RBT® CHEAT SHEET · DATA COLLECTION AND GRAPHING · A.1, A.2, A.3, A.6

Continuous vs. discontinuous measurement

Which measure fits the behavior, how each one is scored, and the traps that cost points.

Which one? Start with what the data must answer

Does the behavior leave a lasting result you can count after it ends, such as a worksheet or folded towels? →	**Permanent product** Count the result before it is moved or erased.
Can you record every instance, with a clear start and end, for the whole observation? →	**Continuous measurement** Frequency, rate, duration, latency or IRT.
Too frequent to count, no clear start or end, or are you busy teaching? →	**Discontinuous measurement** Record a sample: partial-interval, whole-interval or MTS.

The plan names the measure. If it does not seem to fit what you see, tell your supervisor; do not switch on your own.

Continuous: every instance A.1

Measure	Answers	Clock or math	Example
Frequency	How many times?	Tally each one	Ava hands over a picture card 9 times in 2 hours.
Rate	How often per minute or hour?	Count ÷ time	12 requests in 30 min = 0.4 per minute.
Duration	How long does it last?	Onset to offset	3 episodes, 6 min in total: a mean of 2 min.
Latency	How quickly after a cue?	Cue to the response starting	"Fold the towels." He starts 25 s later.
IRT	How long between responses?	End of one to start of the next	About 2 s from one bite to the next.

Discontinuous: a sample A.2

Method	Score it if the behavior…	Tends to
Partial-interval	occurs at **any point** in it	Overestimate
Whole-interval	lasts the **entire** interval	Underestimate
MTS	is happening at the **moment** it ends	Go either way; misses brief behavior

MTS is momentary time sampling. Partial is often used for behavior to decrease, whole for behavior to increase. Shorter intervals give closer estimates. Report the **percentage of intervals** (scored ÷ total × 100): not a count, not a time.

Permanent product A.3

- Measure the lasting result after the behavior ends: answers written, kits packed, towels folded.
- Only the target behavior should be able to make it, and each response should make one.
- Record it before it is moved, erased or thrown away. If it is lost, record the data as missing.
- It shows what exists, not how: no prompts, no time taken, no problem behavior along the way.

Do the math A.6

- **Rate** = count ÷ observation time
- **Mean duration** = total duration ÷ number of episodes
- **Percentage** = (part ÷ total) × 100
- Use one unit first: 1 minute 30 seconds is 90 seconds or 1.5 minutes, never 1.30.
- Across sessions, add all correct and all opportunities, then divide. Do not average the percentages.

Exam traps

Latency or IRT? Ask what starts the clock. A cue starts latency; the end of the last response starts IRT. If nothing cued it, it is not latency.

"How quickly after the instruction" is latency, not duration. Latency ends when the response starts.

Different session lengths: 12 hits in 60 minutes (0.2 per minute) is less than 9 hits in 30 minutes (0.3 per minute). Compare rates, not counts.

Interval data are not counts. Ten scored intervals could hold ten hits or forty.

Key words: "at any time" is partial-interval, "throughout the entire interval" is whole-interval, "at the moment the timer signals" is MTS.

Made it, counted later: counting what the learner made, after the session, is permanent product. Checking at set moments whether the learner *is* writing is MTS.

Read the free lesson

A.1 Collect continuous data: frequency, rate, duration, latency, and IRT

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