FREE RBT STUDY SHEET · 2026 EXAM

Extinction and Extinction Burst: RBT Practice Pack (PDF)

Extinction withholds the reinforcer that has been maintaining a behavior, and it is one of the most tested procedures in behavior reduction. Before you apply it, the team must know what the reinforcer is and be able to keep it consistently withheld. This pack focuses on the typical sequence that follows: a temporary increase called an extinction burst, possible emotional responses, and occasional spontaneous recovery. The questions ask what each phenomenon looks like and what an RBT should do according to the plan, rather than improvising. Questions also check that you know extinction is planned and monitored, not an informal decision to stop responding to a behavior.

START FREE RBT MOCK EXAM →

Free · timed mock exam · results by topic · **rbtpracticequestions.com**

INSIDE THIS PDF 12 questions with options · full answer key · 4 study tips · FAQ

Practice questions

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

1. One staff member gives brief attention from the librarian after Noah's humming loudly, although the extinction plan says not to. What is the main concern?

- **A** Occasional reinforcement can make the behavior more persistent
- **B** The behavior should decrease sooner because its need is being met
- **C** The main risk is to that staff member's rapport with the learner
- **D** The behavior is likely to take on a new function as a result

2. A plan places Mateo's pushing the trays away, which is maintained by access to a fidget toy, on extinction while reinforcing requests for the fidget toy. What should happen after problem behavior?

- **A** The RBT reviews how to earn the item, then hands the item over
- **B** The item is given after a one-minute delay to weaken the behavior
- **C** A different preferred item is offered to redirect the learner
- **D** The behavior no longer produces the item; the replacement does

3. Soon after extinction begins, Leo's dropping to the floor becomes temporarily more frequent and intense. Which secondary effect is this?

- **A** Spontaneous recovery
- **B** Resurgence
- **C** Extinction-induced aggression
- **D** An extinction burst

4. The plan identifies Leo's dropping to the floor as escape maintained. Which action implements escape extinction during toy cleanup?

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

5. When tearing activity sheets no longer produces a break from the worksheet, Sofia tries several new forms of behavior and briefly returns to an older response. What effects are shown?

- **A** Stimulus generalization plus the pairing of a new conditioned reinforcer
- **B** Novel forms of responding plus the return of a previously reinforced one
- **C** Shaping of new responses plus maintenance of the older response
- **D** Side effects of punishment plus avoidance of the current setting

6. After attention-maintained comments stop receiving attention, the learner makes the same comments louder and more often for two sessions. Which secondary effect is shown?

- **A** Response variation pattern
- **B** Resurgence of older behavior
- **C** Emotional responding pattern
- **D** Extinction burst pattern

How would you score today? Take the free mock exam and see your weak task-list areas.

START FREE RBT MOCK EXAM →

7. Mateo cries and appears distressed after the function-based extinction procedure begins. What should the RBT do?

- **A** Give a break of the RBT's own choosing so that the crying stops
- **B** Treat the crying as a new target and apply extinction to it as well
- **C** Hold the report on the distress until the next supervision meeting
- **D** Give calm, respectful care, follow the plan, and report the distress

8. A plan stops the attention that used to follow calling out. For two sessions, calling out briefly increases and new forms appear. What should the RBT call this pattern?

- **A** Maintenance probe
- **B** Preference shift
- **C** Extinction burst
- **D** Task analysis

9. The plan identifies Sofia's tearing activity sheets as attention maintained. During the behavior, what implements attention extinction?

- **A** Give no social response to the behavior while monitoring safety
- **B** Move the learner to a quiet area for safety until the behavior ends
- **C** Give attention right away so that the behavior does not escalate
- **D** Withhold attention from the learner for the rest of the session

10. Procedural fidelity is poor because the extinction component is applied inconsistently. What is the main interpretive risk?

