## ESE656: POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORTS IN THE CLASSROOM

**Instructor Guidance**

Week 2

Welcome to Week Two of ESE 656:Positive Behavior Supports in the Classroom!

Please be sure to review the Week Two homepage for this course to see:

* The specific learning outcomes for the week
* The schedule overview
* The required and recommended resources
* The introduction to the week
* A listing of the assessments

Next, be sure to read this entire Instructor Guidance page.

### Overview

Recall that in Week One you discussed the overarching understanding of cognitive development and development of children over time. Week Two is designed to expand on this learning and analyze how specific disabilities will impact social skills and behavior in the learning environment. Interpret instructional techniques to implement appropriate social skills and behavior interventions. As well as, analyze how cultural and linguistic perspectives influence teacher, guardian/caregiver/parent, and student behavior.

As part of the Week One Discussion One, you were encouraged to review the weekly homepages for the course and take note of the assessments each week. Now is an appropriate time to revisit the Week Six Final Project instructions and Grading Rubric to be sure you understand the scope of what you will do in that assessment and how your participation in Week Two supports your success.

### Intellectual Elaboration

**Motivation**This week’s class will review positive environments in the classroom. However, before we can begin to discuss what positive environments look like, a brief discussion on the theoretical underpinnings of behavior (why we do what we do) needs to take place.
 **Classical Conditioning**Ivan Pavlov explains this theory through the use of “Pavlov’s Dogs” where each time he rang a bell he also fed the dogs meat powder. After a while, he discovered that dogs began to ‘drool’ with just the sound of a ringing bell. Finally, the dogs began to salivate as soon as the person feeding them would enter the room (Psychology 101, n.d.).

**Classical Conditioning in Action**In most preschool class, every day naptime is at noon. This means right at noon, students get cranky and tired even if they aren’t in school. Pavlov explains that we create mental relationships which causes us to have a ‘conditioned’ response to something that is typically ‘neutral’ when paired together. In other words: noon=nap, noon (time of day) = nap time, THEREFORE noon= feeling tired.

**Operant Conditioning**Operant conditioning comes from how we respond to what is presented to us in our natural environment; learning due to the natural consequences of our actions.
Think about the mouse in the maze. The mouse has to solve the maze to get the food. The mouse tries a bunch of different routes and finally finds the way to the food. Once that happens, the mouse will naturally try to remember what he did to get food. This is learning through a natural consequence of how to be rewarded.
 **A-B-C’s of Behavior**In order to assess and analyze a behavior, we must consider the A-B-C’s of behavior, or the 3-term contingency (Alberto & Troutman, 2013). Antecedents are events preceding a behavior. B stands for the behavior itself, which has a measurable dimension. Consequences are the events that follow a behavior. Changing antecedents and consequences can change the future rate or likelihood of the behavior to occur. These are the basis for the application of behavioral science in Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) (Sailor, Dunlap, Sugai, & Horner, 2009).

**Operant Conditioning in Practice**Your students know that if they don’t finish their classwork, they’ll have to stay in during recess to finish it. Because Sam goofed on during math class, he missed the first ten minutes of recess (which didn’t make him happy at all!). The next day Sam made sure to get right down to business so he could have his full playtime (which he did!). He earned a natural consequence for his actions, which he will undoubtedly remember next time!

**Unconditioned Stimulus**The [unconditioned stimulus (Links to an external site.)](https://www.verywell.com/what-is-an-unconditioned-stimulus-2796006) is one that unconditionally, naturally, and automatically triggers a response. Your alarm goes off at 5am; the time when you have to get up for work. As soon as your alarm rings, you jump out of bed, ready to face the day! (The alarm is the unconditional stimulus).

**The Unconditioned Response**The [unconditioned response (Links to an external site.)](https://www.verywell.com/what-is-an-unconditioned-response-2796007) is the unlearned response that occurs naturally in response to the unconditioned stimulus. Being ready to face the day is the unconditioned response.

**The Conditioned Stimulus**The [conditioned stimulus (Links to an external site.)](https://www.verywell.com/what-is-a-conditioned-response-2794974) is previously neutral stimulus that, after becoming associated with the unconditioned stimulus, eventually comes to trigger a conditioned response. Supposed that when your alarm went off at 5am every day it played the same song “Everybody Have Fun Tonight” by Wang Chung. While the song is completely unrelated to the alarm, if every time you heard it you felt a rush of excitement (like you do with the alarm) THE SONG would be the conditioned stimulus.

**The Conditioned Response**The [conditioned response (Links to an external site.)](https://www.verywell.com/what-is-a-conditioned-response-2794974) is the learned response to the previously neutral stimulus. In our example, the conditioned response would be THE FEELING of euphoria (ready to start the day!)

**Simon Says… DWDo What I Do**According to Albert Bandura’s Social Learning Theory, children will imitate the behaviors of those who they find similar or those who they admire. Adults who witness the behavior will either reinforce it through negative or positive responses. Finally, the children will use that reinforcement to either continue the behavior or modify it for a different response (operant).  Depending on where you teach- it is important for you, as the instructor, understand the student’s cultural believes, values, who they admire and why.

