Learning Under Study

Five experiments, five ways to investigate behavior

SS24.P.11c "Describe original experiments conducted by Albert Bandura, B. F. Skinner, Ivan Pavlov, John B. Watson, Kenneth and Mamie Clark, and Rosalie Rayner."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Number the five experiments from 1 to 5. For each one, underline what the researchers did and circle the response they observed.

What Happened in the Experiment?

1. A tone does not normally make a dog drool. Ivan Pavlov studied digestion by measuring dogs' saliva when food appeared. He repeatedly sounded a tone just before giving food; eventually, the tone alone triggered salivation. His dogs had learned an association between two events. B. F. Skinner studied how consequences shape actions. In an operant chamber, a rat could press a lever that released food. Pressing increased when it produced food, showing how reinforcement can strengthen a behavior. Pavlov changed what signaled food; Skinner changed what followed an animal's action. Their procedures tested different forms of learning.

2. John B. Watson and Rosalie Rayner tested whether fear could be learned. They showed an infant known as Little Albert a white rat, which initially did not frighten him. They paired the rat with a sudden, loud noise several times. Later, Albert showed fear at the sight of the rat without the noise. In another study, Kenneth and Mamie Clark presented Black children with dolls that differed in skin color. They asked children to choose dolls for roles such as the 'nice' doll and to identify the doll that looked like them. Many chose the white doll for positive roles, evidence the Clarks used to investigate children's racial attitudes.

3. Albert Bandura examined learning by watching others. In his Bobo doll studies, some children saw an adult hit and speak aggressively to a large inflatable doll; other children saw a nonaggressive adult or no adult. When later given a chance to play, children who had seen the aggressive adult were more likely to copy specific aggressive acts than those who had not. No food reward or loud noise was needed for the children to reproduce what they saw. These studies also raise ethical questions: frightening an infant or exposing children to aggressive behavior could cause harm. Describing an experiment means naming its participants, procedure, and observed response.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Describe what Pavlov did and what the dogs did in response. How did Skinner's procedure and the rat's response differ?

2. Describe how Watson and Rayner tested whether Little Albert could learn fear, and state what they observed.

3. What did the Clarks ask children to do with the dolls, and what response did they observe?

4. Describe what children saw and did in Bandura's Bobo doll studies.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a museum label comparing two experiments from the passage. In 4 to 6 sentences, name the researchers, explain each procedure and observed response, then identify one key difference and one ethical concern or limitation.

Learning Under Study

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Number the five experiments from 1 to 5. For each one, underline what the researchers did and circle the response they observed. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Describe what Pavlov did and what the dogs did in response. How did Skinner's procedure and the rat's response differ?	**Pavlov sounded a tone before giving dogs food; eventually, the tone alone made them salivate. Skinner let a rat press a lever for food; lever pressing increased when it produced food.**
2	Describe how Watson and Rayner tested whether Little Albert could learn fear, and state what they observed.	**They paired a white rat with a loud noise several times. Albert later showed fear of the rat without the noise.**
3	What did the Clarks ask children to do with the dolls, and what response did they observe?	**They asked children to select dolls for roles, including the 'nice' doll, and identify the doll that looked like them. Many children chose the white doll for positive roles.**
4	Describe what children saw and did in Bandura's Bobo doll studies.	**Some children watched an adult act aggressively toward a Bobo doll. When they later played, they were more likely to copy specific aggressive acts than children who had not watched the aggressive adult.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Pavlov sounded a tone before feeding dogs, and the dogs eventually salivated at the tone without food. Bandura showed children an adult behaving aggressively toward a Bobo doll, and children who watched were more likely to copy those actions. Pavlov studied learning from a repeated signal, while Bandura studied learning from watching another person. One ethical concern in Bandura's experiment is that exposing children to aggression might encourage harmful behavior outside the study.

Accept any accurate comparison of two experiments that names the researchers, describes each procedure and response, and gives a supported difference. Ethical concerns may be framed as possible risks rather than proven harms.