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Prompting and Prompt Fading: RBT Practice Questions (PDF)

Prompts are the cues an RBT gives to help a learner emit a correct response, and prompt fading is the planned reduction of that help. Exam items in this area ask you to classify prompts, sequence them within a hierarchy, and decide when to fade. This set concentrates on least-to-most, most-to-least, and errorless approaches, with a focus on the reasoning behind each choice. A good answer protects the learner from errors while still moving toward independent responding, so look for the option that balances both goals. Notice whether the stem describes a planned hierarchy or an unplanned change in help, because that distinction decides many of the answers.

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Practice questions

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

1. The RBT gently guides Aisha's hand through part of placing a picture on its match. How is this assistance best classified?

- **A** A motivating operation
- **B** A natural consequence
- **C** A response prompt
- **D** A stimulus prompt

2. A plan says to wait 5 seconds after the cue before giving verbal help so the learner can respond independently. Which procedure is used?

- **A** Response cost step
- **B** Free-operant assessment
- **C** Time delay prompt
- **D** Permanent product

3. During a teaching trial for greeting a peer, a peer walks up and waves, and Sofia responds incorrectly. The protocol specifies an immediate model prompt and a transfer trial. What should the RBT do?

- **A** Record the error and wait for the next scheduled session to correct it
- **B** Deliver a milder version of the reinforcer for the incorrect attempt
- **C** Carry out the correction exactly as trained, then record the trial
- **D** Use a stronger physical prompt than written to prevent another error

4. Sofia is injured during a crisis and may need urgent medical care. What is the priority?

- **A** Keep the injury private until the family can be told in person
- **B** Finish the crisis plan's steps fully before checking the injury
- **C** Activate the plan's emergency procedures to get the learner care
- **D** Give medicine from the first-aid kit to ease the learner's pain

5. An RBT learns that session totals are estimated from memory. What is the main reason this should be reported promptly?

- **A** The learner's progress may slow, since data errors weaken the reinforcement
- **B** Treatment changes could be made or delayed on the basis of inaccurate data
- **C** The team may have to move the target to a different measurement method
- **D** The operational definition may need to be replaced with a simpler version

6. The RBT sees that two targets share the same legend symbol. Why must this be corrected or reported promptly?

- **A** The graph may be shared with the family, who could find the error confusing
- **B** A flawed graph shows that the procedure itself was run without enough fidelity
- **C** The session notes will need to be rewritten so that they match the plotted points
- **D** Visual analysis relies on the display, so a distorted graph can mislead decisions

7. Data show that Maya raises a hand before speaking correctly only on trials where the RBT unintentionally nods or glances just before the response. What is the primary concern?

- **A** The reinforcer may be too small to maintain correct responding
- **B** The learner may have generalized the skill to a new cue
- **C** The RBT's nods or glances may be acting as unplanned prompts
- **D** The intertrial interval may be too long for sustained attention

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8. A graph key says blue circles show prompted responses and black squares show independent responses. A new point uses the wrong symbol. What is the best correction?

- **A** Leave it because value matches
- **B** Use the matching symbol
- **C** Move it one session later
- **D** Average both data paths

9. Noah is learning to select the item named by the RBT. After "Show me the cup," the learner selects a spoon. What should the RBT do?

- **A** Repeat the instruction several times until the learner picks the cup unaided
- **B** Praise the attempt so the learner stays motivated to keep selecting
- **C** Use the planned prompt or correction, then reinforce the right choice
- **D** Record the error as the plan requires and move on to a different target

10. The plan uses total-task teaching for setting up a group game. How should the RBT proceed?

- **A** Teach the steps in isolated table trials before running the routine
- **B** Prompt every step heavily at first, then remove prompts at once
- **C** Practice the hardest steps several times before the routine each day
- **D** Run the whole sequence each time, with prompts on steps as needed

11. A new prompting procedure was added to a client's plan, and the RBT has not been trained on it. What must be in place before the RBT starts?

- **A** Get supervised training and show accurate performance first, since competence must precede use with a client.
- **B** Start with the client right away, since competence develops fastest through real sessions with close data review.
- **C** Confirm the procedure is in the written plan, since a supervisor's assignment shows the RBT is competent.
- **D** Proceed if a similar procedure was run before, since general ABA experience transfers across procedures.

