"Skinner’s theory and Staats’s theory, both offering behavioral interpretations of personality have implications for major theoretical questions, as presented in Table 10.1.”

One of the greatest strengths of these, and other, behavioral perspectives is its clear statement of scientifically verifiable hypotheses.”

“Because the causes of behavior can be manipulated, this approach more closely approximates the models of science derived from laboratories in other scientific disciplines.”

“Staats’s theory goes farther than Skinner’s in defining in advance what would be reinforcing (stimuli that produce emotional responses).”

“In extending the basic behavioral concepts beyond animal models, Staats describes responses that have particular importance to humans, including language and cognition, emotion and motivation, and sensory-motor behaviors.”

“He explains in detail how development builds from these basics to adaptive or maladaptive adult behaviors.”

“Both theorists offer idiographic approaches, respecting that each individual is unique.”
Radical Behaviorism: Skinner

"B. F. Skinner proposed a theory of behavior based on principles of reinforcement."

"... most of his work was with animals ..."

"... the implications he as drawn for humans are controversial and (compared to later behavioral theories) limited."
Behavior as the Data for Scientific Study

Question: What are meant by the following statements?

"… Skinner did not propose causes of behavior within the personality of the individual.”

“… the causes of behavior are external to the individual …”

“Traits are … simply summary descriptions of behaviors.”

Question: Why is Skinner’s behaviorism called radical behaviorism?

Question: Why would Skinner rule out thoughts, intentions, and other inner states as causes in his theory?
Behavior as the Data for Scientific Study

Question: What are meant by the following statements?

"Skinner argued that scientific progress in psychology required abandoning mentalism?"

“… Skinner emphasized the importance of control over behavior.”

The Evolutionary Context of Operant Behavior

Question: What was Skinner’s description of operant conditioning?
The Rate of Responding

“To analyze the learning process into small steps, Skinner realized that it was necessary to select a dependent measure carefully.”

Question: What is the relationship of rate of responding to learning within the framework of operant conditioning?

Question: What are operant responses within the framework of operant conditioning?

Question: What was the value of the experimental apparatus that came to be known as the Skinner box in the study of operant conditioning?

Learning Principles

“… operant behavior involves mutual responsiveness of the person (or other organism) and the environment.”

“The person’s behavior leads to a contingent change in the environment … ”

“The rate of responding can be increased by reinforcement and decreased by punishment or extinction.”
Reinforcement: Increasing the Rate of Responding

“Behavior that is adaptive in a given environment is strengthened.”

Question: What did Skinner’s research indicate to be the difference between short-term and long-term consequences of behavior?

[Illustrations] Short and long term consequences of behavior.

Question: Why did Skinner prefer the term reinforcement over that of reward?

Question: What is a positive reinforcer?
Reinforcement: Increasing the Rate of Responding
(Continued)

Question: What is a base rate of responding? (298)

Question: What are primary reinforcers?

Question: What are secondary reinforcers? (298-299)

Question: What is meant by the following statement?

"People do not all respond in the same way to a specific environmental consequence of their action."

Question: What is meant by the following statement?

"There is nothing inherent about any consequence that makes it always a reinforcer." (299)
Reinforcement: Increasing the Rate of Responding
(Continued)

Question: What is a **negative reinforcer**?

Question: What is the view of **punishment** within the context of operant conditioning?
Question: What is meant by the following statement?

"Unfortunately, punishment also has unintended adverse effects that make it a generally undesirable technique for controlling behavior."

(299)

Question: What is meant by the following statement?

"Skinner was critical of punishment …”
Question: What is extinction within the context of operant conditioning? (300)

[Example] Extinction.

Additional Behavioral Techniques

“Behaviorists have many additional techniques available to further describe how experience can change behavior …”

Question: What is shaping within the context of operant conditioning?

[Examples] Shaping.
Additional Behavioral Techniques
(Continued)

Question: What is **chaining** within the context of operant conditioning? (300)

[Example] Chaining.

Question: What is **discrimination learning** within the context of operant conditioning? (300-301)


Question: What is **generalization** within the context of operant conditioning?
Additional Behavioral Techniques  
(Continued)

Question: What is meant by the following statement?

"The concepts of stimulus discrimination and generalization help to explain personality consistency and change."

Schedules of Reinforcement

“In adapting to the environment, the organism is exquisitely modifying its behavior in response to the frequency and timing of reinforcements.”

Complete the following:

“The term schedule of reinforcement refers to the …

Question: What is a continuous reinforcement (CR) schedule of reinforcement?

