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39	A	B	C	D	E

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers (CCPDT)

CPDT

Examination for Certified Professional Dog Trainer-KA

EDITION

Demo

QUESTIONS

9

FORMAT

Limited Edition PDF

Before you begin

What this is

9 practice questions for Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers (CCPDT) CPDT , each with its answer key and an explanation. Answer a question before you read its key — the explanation is worth more once you have committed.

If something looks wrong

Send us three things and we will check it:

- the exam code, CPDT
- the question number
- the email address on your order

Write to **support@mometrix.net**. We reply within one business day.

QUESTION 1

MULTIPLE CHOICE

A dog that has been repeatedly exposed to the sound of a thunderstorm without any accompanying aversive event still shows full-blown signs of fear during the next storm. Which combination of learning-theory concepts best explains this persistence? (Choose two.)

- ☒ **A** Classical conditioning has established the storm sounds as a conditioned stimulus that elicits a conditioned emotional response.
- ☒ **B** Operant reinforcement has maintained the fear response because avoiding the stimulus has been negatively reinforced.
- ☐ **C** The behavior was shaped through successive approximations of the fearful response.
- ☐ **D** Extinction fails to occur because the original fear-acquisition trial included an unconditioned stimulus of sufficient intensity to produce stimulus generalization.
- ☐ **E** Continuous reinforcement of the calm response during storms has produced resistance to extinction.

ANSWER **A · B**

WHY Storm sounds paired with aversive events form a conditioned stimulus (CS) that elicits a conditioned fear response — classical conditioning (A). When the dog escapes or avoids the feared context, the reduction in fear negatively reinforces the escape/avoidance behavior, which is operant conditioning (B). Shaping by successive approximations (C) does not apply to an emotional response. Generalization (D) describes responding to similar stimuli, not persistence of the original response. Continuous reinforcement of calm behavior (E) would actually accelerate extinction, not prevent it.

QUESTION 2

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Which of the following body-language signals are reliably classified as distance-increasing (appeasement-related warning) signals in dogs? (Choose two.)

- ☒ **A** Lip licking with the head turned away while the body remains still
- ☐ **B** A stiff, upright tail held high with forward weight shift
- ☐ **C** A relaxed open-mouth 'play face' with rear-end up and forelegs lowered
- ☒ **D** Whale eye (showing the whites of the eyes) combined with a closed, tense mouth
- ☐ **E** Soft, squinty eyes with a relaxed body and loose, sweeping tail wag

ANSWER A • D

WHY Lip licking with a head turn and whale eye with a tense mouth are classic distance-increasing signals that communicate discomfort and a desire for the stressor to stop (A, D). A high, stiff tail with forward weight shift (B) is a distance-decreasing/confident assertive signal. The relaxed play face (C) and soft eyes with a loose wag (E) are affiliative, distance-decreasing signals.

QUESTION 3

SINGLE CHOICE

A trainer uses a variable ratio schedule to maintain a high, steady rate of responding from a dog. Which reinforcement procedure is the trainer applying?

- ☐ **A** Continuous reinforcement
- ☐ **B** Fixed ratio reinforcement
- ☒ **C** Variable ratio reinforcement
- ☐ **D** Variable interval reinforcement
- ☐ **E** Fixed interval reinforcement

ANSWER C

WHY A variable ratio (VR) schedule delivers reinforcement after an unpredictable number of responses and is well known for producing the highest, most steady rate of responding with low post-reinforcement pauses. Continuous (A) is reinforcement after every response; fixed ratio (B) is after a set number; variable interval (D) is after an unpredictable amount of time; fixed interval (E) is after a set amount of time.

QUESTION 4

SINGLE CHOICE

A trainer is working with a dog that lunges and barks at other dogs. The trainer begins at a distance where the dog notices other dogs but can still take food, then pairs the sight of other dogs with high-value food before any lunge occurs. Which procedure is the trainer using?

- ☐ A Flooding
- ☒ B Systematic desensitization combined with counterconditioning
- ☐ C Positive punishment
- ☐ D Response substitution through extinction alone
- ☐ E Classical extinction trials

ANSWER B

WHY Starting sub-threshold (below the reaction point) is systematic desensitization; pairing the previously feared stimulus (other dogs) with food changes the dog's emotional response, which is counterconditioning. Together these describe systematic desensitization with counterconditioning (B). Flooding (A) would expose the dog at full intensity. Positive punishment (C) would add an aversive. Extinction alone (D, E) does not build a new, competing emotional response.

QUESTION 5

SINGLE CHOICE

A trainer wants to decrease a dog's jumping on visitors by removing the dog's access to the visitor the moment the dog's paws leave the floor, with no physical correction. Which quadrant is being applied?

