Shaping

Goals

- Define shaping
- Provide examples of shaping
- Learn key features of shaping

Shaping is the process of differentially reinforcing successive approximations to a target behavior. First, when teaching new skills, we may accept approximations of a behavior as correct.

- Example: The child may only answer with the first sound or the first gesture, but we provide the reinforcer. Over time we would stop accepting the approximated response and expect a closer approximation to our end goal

When first teaching the child to say "juice":

Child says "_____" ⟶ child gets Juice

Over time, child says "_____" ⟶ child no longer is given juice

Child says "_____" ⟶ child gets Juice

Eventually, child says "_____" ⟶ child gets Juice

When first teaching a rat to press a lever:

Rat _____ ⟶ rat gets food pellet

Rat _____ ⟶ rat gets food pellet   rat

Rat _____ ⟶ gets food pellet

Rat_____ ⟶ rat gets food pellet

Reinforcing some responses but not others is called *differential reinforcement*.

Key Features of Shaping

Reinforcement is provided contingent on targeted responses.
Behavior is strengthened by_____ a_____ stimulus_____ a behavior or response.

Differential reinforcement: systematically reinforcing some responses but not others. To provide differential reinforcement the person shaping behavior must make decisions in the moment. Pay attention to the child's response. Only reinforce the behaviors that are____to the target response.

Extinction is the process of no longer providing a reinforcer for behaviors that were_____. For example: *Ju, Ooo, Jah* when teaching to say the word "juice"

The shaper stops reinforcing (places on extinction) the previous attempts that are not as close to the desired terminal behavior. The response will decrease because it is no longer followed by a reinforcer. You may see an extinction burst: a slight____in the behavior before it_____.

Response variability is the＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿in other responses when extinction is in effect. The child may try new or other responses to access reinforcement (previously reinforced responses are no longer reinforced).

Shaping is a systematic process but not a linear one. You may often have to take a few steps back and re- start the process from time to time to keep moving forward.