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Chaining and Task Analysis Practice Questions for RBTs

Chaining teaches a multi-step skill by linking individual steps into a sequence, and every chained program starts with a task analysis that lists those steps in order. This practice set asks you to read a task analysis, decide which step to teach first, and identify whether a procedure is forward chaining, backward chaining, or total task presentation. The questions also check whether you understand how to assist the learner on untaught steps and when to fade that assistance. Read each sequence carefully, since the first step taught is often the most frequently missed item.

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Practice questions

Answer every question before you look at the key, then check yourself on the next pages.

1. When Ethan practices putting on a jacket, the RBT completes every step except the last and teaches Ethan to do that final step. Which method is this?

- **A** Graduated guidance, with the RBT's hands fading across the steps
- **B** Backward chaining, starting with the step that produces the outcome
- **C** Task analysis, since the RBT breaks the routine into its steps
- **D** Total-task chaining, since the RBT supports the learner across the routine

2. The task analysis for organizing art supplies has eight steps. In forward chaining, which step should Nia learn first?

- **A** The first unmastered step; later steps are added as each is mastered
- **B** The step with the most errors on the baseline probe, in any position
- **C** A step the learner can already do, so teaching starts with success
- **D** The step most important for safety, wherever it appears in order

3. A handwashing plan teaches the last step first, then adds earlier steps after success. Which chaining method is used?

- **A** Forward chaining plan
- **B** Total task chaining
- **C** Time delay prompt step
- **D** Backward chaining plan

4. Maya follows a written plan that teaches handwashing by completing the last step for the learner, then fading help as earlier steps are added. Which TCO area is being practiced?

- **A** D.2 antecedent intervention
- **B** C.5 task analysis and chaining
- **C** A.7 graph trend identification
- **D** F.7 multiple relationships

5. Data show repeated implementation errors on a chaining program. How should the supervisor verify competent performance?

- **A** A written protocol, a data graph review, a monthly meeting, and emailed comments when a trend looks off.
- **B** Instructions, modeling, RBT rehearsal with feedback, and then direct observation during a session.
- **C** Instructions, a video model, a written quiz, and a signed acknowledgment before the next session.
- **D** Instructions, modeling, praise for effort, and the RBT's self-report on how later sessions went.

6. While Maya practices packing a backpack, the RBT finds that the written task analysis does not match how materials are arranged in the classroom. What should the RBT do?

- **A** Rewrite the steps to fit this setting and send the supervisor a copy later
- **B** Run the steps exactly as listed so the data stay comparable to earlier days
- **C** Pause if needed, note the mismatch, and ask the supervisor for direction
- **D** Skip the steps that do not fit and score the remaining steps as usual

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7. An RBT teaches toothbrushing by prompting every step of the routine during each practice. Which chaining method is shown?

- **A** Total task chaining
- **B** Backward chaining
- **C** Stimulus fading
- **D** DRO interval plan

8. A handwashing plan teaches the first step, then adds the next step after mastery while help continues for later steps. Which chaining method is shown?

- **A** Backward chaining
- **B** Whole interval
- **C** Response cost
- **D** Forward chaining

9. The plan identifies Maya's calling out as escape maintained. Which action implements escape extinction during the writing worksheet?

- **A** Pause the task briefly so that the learner can calm down first
- **B** Keep the task in place, using the programmed prompts and supports
- **C** Withhold eye contact and comments while the learner leaves the task
- **D** Switch to an easier task until the problem behavior has stopped

10. The RBT is scheduled to run a functional analysis condition but has had no rehearsal or feedback. What must happen before the RBT provides this service?

- **A** Tell the supervisor and note it, train with rehearsal and feedback, and start once competence is confirmed.
- **B** Tell the supervisor, try it once with the client while the supervisor is on call, and get feedback after.
- **C** Study the written protocol, watch a training video, and begin at the next session with extra care.
- **D** Ask a more experienced RBT to run it first, watch a few sessions, and then take over the procedure.

