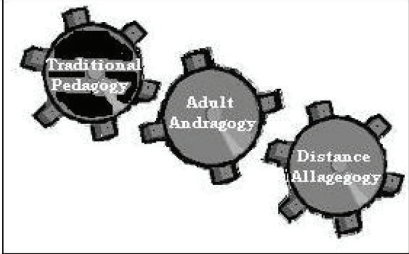# Chapter 1
Learning Theories and Pedagogy:
Teaching the Traditional Learner

Learning Objectives. In this chapter, the reader will learn about Behaviorism – one of the earliest schools of educational psychology. Behaviorism is a theory of animal and human behavior that basically defines learning as an observable and measurable action in response to the environment. Specifically, the reader will understand:

*   The nature of the traditional learner and definition of pedagogy.
*   Important differences among classical and operant conditioning, connectionism, and social learning theory.
*   Major theorists of behaviorism to include: Ivan Pavlov, E. L. Thorndike, B. F. Skinner, and Albert Bandura.
*   Major instructional applications of behavioristic psychology to include: programmed instruction, computer-assisted instruction, and mastery learning
*   Key criticisms of behaviorism and the traditional learner
*   Behaviorism and the Engine for Designing Online Education.

Figure 1. Traditional Lesson Plan Template (Focus on the Learner)

Focus on the Learner

Grade Level:

Psychology of the Lesson: Behavioral

Major **instructional application:**

☐ Programmed instruction   ☐ Computer-assisted instruction

☐ Mastery learning   ☐ Other _____

Traditional student characteristics targeted by this lesson plan:

☐ Subject-oriented; seek to successfully complete each course, regardless of how course relates to their own goals

☐ Future-oriented; youth education is often a mandatory or an expected activity in a youth's life and designed for the youth's future

☐ Often depend on adults for direction

☐ Likely to accept new information without trying it out or seriously questioning it

☐ Seek education that prepares them for an often unclear future; accept postponed application of what is being learned

☐ Depend on others to design their learning; reluctant to accept responsibility for their own learning

Lesson Plan Template. Lesson plan templates are provided as tools for exploring the development of lessons throughout the text. As each chapter is introduced, the reader will be encouraged to refer to the appropriate appendix and consider how each component of *The Engine for Designing Technology-Based Instruction* contributes to the development of an overall effective lesson for the traditional, adult, and distance learner.

In this chapter, please refer to **Appendix A, Traditional Learner Lesson Plan Template**; specifically, the **Focus on the Learner** portion of the template depicted in Figure 1.

INTRODUCTION

There is little doubt that the most dominant form of instruction is pedagogy, also referred to as didactic, traditional, or teacher-guided instruction. The pedagogical model of instruction has been around for centuries. Young boys were received into schools (most often schools with religious purposes) that

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