

2021 – 12 ATAR Psychology

Task Three – Project

7.5%

Learning Theories, Phobias and Behaviour Modification

Name:

Due Date:

Score: /42

**Assessment type:** Project

**Conditions**

Time for the task:

* Two weeks out of class time to complete poster or fact sheets.
* One period in-class to apply your knowledge of Learning Theory and Behaviour Modification relating to **2** case studies (in-class validation).

Materials required when completing your validation:

* Poster – 1x single sided A3 or 2x single sided A4 sheets of paper
* List of references

You must also consider how you will address the ethics involved in any investigation.

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**Learning Theory and Behaviour Modification** **(42 Marks)**

Imagine you are a Psychology Professor with a specialty in Learning Theory and Behaviour Modification techniques. You have been asked to deliver a lecture to Psychology students. You are to design and develop a poster or fact sheet which will be distributed to students after the lecture covering all the information.

**Poster (16 marks)**

* Discuss the THREE theories of learning covered in your classes, noting the theorists and experiments that led to their conclusions.
* Using the fear of heights (acrophobia) as an example, explain how phobias develop by referring to ONE aspect of Learning Theory.
* Discuss the origins of the behavioural therapies, CBT and Systematic Desensitisation, by referring to the work of Albert Ellis, Aaron Beck, Mary Cover Jones, and Joseph Wolpe. Give a brief overview of the processes used in the therapies and relate them to the earlier work involving classical conditioning and operant learning.
* You must include a list of references using ***APA conventions.***
* The information in your poster should be presented logically. The text and graphics should be set out effectively to communicate to your audience.

**In-class validation (26 marks)** You will be given unseen questions to write a response applying your knowledge of the topics covered in the fact sheets.

**Marking Guide for Poster or Fact Sheets (16 marks)**

* Discuss the three theories of learning covered in your classes, noting the theorists and experiments that led to their conclusions.

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| **Description** | **Marks** |
| **Classical conditioning** |  |
| * Provides a clear and descriptive outline of the theory of learning including theorists | 1 |
| * Provides clear summaries of studies/research used to support the theory of learning | 1 |
| **Subtotal** | **2** |
| **Operant conditioning** |  |
| * Provides a clear and descriptive outline of the theory of learning including theorists | 1 |
| * Provides clear summaries of studies/research used to support the theory of learning | 1 |
| **Subtotal** | **2** |
| **Observational learning** |  |
| * Provides a clear and descriptive outline of the theory of learning including theorists | 1 |
| * Provides clear summaries of studies/research used to support the theory of learning | 1 |
| **Subtotal** | **2** |
| **Total** | **6** |

* Using the fear of heights (acrophobia) as an example, explain how phobias develop by referring to ONE (1) aspect of Learning Theory.

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| **Description** | **Marks** |
| **Phobias** |  |
| * Provides a clear and descriptive outline of the development of phobias, describing acrophobia and outlining a scenario that may contribute to the development of this phobia, relating it to one theory of learning. | 2 |
| * Provides a description of phobias in general and attempts to explain why they develop | 1 |
| **Subtotal** | **2** |

* Discuss the origins of the behavioural therapies, CBT and Systematic Desensitisation, by referring to the work of Albert Ellis, Aaron Beck, Mary Cover Jones, and Joseph Wolpe. Give a brief overview of the processes used in the therapies and relate them to the earlier work involving classical conditioning and operant learning.

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| **Description** | **Marks** |
| **CBT** |  |
| * Provides a clear and detailed discussion of the origins of CBT and refers to both theorists, with a clear and descriptive outline of the processes and links the process to classical or operant conditioning | 2 |
| * Briefly comments on some aspects of the origins referring to one or both of the researchers but no clear steps and/or no link to conditioning | 1 |
| **Subtotal** | **2** |
| **Systematic Desensitisation** |  |
| * Provides a clear and detailed discussion of the origins of Systematic Desensitisation and refers to both theorists, with a clear and descriptive outline of the processes and links the process to classical or operant conditioning | 2 |
| * Briefly comments on some aspects of the origins referring to one or both of the researchers but no clear steps and/or no link to conditioning | 1 |
| **Subtotal** | **2** |
| **Total** | **4** |

* References – provide an alphabetical list of any references use in the report

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| **Description** | **Marks** |
| * Includes a range of relevant references (at least 5, from appropriate sources) | 1 |
| * Correct in-text and end-text referencing (Inc. listed alphabetically) | 1 |
| **Total** | **2** |

* Presentation

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| **Description** | **Marks** |
| * Effectively uses text and graphics | 1 |
| * Quality of spelling and grammar | 1 |
| **Total** | **2** |

**In-class Validation: (26 marks)**

1. Choose TWO theories of learning and describe how each one could be used to train ONE type of pet (for example a pet dog) to learn ONE desired behaviour. Include the following in your response:

* Outline the behavior and suggest how the person could measure the effectiveness of the learning.
* Comment on the effectiveness of the two different methods including strengths and weaknesses of each method. **(10 marks)**

