Stage 2 Psychology
Student Response
2012 Examination Extended Response
Question 25

This text is an actual student response. It has been word processed in the interests of legibility. <mark>*Errors in punctuation, spelling and sentence structure reflect the student's own work without correction.*</mark>

One factor that may have influenced Alice's learning may have been her attention level to the behaviour being observed – we must pay attention to a behaviour in order to learn it through observation. In Alice's case, she 'watched the program carefully' and thus her close attention to the baking may have contributed to her baking success. Another factor that influences observational learning is motivation – the behaviour being learnt must have a usefulness to the learner. For Alice, her motivation to learn cake-baking may have stemmed from wanting to eat the product or impressing her friends.

Positive reinforcement is an aspect of operant conditioning that aims to increase the strength and/or frequency of a behaviour. This is achieved through adding a pleasant stimulus after the desired behaviour has been performed. Alice's friends 'enjoyed eating' her cakes and 'gave her many compliments' (the pleasant stimulus), thus Alice is likely to continue baking cakes in the future to continue receiving these rewards.

Negative reinforcement is also a part of operant conditioning that aims to increase the strength and frequency of a behaviour. This is achieved through removing a negative or aversive stimulus after a desired behaviour, in order to increase the strength and frequency of that behaviour. For Alice, the negative/aversive stimulus of a burnt cake is removed by the action of taking it out of the oven in time. Thus in the future, she is more likely to take the cake out of the oven in time in order to continue avoiding the negative stimulus of a burnt cake. The frequency of her behaviour increases due to negative reinforcement.

Classical conditioning is the forming of associations between two stimuli that are normally unrelated. Before learning occurs, neutral stimulus (NS) does not elicit a response naturally. However, an unconditioned response (UVS) elicits an unconditioned response (UCR) without prior conditioning. Classical conditioning involves three phases: acquisition, performance and extinction. During acquisition, a NS is paired repeatedly with a UCS to elicit the UCR. During the performance phase, the previously neutral NS becomes a conditioned stimulus (CS) that elicits a conditioned response (CR). The CR is the same or a similar response to the UCR that was originally elicited by the UCS. During

<div style="background: yellow;">

Knowledge and Understanding
Demonstrates a deep knowledge of the theory of observational learning through description of attention.

Knowledge and Understanding
Demonstrates ability to perceptively and logically explain Alice's behavior.

Application
Applies psychological concepts of positive reinforcement explicitly to the scenario.

Knowledge and Understanding
Demonstrates a deep knowledge of positive and negative reinforcement and classical conditioning.

Application
Demonstrates highly effective use of appropriate psychological terminology relevant to classical conditioning.

</div>

the acquisition phase, learning has occurred. Extinction is the gradual weakening and disappearance of the CR in the absence of the UCS. In the scenario, the special plate was the NS – a stimulus that did not naturally elicit a response from Alice's friends. The cakes that Alice baked were an UCS that elicited the UCR of salivation. As the special plate (NS) and cake (UCS) are paired repeatedly together, the plate becomes a CS that elicits the CR without the presence of the cakes (Alice's friends 'started to salivate whenever they saw Alice's special plate' regardless of whether it was used to serve cake). Thus, classical conditioning has occurred, as an association has been formed between the plate and cake, where the plate now triggers a learnt response.

Additional comments

A review of this student's response shows that it:

- consistently demonstrates a deep and broad knowledge of concepts within the *Learning* topic (Knowledge and Understanding)
- demonstrates the ability to communicate knowledge and understanding of psychology coherently and highly effectively, with clear expression of relevant ideas, fluent logical sequencing, and good organisation (Knowledge and Understanding)
- uses psychological terms relevant to observational learning and classical conditioning highly effectively. (Application)