Question: What are partial reinforcement schedules?
Question: What are fixed ratio (FR) schedules of reinforcement?

[Examples] Fixed ratio schedules of reinforcement.

Question: What is a variable ratio (VR) schedule of reinforcement?

Question: What are fixed interval (FI) schedules of reinforcement?
Question: What is a **variable interval (VI) schedule** of reinforcement?

Applications of Behavioral Techniques

“Skinner’s theory of operant behavior has been applied widely, particularly in therapy and education, to design strategies for increasing desired behavior and decreasing problematic behavior.”
Therapy

“Behavior therapy offers effective treatment for a variety of problems.”

**Question:** What are the practices of **behavior modification** within the context of operant conditioning? (303-304)

**Question:** What are **token economies** within the context of operant conditioning? (304)

“Behavior modification techniques have been applied to an astonishing range of behaviors … ”

[Illustrations] Behavior modification techniques.
“Skinner advocated his behavioral technology to improve education.”

[Illustrations] Behavioral technology to improve education.

Radical Behaviorism and Personality Theory: Some Concerns

“Skinner … argued that the fundamental principles of behavior are the same in rats and humans … ”

Question: What is the most popular objection to Skinner’s theory?

Question: What are meant by the following statements?

"Language was of great interest to Skinner.”
Radical Behaviorism and Personality Theory: Some Concerns

(Continued)

“… many are convinced that Skinner’s theory is not a theory of personality.”

“Skinner … represents the most important alternative to a personality psychology.”

Psychological Behaviorism: Staats

“Arthur Staats has developed a theory of psychological behaviorism that contributes behavioral insights to an understanding of personality.”

Reinforcement

“Accepting behaviorism’s assertion that behavior is maintained by reinforcement, Staats considered the implications of this concept to human behavior.”

[Illustrations] Arthur Staat’s notion of reinforcement.
Basic Behavioral Repertoires

“(To Staats) personality consists of behavior repertoires which like traits, vary from one person to another and lead to different behaviors.”

“Most important are those repertoires that are the stepping stones for subsequent learning: basic behavioral repertoires (BBRs), built up through learning from birth onward.”

The Emotional-Motivational Repertoire

“Each human, with a unique set of environmental conditions, learns emotional-responses to a large number of stimuli.”

[ Illustrations] The emotional-motivational repertoire. (309-312)
The Emotional-Motivational Repertoire
(Continued)

Table 10.2  Staats’s Three Basic Behavioral Repertoires (BBRs)
[Page 310]

“… Staats’s theory … explains … how people can develop learned fears.”

Figure 10.3  Classical Conditioning of One Emotional Response (Fear)
[Page 311]

[Illustrations] Classical conditioning of fear.
The Emotional-Motivational Repertoire
(Continued)

“Because of different learning experiences, people develop a variety of emotions and motivations about hobbies, work, and even biological activities, such as food and sex.”

[Illustrations] Emotional-motivational responses. (311-312)
The Language-Cognitive Repertoire

“Language has important emotional functions.”

[Illustrations] Language-cognitive repertoire. (312-313)

The Sensory-Motor Repertoire

[Illustrations] Sensory-motor repertoire. (313-314)
“Situations can have three different kinds of implications on behavior, according to what Staats has variously termed "three function learning theory" or "A-R-D theory."

“Situations can arouse affects and attitudes ("A") …”

“They can provide reinforcements ("R") …”

They can direct ("D") behavior. …”

Psychological Adjustment

“Staats describes his theory as one (that) construct theory bridges … from scientific to practice in a bidirectional development …”

[Illustrations] Staats’s theory and psychological adjustment. (314-315)
The Nature-Nurture Question from the Perspective of Psychological Behaviorism

“Sometimes we think of learning and biology as competing explanations of personality: the more important one is, the less important the other. That competition between the two explanations is often called the nature-nurture question. Arthur Staats criticizes this position.”

Question: What is Arthur Staats’s position on the nature-nurture question? (315-317)
“In contrast to radical behaviorism, which finds personality tests to be useless, psychological behaviorism considers many personality tests to offer useful information about behavioral repertoires.”

“Behaviorism has stimulated some personality theorists to develop new theoretical concepts and measurement methods.”

The Act-Frequency Approach to Personality Measurement

“The act-frequency approach (AFA) to personality measurement uses systematic procedures for assessing the frequency of prototypical behaviors to infer an individual’s personality traits.”

[Illustrations] The act-frequency approach to personality measurement. (317-318)
Contributions of Behaviorism to Personality Theory and Measurement

Question: What have been the contributions of behaviorism to personality theory and measurement? (318-319)