- ☐ A Positive reinforcement
- ☐ B Negative reinforcement
- ☐ C Positive punishment
- ☒ D Negative punishment (response cost/time-out)
- ☐ E Extinction without consequence

ANSWER D

WHY Removing a desirable stimulus (access to the visitor) contingent on an unwanted behavior (jumping) is negative punishment, also called response cost or a time-out from social reinforcement (D). Positive reinforcement (A) adds a desirable stimulus to increase behavior. Negative reinforcement (B) removes an aversive to increase behavior. Positive punishment (C) adds an aversive to decrease behavior. Pure extinction (E) withholds the reinforcer that previously maintained the behavior, but here the trainer is actively withdrawing access as a consequence — that is negative punishment.

QUESTION 6

SINGLE CHOICE

Domestic dogs descend from a canid ancestor whose social structure is best described as:

- ☐ **A** Solitary hunters that form only loose, temporary pair bonds
- ☒ **B** Highly social, group-living animals with fluid, affiliative social structures
- ☐ **C** Strictly hierarchical packs with a single, linear 'alpha' pair that suppresses all subordinates
- ☐ **D** Colonial insects with a queen-and-worker caste system
- ☐ **E** Feral cats with mandatory solitary territory-holding

ANSWER B

WHY The domestic dog's wild ancestor is the wolf, a highly social canid that lives in family-based groups with fluid, affiliative social behavior (B). The outdated dominance/linear-alpha model (C) has been empirically discredited in favor of family-group and individual-relationship models. Dogs are not solitary (A), colonial (D), or feline (E).

QUESTION 7

SINGLE CHOICE

Which statement best reflects current, evidence-informed guidance about electronic (shock) collars for pet dogs?

- ☐ **A** Shock collars are the fastest, most reliable tool for any behavior problem and have no welfare cost when fitted properly.
- ☐ **B** Shock collars are recommended by all major veterinary behavior groups as a first-line treatment for fear and aggression.
- ☒ **C** Evidence indicates shock collars offer no advantage over positive-reinforcement training for most common behavior problems and carry risk of fear, anxiety, and pain-related side effects.
- ☐ **D** Shock collars only produce side effects if used on puppies; they are entirely safe for adult dogs.
- ☐ **E** Shock collars are required by certifying bodies to be used in at least one CPDT-KA skills demonstration.

ANSWER C

WHY Peer-reviewed comparative trials and consensus statements from veterinary behavior organizations find that shock/electronic collars offer no demonstrated superiority over positive-reinforcement methods for typical companion-dog problems and are associated with increased stress and fear-related indicators (C). Statements A, B, D, and E misrepresent the evidence and current professional guidance.

QUESTION 8

SINGLE CHOICE

A puppy is enrolled in a socialization class starting at 8 weeks of age, before the full puppy vaccine series is complete. Which statement is most consistent with current guidelines?

- ☐ **A** Socialization must be delayed until all vaccines are finished at 16 weeks, no matter what.
- ☒ **B** Early, supervised exposure to a wide variety of people, surfaces, sounds, and well-vaccinated dogs is critical and should begin before 12-14 weeks because the primary socialization window closes around that time.
- ☐ **C** Puppies should never meet other dogs until 6 months of age.
- ☐ **D** Only flat collars are appropriate in class; head halters and harnesses are unsafe at any age.
- ☐ **E** Parvo risk makes outdoor potty areas off-limits for the entire first year.

ANSWER B

WHY Veterinary behavior consensus is that the primary socialization period in puppies closes around 12-14 weeks, so safe, supervised early socialization should begin well before then (B). Waiting until all vaccines are done (A, C) typically leaves the sensitive window closed. Blanket prohibitions on meeting dogs (C), equipment (D), or outdoor surfaces (E) are not supported by current guidelines when classes are structured with appropriate health protocols.

QUESTION 9

SINGLE CHOICE

A 2-year-old dog suddenly begins urinating indoors, guarding food, and hiding when guests arrive. The trainer suspects a medical contribution and should first:

- ☐ A Begin a strict, intensive dominance-reduction program.
- ☐ B Use a shock collar set to the lowest level to interrupt guarding.
- ☒ C Refer the client to a veterinarian for a medical and pain evaluation before designing a behavior intervention.
- ☐ D Confine the dog to a crate 24 hours a day until the behavior stops.
- ☐ E Assume the behavior is purely learned and ignore the medical dimension.

ANSWER C

WHY New-onset house soiling, resource guarding intensification, and social withdrawal can all have medical or pain-related contributors; current CPDT-KA guidance and veterinary behavior consensus call for veterinary evaluation before behavior intervention (C). Dominance-reduction programs (A), shock (B), 24-hour crating (D), and ignoring medical contributors (E) are not supported.