- **A** Outcome data still test the plan as long as the RBT recorded them accurately
- **B** Changes in the data may come from the departures rather than from the plan
- **C** Occasional lapses may average out across sessions, so the trend stays valid
- **D** The learner has probably stopped responding to the planned reinforcers

11. After a planned consequence starts, the learner briefly yells more often and uses new phrases. Which secondary effect should the RBT recognize?

- **A** Skill deficit issue
- **B** Data-entry error note
- **C** Extinction burst
- **D** Preference shift clue

12. A behavior plan says attention no longer follows repeated pencil tapping, while appropriate requests still receive attention. What is the RBT implementing?

- **A** Shaping procedure
- **B** Maintenance check
- **C** Generalization plan
- **D** Extinction plan

Answer key and explanations

1. Correct answer: A · Occasional reinforcement can make the behavior more persistent

Inconsistent extinction can create intermittent reinforcement, making behavior more resistant while obscuring evaluation of the plan. Extinction requires coordinated, consistent implementation across trained team members.

Task: D.4

2. Correct answer: D · The behavior no longer produces the item; the replacement does

The maintaining tangible is withheld after problem behavior and remains available through the appropriate alternative response. Pair extinction with a practical, reinforced way to access the same outcome.

Task: D.4

3. Correct answer: D · An extinction burst

A temporary increase in frequency, duration, or intensity after extinction begins is an extinction burst. An extinction burst is a temporary escalation, not proof that the plan should be changed independently.

Task: D.6

4. Correct answer: A · 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

5. Correct answer: B · Novel forms of responding plus the return of a previously reinforced one

New response forms during extinction reflect variation; recurrence of a previously effective behavior is resurgence. Extinction can produce novel response forms and the return of older behavior.

Task: D.6

6. Correct answer: D · Extinction burst pattern

An extinction burst is a temporary increase in the behavior after extinction begins.

Task: D.6

7. Correct answer: D · Give calm, respectful care, follow the plan, and report the distress

Emotional responding can occur as a secondary effect. The RBT maintains dignity, follows the plan, monitors safety, and communicates objective data. Treat secondary emotional responding seriously and compassionately while following the safety plan.

Task: D.6

8. Correct answer: C · Extinction burst

Extinction can produce bursts and response variation.

Task: D.6

9. Correct answer: A · Give no social response to the behavior while monitoring safety

Function-based extinction withholds the specific reinforcer that previously maintained behavior. Safety and the written protocol remain controlling. Extinction is function specific: withhold the maintaining reinforcer named in the plan.

Task: D.4

10. Correct answer: B · Changes in the data may come from the departures rather than from the plan

When a procedure is not implemented as written, outcomes do not provide a fair test of that procedure. Before judging an intervention, ask whether it was implemented as written.

Task: A.8

11. Correct answer: C · Extinction burst

An extinction burst can include a temporary increase or variation.

Task: D.6

12. Correct answer: D · Extinction plan

Extinction withholds the consequence that previously maintained behavior.

Task: D.4

Study tips

- Define extinction as withholding the specific reinforcer that maintains the behavior, not as ignoring all behavior.
- Expect a possible burst, meaning a short increase in the behavior, before it declines.
- Know that spontaneous recovery is a brief return of the behavior after a break, and it still calls for consistency.
- Pair extinction with a plan for reinforcing an appropriate replacement behavior.

FAQ

What is an extinction burst?

An extinction burst is a temporary increase in the target behavior when reinforcement is withheld. It can occur before the behavior decreases.

What should an RBT do during a burst?

Follow the written plan and stay consistent. Changing course during the burst can strengthen the behavior and make extinction harder.

Can extinction be used without a replacement plan?

It is generally paired with reinforcing an appropriate alternative. Any extinction procedure should be designed and approved by the supervisor.

Turn this sheet into a real exam rehearsal

The free mock exam runs on the clock and shows which task-list areas still cost you points.

START FREE RBT MOCK EXAM →

https://rbtpracticequestions.com/

Independent study resource from rbtpracticequestions.com. Not affiliated with, endorsed by or sponsored by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB). Practice questions written against the RBT Test Content Outline (3rd ed.).