Sample questions on introductory material, methodology, and learning

1) Jack is a college student, and therefore is often under a great deal of stress. He has decided that he wants to study stress, so he is changing his major to psychology. What kind of psychologist will he become?
   a. comparative psychologist
   b. psychophysiologist
   c. developmental psychologist
   d. cognitive psychologist
   e. psycholinguist

2) Robert is interested in the courtship rituals of king penguins. He attempts to explain such behaviors through theories of why they are adaptive in the penguins' frigid habitat. Robert is most likely a(n):
   a. physiological psychologist
   b. psychophysiologist
   c. comparative psychologist
   d. neuropsychologist
   e. experimental psychologist

The following refers to the next two questions:

A scientist believes that sleep deprivation causes aggressive behavior. She gets a group of 20 subjects to be in an experiment. She lets 10 of the subjects only have 2 hours sleep per night for five nights in a row. She lets the other 10 subjects sleep their usual amount. Five days after the experiment began, she interviews each subject and observes their behavior. She discovers that the 10 subjects that were deprived of sleep generally behaved more aggressively towards her than the 10 subjects who were not deprived of sleep.

3) Sleep deprivation serves as the ___________ in the experiment.
   a. operational definition
   b. conditional stimulus
   c. conditional response
   d. dependent variable
   e. independent variable

4) Aggression serves as the ___________ in the experiment.
   a. operational definition
   b. conditional stimulus
   c. conditional response
   d. dependent variable
   e. independent variable
The following refers to the next three questions:

Some people in a small town claim that if a certain raccoon climbs up a particular tree on April 1, that means the summer will be very dry. If the raccoon does not climb up the tree on April 1, that means the summer will be wet. The raccoon is not convinced that his behavior really has any influence on the wetness of the summer. To find out, he decides to conduct an experiment. He decides ahead of time, by flipping a coin, whether to climb the tree on certain years and to not climb it on others. He then measures the wetness of the summer to see if it is different on years when he climbs the tree compared to years on which he does not.

5) What is the independent variable in this experiment?
   a. the wetness of the summer
   b. whether or not the raccoon climbs the tree
   c. how high the raccoon climbs in the tree
   d. the difference between the wetness of the summer in years when the raccoon climbs the tree and in years when he does not
   e. b & c

6) What is the dependent variable in this experiment?
   a. the wetness of the summer
   b. whether or not the raccoon climbs the tree
   c. the coin
   d. the number of times the coin lands "heads" versus the number of times it lands "tails"
   e. none of the above

7) The raccoon's idea that the summer will be drier when he climbs the tree on April 1 is an example of a(n):
   a. operational definition
   b. theory
   c. hypothesis
   d. nominal fallacy
   e. a and b

8) Performance on the SAT has been shown to be a good predictor of college success. Because the SAT predicts what it claims to measure (i.e., scholastic aptitude), it is considered a _________ measure.
   a. reliable
   b. stable
   c. consistent
   d. valid
   e. a and d
9) A college admissions counselor claims that incoming students' SAT scores are usually not very good at predicting the grades these students will receive in college. However, she does note that when students take the SAT more than once, they tend to receive about the same score each time. Thus, if this counselor were questioned about whether she thought the SAT was a good measure of students' knowledge and learning skills, she would probably express some doubts about the SAT's ________ but not its ________ .

a. reliability, validity
b. operationalization, validity
c. reliability, operationalization
d. validity, reliability
e. none of the above

10) A lawyer argues that a lie detector test her client took should not be used as evidence in a case she is working on because her client is generally a nervous person and thus, the results of the test would always suggest that her client was not telling the truth. Thus, the lawyer is questioning the ______ of the lie detector test.

a. unconditional stimulus
b. conditional stimulus
c. discriminative stimulus
d. reliability
e. validity

11) Bob, a businessman, travels in connection with his job about twice a month for a week at each time. He often stays in a hotel very close to the airport for convenience. At the beginning of the week Bob is awakened by the loud sound of the jets as they leave and enter the airport. However, by the end of the week Bob is no longer awakened by the sound of the jets. It can be said that Bob ________.

a. was instrumentally conditioned to the jets
b. reacted to the sound of the jets with an avoidance response
c. responded to response cost
d. became habituated to the sound of the jets
e. became classically conditioned to jets

12) This past summer, Ginny had a traumatic experience that involved aliens (or so she thinks). Now she has an intense, irrational fear of all things green and slimy (she did not used to have such a fear). What is the term for her intense, irrational fear of all things green and slimy?

a. a phobia
b. a fetish
c. an unconditional stimulus
d. aversive stimulus
e. an unconditional response
Sarah is standing on the balcony enjoying the view outside her apartment when she hears her brother Bill open the door. As a practical joke, Bill runs up behind her, gives her a push, and then catches her just as she is beginning to fall. Bill thinks this is very funny; however, Sarah is visibly upset, shaking and sweating. Bill takes her inside to calm her down and apologizes for his behavior. Now Sarah gets very scared and begins shaking every time she hears a door open when she is on the balcony.

13) The fear Sarah feels when she now hears the door open is known as the _____.
   a. unconditional response
   b. conditional response
   c. unconditional stimulus
   d. conditional stimulus
   e. classical response

14) After the incident with Bill, the sound of the door opening is known as the _____ for Sarah.
   a. unconditional response
   b. conditional response
   c. unconditional stimulus
   d. conditional stimulus
   e. classical response

15) The fear Sarah felt as Bill pushed her on the balcony is known as the ______.
   a. unconditional response
   b. conditional response
   c. unconditional stimulus
   d. conditional stimulus
   e. classical response

16) After a few weeks of the hearing the door open and nothing happening, Sarah becomes less and less nervous at the sound. This is known as ______.
   a. habituation
   b. counterconditioning
   c. facilitation
   d. sensitization
   e. extinction
The next four questions refer to the following:

Steve is a new father. His daughter Emily is beginning to talk and say simple words. Steve spends a lot of time with his daughter and wants her to learn as much as she can at the earliest possible age. Luckily, Steve studied psychology in college. He wants to teach Emily her colors, so he paints a big circle of every color on large squares of poster board. At a certain time each day, Steve sits with Emily and holds up one poster. "Green," he says over and over until Emily says "gween" back to him. When Emily can approximate the sound or say the color, Steve gets excited, smiles, and says "Right! Good Job!" They do this repeatedly until Emily says "gween" each time Steve holds up the poster.

17) Steve is using ____________ to modify his daughter's behavior.
   a. positive reinforcement
   b. conditional reinforcement
   c. classical conditioning
   d. punishment
   e. negative reinforcement

18) After a while Steve produces a smile and a nod and says "Right!" only every other time that Emily says the correct color. What schedule of reinforcement is being used?
   a. fixed ratio
   b. variable interval
   c. fixed interval
   d. variable ratio
   e. continuous

19) Eventually Steve holds up a red circle and says "Red." But Emily smiles and says "gween." Steve does not tell Emily "good job". After this interaction repeats itself, Emily eventually stops saying "green" when the red circle is held up. What conditioning process has occurred for Emily's "green" response?
   a. negative reinforcement
   b. extinction
   c. superstitious behavior
   d. reversed learning
   e. a and b
ANSWERS:

1. b
2. c
3. e
4. d
5. b
6. a
7. c
8. d
9. d
10. e
11. d
12. a
13. b
14. d
15. a
16. e
17. a
18. a
19. b