

Analyzing Classical Conditioning Situations

Learning

Name _____

Date _____

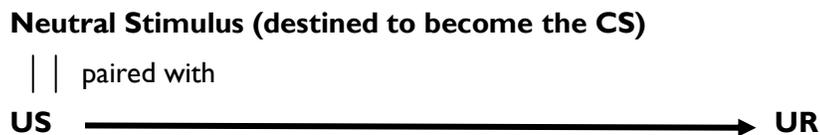
PART I: REVIEW

The sequence of events involved in classical conditioning is as follows:

BEFORE CONDITIONING



DURING CONDITIONING



AFTER CONDITIONING



A potentially confusing point: The CR and the UR are the same behavior (or at least closely related!). If the behavior is triggered by the US, it's called the UR. If it's triggered by the CS, it's referred to as the CR.

Abbreviations:

US = unconditioned stimulus

CS = conditioned stimulus

UR = unconditioned response

CR = conditioned response

PART 2: ANALYZING A CLASSICAL CONDITIONING SITUATION

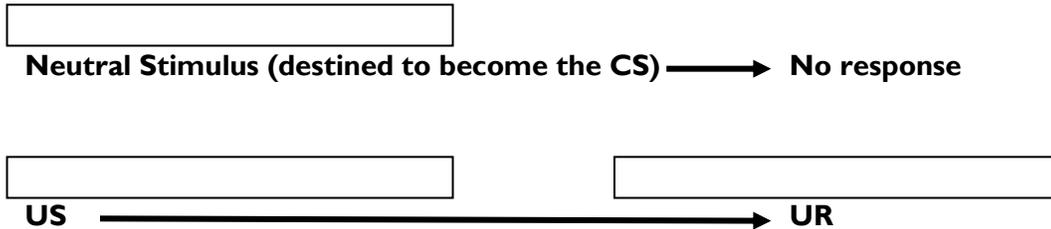
You should be able to fill in the blanks on the diagram on the following page for any classical conditioning situation. Here's an sample situation:

Ethel is a 36-year-old woman who has had her driver's license for 20 years. Until recently, she had always been comfortable driving. However, a month ago she was involved in an accident while turning left at a busy intersection. No one was injured, but Ethel was badly shaken up and quite frightened by the accident. At present, she is able to drive, but is not able to make herself turn left. She makes three right turns instead of one left turn to get where she needs to go. She says that when she tries to turn left, she feels very fearful and panicky.

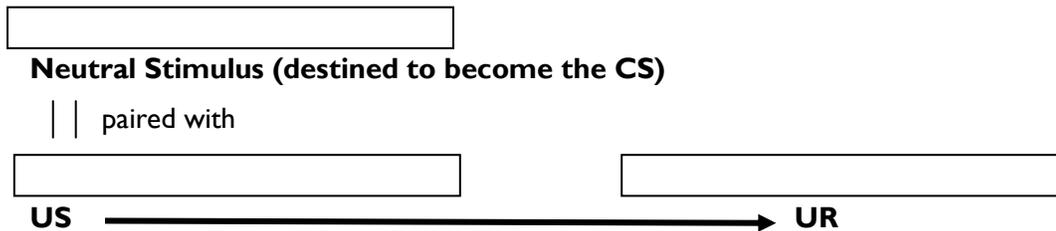
Analyzing Classical Conditioning Situations

Learning

BEFORE CONDITIONING



DURING CONDITIONING



AFTER CONDITIONING



1. What is the behavior or response in question? _____ This will be both the **CR** and the **UR**. If you are having trouble, remember that the responses or behaviors involved in classical conditioning are usually involuntary behaviors such as salivation or eye blink, or emotional responses such as fear, anxiety, physical attraction, or even relaxation. *In the example with Ethel, the behavior or response in question is fear, both of turning left and of being in car accidents.*
2. What is the essential feature of the situation that originally triggered the UR? (What would have triggered the UR without any previous experience?) _____ This is probably the **US**. *In the example above the essential feature is the car accident — which would create a response in almost anyone.*
3. What other features or stimuli were associated with the US? _____ These are possible candidates for the **CS**. Do any of these trigger the CR? If yes, which one? _____ This is probably your **CS**. It should also originally have been a neutral stimulus. *In the example above, both driving and turning left were associated with the automobile accident. However, the example indicates that Ethel is OK with driving in general; turning left is what causes her fear and panic.*

Now put it all together and fill in the blanks in the diagram at the top of this page. Review the sequence of events that you have suggested. Does it make sense? If not, look at it again and reanalyze the situation.