11. Two staff use different start and stop rules for the same out-of-seat episodes. What is the main problem?

- **A** More reinforcers are needed
- **B** The graph has too few colors
- **C** Scores may not be consistent
- **D** Sessions become too short

12. An RBT participates by conducting scatterplot recording across the school day, with no condition deliberately changed. Which assessment type is this?

- **A** Indirect assessment
- **B** Descriptive assessment
- **C** Functional analysis
- **D** Preference assessment

Answer key and explanations

1. Correct answer: B · Backward chaining, starting with the step that produces the outcome

Backward chaining teaches the last unmastered step first, allowing the learner to contact the completed routine and its outcome. Backward chaining moves from the final step toward the beginning.

Task: C.5

2. Correct answer: A · The first unmastered step; later steps are added as each is mastered

Forward chaining teaches the earliest unmastered step first while later steps are completed with planned assistance. Forward chaining builds independence from the first step toward the last.

Task: C.5

3. Correct answer: D · Backward chaining plan

Backward chaining teaches the final step first.

Task: C.5

4. Correct answer: B · C.5 task analysis and chaining

Teaching a multistep routine by chaining steps matches task analysis and chaining.

Task: C.5

5. Correct answer: B · Instructions, modeling, RBT rehearsal with feedback, and then direct observation during a session.

Effective supervision uses behavioral skills training (instructions, modeling, rehearsal, and feedback) and direct observation of service delivery, so performance can be practiced, evaluated, and improved. Good supervision is active: teach, model, rehearse, observe, and give feedback.

Task: F.4

6. Correct answer: C · Pause if needed, note the mismatch, and ask the supervisor for direction

The RBT should preserve safety and report implementation barriers rather than independently changing a clinical program. Report task-analysis mismatches; do not silently rewrite or mis-score the program.

Task: C.5

7. Correct answer: A · Total task chaining

Total task chaining teaches the full sequence each time.

Task: C.5

8. Correct answer: D · Forward chaining

Forward chaining teaches the sequence from the first step forward.

Task: C.5

9. Correct answer: B · Keep the task in place, using the programmed prompts and supports

Escape extinction prevents problem behavior from producing task removal, while teaching continues with planned supports and safety procedures. For escape-maintained behavior, extinction means the response no longer removes the demand.

Task: D.4

10. Correct answer: A · Tell the supervisor and note it, train with rehearsal and feedback, and start once competence is confirmed.

RBTs provide services only after their supervisor confirms they have demonstrated competence (1.06) and do not use unfamiliar interventions without proper training (2.04). When asked to go beyond their competence, they tell the supervisor right away and document it; restrictive procedures also need a documented plan and supervisor-verified competence (2.05). Competence must be confirmed by the supervisor before service, not assumed after exposure.

Task: F.2

11. Correct answer: C · Scores may not be consistent

Task A.8 includes recognizing that unreliable collection can make scores inconsistent.

Task: A.8

12. Correct answer: B · Descriptive assessment

Descriptive assessment observes behavior and environmental events as they naturally occur without systematic experimental manipulation. Direct naturalistic observation can suggest patterns, but it does not by itself prove a function.

Task: B.3

Study tips

- Write the steps of any task analysis in order on paper before deciding which step is taught first.

- Forward chaining starts with the first step; backward chaining starts with the last step.
- Total task presentation means the learner attempts every step each trial, with help as needed.
- Use the learner's current skill level to decide how much assistance each untaught step needs.

FAQ

What is a task analysis?

A task analysis breaks a skill into small, observable steps that can be taught and measured in sequence.

How does backward chaining differ from forward chaining?

Backward chaining teaches the last step first and works toward the first. Forward chaining starts with the first step and moves forward.

Which chaining method is most common for beginners?

Procedures vary by learner and program. Total task presentation is often used when a learner can complete many steps with help, so the supervisor should decide.

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