Classical Conditioning Worksheet

Directions: Six examples of classical conditioning are outlined in the following paragraphs. In each example, identify the unconditioned stimulus, unconditioned response, conditioned stimulus, and the conditioned response.

The Shower

When Miah gets back to the dormitory after jogging around the campus, he likes to take a quick shower before going to class. One morning while taking a shower he hears someone flushing a nearby toilet. Suddenly, extremely hot water comes rushing out of the showerhead and Miah experiences excruciating pain. After muttering a few obscenities, he continues showering. A few minutes later, Miah hears another toilet flush and he leaps out of the shower.

1. What is the unconditioned stimulus?
2. What is the unconditioned response?
3. What is the neutral stimulus that becomes the conditioned stimulus?
4. What is the conditioned response?

Stop the Carousel I Want to Get Off

Molly was ecstatic when she learned her family was going to the state fair next weekend. When her family arrived at the state fair the temperature was in excess of 100°F, but Molly didn't care because she was finally there. Molly stopped and watched some clowns performing next to the carousel. As she watched the silly antics of the clowns with the carousel music playing in the background, Molly got more and more sweaty and uncomfortable. Eventually, she fainted from the heat. After that trip to the state fair, every time Molly hears carousel musical she feels a little dizzy.

1. What is the unconditioned stimulus?
2. What is the unconditioned response?
3. What is the neutral stimulus that becomes the conditioned stimulus?
4. What is the conditioned response?

When Good Tuna Goes Bad

Ryan was really looking forward to lunch because his mother had prepared a tuna salad sandwich. Unfortunately, the mayonnaise she used had been left out too long and was spoiled. Not long after eating the sandwich, Ryan felt sick and had to rush to the bathroom. Thereafter, the mere mention of a tuna sandwich would make Ryan nauseous.

1. What is the unconditioned stimulus?
2. What is the unconditioned response?
3. What is the neutral stimulus that becomes the conditioned stimulus?
4. What is the conditioned response?
Kitties and Clickers

Psychologists like to experiment on other organisms in their immediate environment, so Jenny decided to perform a few experiments on her kitty, Precious. Jenny had a little clicker that makes a loud ‘CLICK’ sound. She walked around the house, randomly clicking it for a while while Precious rested in the living room. Then Jenny sat down with Precious, and used the flash on her camera to flash a bright light at the same time she clicked. Precious blinked because of the flash, and looked mildly annoyed. Jenny repeated this process with her 4 times, then clicked the clicker, without using the flash. She still blinked! (She also looked very unhappy).

1. What is the unconditioned stimulus?
2. What is the unconditioned response?
3. What is the neutral stimulus that becomes the conditioned stimulus?
4. What is the conditioned response?

Kitties and Snappers

After Sabrina heard about Jenny’s experiment, she wanted to try something with her own cat. Sabrina’s cat, Jasmine, tends to follow her around the house (unless she’s sleeping). When Sabrina feeds her, She puts her food dish on the floor. One day a few weeks ago, Sabrina tried a new procedure. After she put the food dish on the floor, She would snap her fingers, which was paired with her eating the food and licking her chops (yum!). One night about a week ago, a half hour or so before Sabrina normally feeds her, they were sitting on the couch. Sabrina decided to try snapping her fingers to see if there was any classical conditioning — Jasmine looked at Sabrina and licked her chops!

1. What is the unconditioned stimulus?
2. What is the unconditioned response?
3. What is the neutral stimulus that becomes the conditioned stimulus?
4. What is the conditioned response?

Mmmm…. Liver!!!

Hannah and her sidekick, Avery, went out on the town in Manhattan one evening, to a swanky restaurant. Hannah and Avery saw a new food item on the menu (Fois Gras, which is seared goose liver), and decided to try it. Avery found it delicious, as did Hannah. After retiring to bed that night, Avery became nauseous, had a headache, and slept poorly. Avery has tried eating fois gras since then, but when looking at it, she immediately feels nauseous and can’t eat it. (hint: Food aversion is a special case of classical conditioning which requires only one pairing of the stimuli)

5. What is the unconditioned stimulus?
6. What is the unconditioned response?
7. What is the neutral stimulus that becomes the conditioned stimulus?
8. What is the conditioned response?