12. Noah is first learning to read a three-letter word and still needs frequent prompts and reinforcement. Which learning stage is this?

- **A** Fluency building
- **B** Acquisition
- **C** Maintenance
- **D** Generalization

13. The plan says Sofia earns one token immediately after greeting a peer. The learner responds correctly. What should the RBT do?

- **A** Praise the response and give the token at the next natural break
- **B** Ask the learner to repeat the response before any token is delivered
- **C** Hand over a single token right away and set up the next opportunity
- **D** Give the token along with the backup item to strengthen the pairing

14. During play, the RBT captures a child's interest in bubbles and prompts a request before blowing more bubbles. Which procedure is most likely?

A Chaining procedure
B Extinction procedure
C Punishment procedure
D Incidental teaching

Answer key and explanations

1. Correct answer: C · A response prompt
Physical guidance directly assists the learner's response, making it a response prompt. Response prompts act on what the learner does; stimulus prompts alter what the learner sees or hears.
Task: C.7

2. Correct answer: C · Time delay prompt
Time delay changes the interval before prompting.
Task: C.7

3. Correct answer: C · Carry out the correction exactly as trained, then record the trial
Error correction should follow the trained protocol consistently. The RBT does not improvise consequences or alter scoring. Use the exact error-correction procedure in the skill-acquisition plan.
Task: C.3

4. Correct answer: C · Activate the plan's emergency procedures to get the learner care
Potential injury requires prompt activation of trained medical and workplace procedures, followed by required notification and documentation. Medical safety and required emergency reporting take priority.
Task: D.7

5. Correct answer: B · Treatment changes could be made or delayed on the basis of inaccurate data
Unreliable measurement can obscure real patterns and lead the team to make decisions from inaccurate data. Data quality matters because treatment decisions depend on the record.
Task: A.8

6. Correct answer: D · Visual analysis relies on the display, so a distorted graph can mislead decisions
Graphing errors can misrepresent level, trend, phase changes, or relations in the underlying data. A graph must faithfully represent the recorded data and its measurement conditions.
Task: A.4

7. Correct answer: C · The RBT's nods or glances may be acting as unplanned prompts
The RBT's gaze or nod can become an unintended prompt. The team should prevent cueing and follow the planned prompt-fading procedure. Watch for accidental prompts during structured teaching.
Task: C.3

8. Correct answer: B · Use the matching symbol
Task A.4 includes updating graphs so the display matches the recorded data.
Task: A.4

9. Correct answer: C · Use the planned prompt or correction, then reinforce the right choice

The programmed prompt and correction should guide the correct selection, followed by reinforcement and later fading. Prompt correct selections as planned, reinforce them, and fade help systematically.

Task: C.6

10. Correct answer: D · Run the whole sequence each time, with prompts on steps as needed

Total-task presentation provides a response opportunity on each step during each teaching occasion, with prompts and reinforcement as written. In total-task teaching, the learner practices the full sequence with step-specific support.

Task: C.5

11. Correct answer: A · Get supervised training and show accurate performance first, since competence must precede use with a client.

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

12. Correct answer: B · Acquisition

The learner is developing a new skill and requires active teaching, so the procedure is acquisition. Acquisition builds a new skill; maintenance preserves a mastered one.

Task: C.9

13. Correct answer: C · Hand over a single token right away and set up the next opportunity

Consistent, prompt token delivery makes the earning contingency clear and preserves treatment fidelity. Deliver the programmed number of tokens immediately and consistently.

Task: C.11

14. Correct answer: D · Incidental teaching

Incidental teaching uses naturally occurring motivation.

Task: C.4

Study tips

- Learn the prompt hierarchy in the order your program uses, from least to most intrusive.
- Fade prompts only when the learner responds correctly at the current level across several trials.
- Distinguish prompt fading from prompt delay, since they are often confused in answer choices.
- Ask whether the stem describes a planned fading step or an unplanned change in help.

FAQ

What is prompt fading?

Prompt fading is the planned reduction of prompt intensity or frequency so the learner responds independently with the natural cue.

Which prompt is least intrusive?

Typically an independent or gestural cue is less intrusive than a full physical prompt. The exact hierarchy should match the program.

Can prompts be faded too quickly?

Yes. Fading too early can produce errors that weaken the learner's skill. Fade based on the data and the criterion in the plan.

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