recorded scores. This arrangement avoids the practical problems of trying to observe written responding in real time and supports a valid assessment of whether the measurement system produces consistent results across observers. Independence is essential: agreement is meaningful when each observer scores without being influenced by the other observer's judgments. Because intermediate calculations are explicitly outside the response definition, scoring the completed work based on final answers directly matches the behavior being measured. The BACB's current examination content includes measurement, data display, and interpretation as core behavior-analytic skills; reliable measurement supports sound data-based decisions. See the BCaBA Test Content Outline and the BACB Ethics Codes and Enforcement System for relevant professional expectations regarding accurate, reliable practice.

QUESTION NO: 31

Before recruitment of participants for a research study begins, a behavior analyst needs to:

A. obtain consent from participant(s) or legal guardian(s) if necessary.

B. obtain institutional review board approval or equivalent (e.g., an ethics committee).

C. inform participants of their ability to withdraw from the study.

D. inform participants about ethical requirements and experimental procedures.

ANSWER: B

Explanation:

Before recruiting participants, a behavior analyst must obtain approval from an institutional review board or an equivalent ethics-review body. This prospective review is essential because it evaluates whether the proposed research adequately protects prospective participants' rights and welfare before any recruitment, consent, or research procedures begin. The review considers such issues as risk minimization, the appropriateness of the participant population, privacy and confidentiality safeguards, the recruitment process and materials, and the informed-consent process. Obtaining approval at this stage ensures that recruitment itself is conducted under an ethically reviewed protocol rather than beginning before participant protections have been assessed. The BACB Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts requires behavior analysts conducting research to comply with applicable requirements for research review and approval, and to obtain approval before implementing research activities. In many settings, U.S. federal human-subject protections likewise require IRB review and approval before research involving human participants is initiated, including activities used to identify and recruit participants. See the BACB Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' 45 CFR 46 human-subject protection regulations.