Analyzing Classical Conditioning Situations

Learning

PART 3: YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN!

In the examples that follow, identify the US, UR, CS, CR, as well as any other principles likely to be at work..

1. While caring for a friend's dog, you notice that it displays a fear-like posture as you roll up a newspaper. You try this several times more and become convinced that the dog is generally afraid of rolled up newspapers.

US:	CS:
UR:	CR:

Other principles?

2. Willie couldn't ever remember being so sick and nauseated. He would never go to that restaurant again, and he would never again eat chicken. All he could think about was the good dinner his Mom would prepare for his visit home. As he entered the kitchen, he became flushed and felt nauseated when he saw the golden brown turkey sitting on the table.

US:	CS:
UR:	CR:

Other principles?

3. To discourage coyotes from attacking their sheep, ranchers feed the coyotes small pieces of mutton (sheep meat) tainted with poison, that when eaten, cause the coyotes to experience extreme dizziness and nausea. Later, when the coyotes are placed in the pen with the sheep, just the smell of the sheep causes the coyotes to run frantically away from their former prey.

US:	CS:
UR:	CR:

Other principles?

4. As part of a new and intriguing line of research in behavioral medicine, researchers give mice artificially sweetened water and then follow it up with an injection of a drug that weakens mice's immune systems. Later, when these mice drank the sweetened water, they showed signs of a weakened immune response. Research has been conducted to see if the reverse is possible (i.e., if conditioning can be used to increase immune functioning), a discovery that would surely have important implications for new medical treatments.

US:	CS:
UR:	CR:

Other principles?

5. A passenger on an airplane was feeling very anxious about an important job interview the next morning, and as a result he was uneasy and nervous throughout the flight. Back at home weeks later, he is thinking about a holiday trip. Though he hadn't previously been afraid to fly, he finds himself suddenly nervous about flying, and decides to cancel his plans to visit a relative in another state.

US:	CS:
UR:	CR:

Other principles?

Analyzing Classical Conditioning Situations

Learning

6. It's no secret that people become unhappy when bad weather strikes, but what is surprising is that TV weather forecasters are consistently blamed for weather over which they obviously have no control. Weather forecasters around the country have been wacked by old ladies with umbrellas, pelted with snowballs, and worse by people who mistakenly infer a causal relationship between the forecaster and the subsequent bad weather.

US:	CS:
UR:	CR:

Other principles?

7. Fletcher likes to torment his brother Alfred by dousing him with an ice cold glass of water when he is taking a shower. Fletcher does it by sneaking in to the bathroom when Alfred is in the shower, filling up a glass in the sink, then reaching over the shower curtain to splash his sibling with the frigid liquid. As this has happened many times, Alfred starts jumping wildly and flailing his arms desperately the moment he sees the hand with the glass begin to rise above the curtain.

US:	CS:
UR:	CR:

Other principles?

8. Why is it that car advertisements—especially those for sports cars—often feature beautiful women? Because advertisers know that new car ads that include an attractive female are rated by men as better-designed, faster, and more desirable than similar ads that don't include an attractive female.

US:	CS:
UR:	CR:

Other principles?

9. Geraldine was mugged while walking down one of her favorite shopping streets in the city. Now, whenever she approaches that street, she begins to feel uncomfortable; her heart begins to beat faster, she gets an upset stomach, and her palms get sweaty. She has been so bothered by this that she avoids the street altogether.

US:	CS:
UR:	CR:

Other principles?

10. Cletus was chased and assaulted by a crazed rooster when he was just barely three-years-old. As an adult, still gets a little "twinge" in his stomach when he hears the word *rooster*, and he claims that birds make him nervous.

US:	CS:
UR:	CR:

Other principles?

Analyzing Classical Conditioning Situations

Learning

PART 4: MAKE YOUR OWN SITUATIONS

Now it is time for you to construct three of your own classical conditioning situations. You may use the examples above as a guide, but really try to make them original. Describe the situation, then label it just as you've done above.

Situation 1

US:	CS:
UR:	CR:

Other principles?

Situation 2

US:	CS:
UR:	CR:

Other principles?

Situation 3

US:	CS:
UR:	CR:

Other principles?