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| **Description** | **Marks** |
| * Description of desired learning behaviour | 1 |
| * Outlines one measurement of effectiveness and why it may be used | 1 |
| **Subtotal** | **2** |
| **First learning theory** | |
| * Correct application of learning theory, with clear steps and a discussion of how the steps relate to the learning theory | 3 |
| * Application of learning theory is demonstrated through clear steps used to train the pet | 2 |
| * Application of learning theory is attempted but steps do not reflect theory or not in logical order | 1 |
| **Subtotal** | **3** |
| **Second learning theory** |  |
| * Correct application of learning theory, with clear steps and a discussion of how the steps relate to the learning theory | 3 |
| * Application of learning theory is demonstrated through clear steps used to train the pet | 2 |
| * Application of learning theory is attempted but steps do not reflect theory or not in logical order | 1 |
| **Subtotal** | **3** |
| **Comment on effectiveness** | |
| * Gives a strength and weakness of the first method | 1 |
| * Gives a strength and weakness of the second method | 1 |
| **Subtotal** | **2** |
| **Total** | **10** |

1. Refer to the attached article and, as if you were conducting the program, explain to the audience of volunteers; **(16 marks)**
   * How phobias develop according to **one** learning theory
   * The theory behind how this program will work
   * Three ethical issues involved with the program

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| **Description** | **Marks** |
| **Phobias** |  |
| * Defines phobias | 1 |
| **Subtotal** | **1** |
| **How arachnophobia arises - one aspect of learning theory** |  |
| * Describes the learning theory clearly, relates it to the development of phobias and describes a specific scenario with regard to arachnophobia. | 4 |
| * Provides a clear and descriptive outline of the theory of learning relating it to the development of arachnophobia | 3 |
| * Briefly outlines the theory of learning and relates it briefly to arachnophobia | 2 |
| * Briefly comments on some parts of the theory of learning **or** arachnophobia | 1 |
| **Subtotal** | **4** |
| **Total** | **5** |

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| **Description** | **Marks** |
| * Identify the aims of the program | 1 |
| **Subtotal** | **1** |
| **Systematic desensitisation description** | |
| * Clear description of therapy, including the three steps (fear hierarchy, relaxation techniques, graded exposure) | 2 |
| * Clear definition/description of SD but does not include steps/correct terminology | 1 |
| **Subtotal** | **2** |
| **Systematic desensitisation application** | |
| * Correct application of SD, demonstrated through clear steps used to treat the phobia (e.g. first word, then picture, then video etc.) | 2 |
| * Describes possible steps but does not clearly explain step-by-step | 1 |
| **Subtotal** | **2** |
| **Relating systematic desensitisation to classical conditioning** | |
| * Explains how relaxation techniques are paired with the stimulus to overcome the previously negatively conditioned response | 2 |
| * Refers to relaxation techniques being paired with the stimulus | 1 |
| **Subtotal** | **2** |
| **Total** | **7** |

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| **Description** | **Marks** |
| **Ethical issues** |  |
| * Describes and explains three ethical principles, gives specific examples of when the issue may arise in this particular context   (e.g. online so less support, hard to ensure informed consent, debriefing? Etc.) | 4 |
| * Describes and explains three ethical principles, gives general examples in the context of treatment | 3 |
| * Describes and gives examples of two or three ethical principles in the context of treatment | 2 |
| * Describes or defines two or three ethical principles | 1 |
| **Subtotal** | **4** |
| **Total** | **4** |

*Overcome your spider phobia on the world wide web - Australia's Science Channel*. Australia's Science Channel. (2021). Retrieved 25 November 2021, from <https://australiascience.tv/overcome-your-spider-phobia-on-the-world-wide-web/>.

**Article –**

Overcome your spider phobia on the world wide web

*Last updated March 25, 2019 at 4:32 pm*

**A new program promises to help people suffering from a spider phobia.**



**If you have a spider phobia, then researchers need you.** Scientists from the [University of Tasmania](http://www.utas.edu.au/) are looking for volunteers to participate in a new study into spider fear and receive a free trial treatment for their phobia.

[‘Feardrop’](https://www.feardrop.com/) is an online phobia treatment system developed by academics Professor Ken Kirkby, Dr Allison Matthews and Dr Joel Scanlan and one of a few programs to directly deliver exposure treatment online.

Statistics show approximately 5-10 per cent of the adult population experience some form of specific phobia, with higher rates found among females than males.

The current research is being conducted by Liselot Goudswaard, a University of Tasmania Master’s student in Clinical Psychology, who said the program was an easily accessible way for people to access assistance for their spider phobia.

“When people are confronted by the feared object or situation they can feel extremely anxious and can experience a panic attack which can have significant, unwanted effects on their everyday life,” she said.

“Unfortunately, many people with phobias do not seek treatment due to accessibility, cost and duration, which is why online treatment could be a helpful solution.”

**Graded exposure to reduce phobia**

‘Feardrop’ is designed to help people overcome their fears through a common psychological technique known as graded exposure.

“The goal of exposure therapy is to expose the individual to the feared object gradually until they experience a reduction in fear through the process of habituation,” Ms Goudswaard.

Ms Goudswaard said the online treatment could help people to reduce their fear of spiders in everyday life and may act as a stepping stone for real life exposure.

“We are conducting this research trial to assess the effectiveness of the treatment and to work out the best way to present the images to achieve the maximum benefit for our participants,” she said.

“It is also hoped that by investigating individuals’ varying responses to treatment and contributing factors, we will be able to tailor exposure treatment to the individual based on their needs,” she said.

Volunteers who are interested in participating can register online at [www.feardrop.com](http://www.feardrop.com/) to begin the trial treatment, or email [contact@feardrop.com](mailto:contact@feardrop.com)

Researchers also have an online program available for OCD symptoms at [www.ocddrop.com](http://www.ocddrop.com/)