The major difference to remember is that Classical conditioning is taking a ‘neutral’ object and then, through behavior modification, creating a ‘conditioned’ response. For example, when kids (and most adults!) hear the ice cream truck music, they are hungry for ice cream… then whenever they hear the same music, even if it isn’t coming from a truck full of sugar, they get hungry for ice cream. Operant conditioning, on the other hand, is using natural consequences for a behavior. For example, allowing a student to feed the class fish whenever he follows directions.

Really, what this all boils down to is understanding the underpinnings of behavior in the classroom helps special educator professionals make choices about how to structure a positive environment for students with disability so the individual student, the classroom as a whole and the professionals working with the student have a greater chance of ensuring the student is successful in learning and social environments.

**Culture**

Culture is a way of life for a group of people. It consists of their behaviors, beliefs, values and symbols that they accept, generally without thinking about them that are passed on from one generation to the next. A great deal of who we are and how we behave comes from our culture. However, many may argue that culture is only a part of who we are as humans.
 **Nature Vs. Nurture**
Imagine you are a 7th grade middle school math teacher in New York City, in a low-income area. One of your favorite students, Donnell, misses school at least once a week and more times that than is dropped off at school by the police on the way to taking his mom in again. He has an amazing sense of humor, is kind to his friends, and can read and understand books way above his grade level. In addition, Donnell has such a strong visual memory- he can take apart and put back together anything with a plug. Donnell’s brother dropped out of school at 16 to join a gang and you often hear him talking about how he can’t wait to be just like his brother. You’ve tried explaining the value of an education especially with someone with so much potential but he says he wants to be just like his brother who has a brand new BMW. Of course, he would have a different set of values based on his cultural belief (we’ll get to this later), but the traits that make him ‘one of your favorites’ – would that change if his environment changed?  If Donnell and his brother were raised in a different environment, do you think his core traits (funny, giving, intelligent, mechanical) would be different?

**Culture and Behavior**

Students, who are (ELL) English language learners, not only struggle with the language barrier, but also with social barriers. Behaviors expected in their culture may be very different from typical American social rules and behaviors. While I’m sure you are aware of some culture differences that dictate behavior, others may be less explicit, and therefore overlooked. For example, consider a male student from a patriarchal culture, who is being disciplined by his female teacher. While his behavior and lack of compliance is interpreted as ‘rude and disrespectful’, with further investigation you realize this is how he’s been raised.  Conversely, a female student who was raised in the same cultural system refuses to participate in class or speak with her male teacher; her behaviors may be misconstrued as introverted or standoffish.

Now let’s revisit Donnell for a minute, keeping in mind cultural differences without language barriers; think about how his cultural background has also shaped his thinking and personal values. One of the strongest and most outspoken advocates for cultural change among the African American community, Bill Cosby, gives speeches and lectures on the need for personal responsibility to initiate change. In his interview with Meet the Press, Mr. Cosby explains that:

I hear things coming out of the mouths of babes, things that they believe -- example, and what -- one of the most old-fashioned things. Kid us studying, and so they say to the kid, "You're acting white," which is a put-down to make this kid stop studying. Well, let's examine this. If you're black and you say to me, because you see me studying, "You're acting white," what is it you're saying about black people? You see, these are things that have to be discussed with, with -- and nobody -- people aren't coming up enough to challenge these statements, to, to, to do character corrections on these things.

[Why parents shouldn't force their kids to say, "I'm sorry." (Links to an external site.)](http://alysonschafer.com/why-parents-shouldnt-force-kids-to-say-im-sorry/)

With this interview portion in mind, would Donnell have a different set of cultural values and beliefs if he was raised in a different African American family with more financial means or living in a different area? What about if he was adopted by a family of another race from birth?

### Closing Remarks

Understanding the classroom environment along with a student core beliefs based on culture is important for all special educator professionals to understand. As when you take all these factors into consideration along with the identified disability you will have a greater context to why challenging behaviors maybe exhibited.

### Assessment Guidance

This section includes additional specific assistance for excelling in the discussions for Week Two beyond what is given with the instructions for the discussions. If you have questions about what is expected on any discussion for Week Two, contact your instructor using the Ask Your Instructor discussion before the due date.

**Discussion 1: Video Discussion Focusing on Positive Environments**For this discussion, you will be using the video conversation feature to discuss how to structured positive and caring learning environments could be used in the classroom. It is important that your discussion is focused around the disability focus you chose during Week One Discussion One. Remember to read the final assignment for this course, before starting on this Discussion as all work in this course lead up to the final Assignment.

**Discussion 2: Student Initiated Discussion Thread**This discussion is your opportunity to interact with your classmates at a scholarly level regarding any of the Week Two topics.  Your discussion may be generated from any topic, instructional material, resource, or assignment through this week’s content.  However, keep in mind that the topic needs to be aligned to the weekly learning outcomes which are specified at the beginning of this week.

**Journal: Diversity**This journal assesses your ability to think critically about how culture plays a role in student behavior. You will choose two topics from the topics provided and reflect on how cultural and linguistic perspectives influence teacher **and** guardian/caregiver/parent, **and** student behavior. Be sure to support your reflection with information from the Terry and Irving (2010) document, course room text and instructor guidance.

### References

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