Performance Standards for Stage 2 Psychology

	Investigation	Analysis and Evaluation	Application	Knowledge and Understanding
A	Develops logical, coherent, and detailed psychology investigation proposals. Critically and logically selects and consistently and appropriately acknowledges information about psychology and issues in psychology from a range of sources. Clearly understands and consistently uses well-organised, ethical research practices. Obtains, records, and displays findings of investigations using appropriate conventions and formats accurately and highly effectively.	Uses perceptive and thorough analytical skills to examine the behaviour of individuals and groups of people in different contexts. Logically evaluates procedures and suggests a range of appropriate improvements. Systematically analyses and evaluates psychological evidence to formulate logical and highly relevant conclusions.	Applies psychological concepts and evidence from investigations to suggest solutions to complex problems in new and familiar contexts. Uses appropriate psychological terms highly effectively. Demonstrates initiative in applying constructive and focused approaches to individual and collaborative work.	Consistently demonstrates a deep and broad knowledge and understanding of a range of psychological concepts and ethical considerations. Uses knowledge of psychology perceptively and logically to understand and explain behaviours. Uses a variety of formats to communicate knowledge and understanding of psychology in different contexts coherently and highly effectively.
B	Develops well-considered and clear psychology investigation proposals. Logically selects and appropriately acknowledges information about psychology and issues in psychology from different sources. Understands and consistently uses ethical research practices. Obtains, records, and displays findings of investigations using appropriate conventions and formats mostly accurately and effectively.	Uses clear and well-organised analytical skills to examine the behaviour of individuals and groups of people in different contexts. Evaluates procedures and suggests some appropriate improvements. Uses mostly logical analysis and evaluation of psychological evidence to formulate consistent and relevant conclusions.	Applies psychological concepts and evidence from investigations to suggest solutions to problems in new and familiar contexts. Uses appropriate psychological terms effectively. Applies mostly constructive and focused approaches to individual and collaborative work.	Demonstrates some depth and breadth of knowledge and understanding of a range of psychological concepts and ethical considerations. Uses knowledge of psychology logically to understand and explain behaviours. Uses a variety of formats to communicate knowledge and understanding of psychology in different contexts coherently and effectively.
C	Develops considered and generally clear psychology investigation proposals. Selects with some focus, and mostly appropriately acknowledges, information about psychology and issues in psychology from different sources. Generally understands and uses ethical research practices. Obtains, records, and displays findings of investigations using generally appropriate conventions and formats with some errors but generally accurately and effectively.	Uses generally organised analytical skills to examine the behaviour of individuals and groups of people in different contexts. Evaluates some procedures in psychology and suggests some improvements that are generally appropriate. Analyses and evaluates psychological evidence to formulate simple and generally relevant conclusions.	Applies psychological concepts and evidence from investigations to suggest some solutions to basic problems in new or familiar contexts. Uses generally appropriate psychological terms with some general effectiveness. Applies generally constructive approaches to individual and collaborative work.	Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of a general range of psychological concepts and ethical considerations. Uses knowledge of psychology with some logic to understand and explain behaviours. Uses a variety of formats to communicate knowledge and understanding of psychology in different contexts with some general effectiveness.
D	Prepares the outline of a psychology investigation proposal. Selects and may partly acknowledge one or more sources of information about psychology or an issue in psychology. Identifies and attempts to use some ethical research practices. Obtains, records, and displays findings of investigations using conventions and formats inconsistently, with occasional accuracy and effectiveness.	Describes basic behaviour of individuals and groups of people in different contexts. For some procedures, identifies improvements that may be made. Attempts to extract meaning from psychological evidence and to formulate a simple conclusion that may be relevant.	Applies some evidence to describe some basic problems and identify one or more simple solutions, in familiar contexts. Attempts to use some psychological terms that may be appropriate. Attempts individual work inconsistently, and contributes superficially to aspects of collaborative work.	Demonstrates some basic knowledge and partial understanding of psychological concepts and ethical considerations. Identifies and explains some psychological information that is relevant to understanding and explaining behaviours. Communicates basic information about psychology to others using one or more formats.
E	Identifies a simple psychology investigation proposal. Identifies a source of information about psychology or an issue in psychology. Pays limited attention to ethical research practices. Attempts to record and display some descriptive information about an investigation, with limited accuracy or effectiveness.	Acknowledges that individuals and groups of people may behave differently in different contexts. Acknowledges the need for improvements in one or more procedures. Attempts to organise some limited evidence.	Identifies a basic problem and attempts to identify a solution in a familiar context. Uses some psychological terms. Shows emerging skills in individual and collaborative work.	Demonstrates some limited recognition and awareness of psychological concepts and ethical considerations. Shows an emerging understanding that some psychological information is relevant to explaining behaviours. Attempts to communicate information about psychology.