Chapter 5: Learning

Terms:

**Learning** - any relatively permanent change in the way an organism responds based on its experience.

**Reflexes** - behaviors elicited automatically by environmental stimuli.

**Stimulus** - an object or event in the environment that elicits a response in an organism.

**Habituation** - the decreasing strength of a response after repeated presentation of the stimulus.

**Laws of association** - first proposed by Aristotle, basic principles used to account for learning and memory that describe the condition under which one thought becomes connected or associated with another.

**Classical conditioning** - a procedure by which a previously neutral stimulus comes to elicit a response after it is paired with a stimulus that automatically elicits that response; the first type of learning to be systematically studied.
**Prepared learning** - response to which an organism is predisposed because they were selected through natural selection.

**Blocking** - occurs when a stimulus fails to elicit a conditioned response because it is combined with another stimulus that already elicits that response.

**Law of effect** - states that the tendency of an organism to produce a behavior depended on the effect that behavior has on the environment.

**Operant conditioning** - learning the results when an organism associates a response that occurs spontaneously with a particular environment effect; also. Called instrumental conditioning.

**Operant** - behavior that are emitted by the organism rather than elicited by the environment.

**Reinforcement** - a conditioning process that increases the probability that a response will occur.

**Reinforcer** - an environmental consequence that occurs after an organism has produced a response and makes the response more likely to recur.
Phobia- an irrational fear of a specific object or situation.
Stimulus generalization- the tendency for learned behavior to occur in response to stimuli that were not present during conditioning but that are similar to the conditioned stimulus.
Extinction- the process by which a conditioned response is weakened by presentation of the conditioned stimulus without the unconditioned stimulus; in operant conditioning, the process by which the connection between an operant and a reinforcer or punishment is similarly broken.
Spontaneous recovery- the spontaneous reemergence of a response or an operant that has been extinguished.
Interstimulus interval- the duration of time between presentation of the conditioned stimulus and the unconditioned stimulus.
Important People

Aristotle- proposed a set of laws of association to account for learning and memory.

Ivan Pavlov- discovered classical conditioning during his study of the digestive system of dogs (dog salivating).

Watson and Rayner- proposed a classical conditioning as an explanation for some human phobias (little Albert).

Edward Thorndike- proposed the law of effect (cat in a box with a mechanical latch and then placed food in full view just outside the box).

B.F. Skinner- known for operant conditioning (a pigeon was placed in a cage with a target mounted in one side)
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Summary

1. Classical conditioning
   a. Pavlov’s Model
   b. Stimulus generalization and Discrimination
   c. Extinction
   d. Factors Affecting Classical Conditioning
   e. What Do Organism Learn in Classical Conditioning

2. Operant conditioning
   a. Reinforcement
   b. Punishment
   c. Extinction
   d. Operant conditioning of complex behaviors

3. Cognitive-social theory
   a. Social Learning