The Kissing Bunny

When you see this series of behaviors in final form, the Kissing Bunny comes out of its little house, hops along the fence (a PROGRESSION), reaches up to the top of the fence (another PROGRESSION), and "kisses" a plastic "girl-friend" over the fence (a licking or chewing behavior: MANIPULATION).

At the beginning of the training, after the rabbit is feeder conditioned, we lower the face of the plastic "girlfriend" rabbit to floor level, and place the feeder very near the face. Usually we put a bit of wet mashed feed on the lips of the plastic rabbit. We place the rabbit near the feeder. When the rabbit touches or licks at the lips of the plastic face, we sound the electric feeder to say YES. After a few trials like this, we do not put mash on the lips but just wait for the rabbit to "kiss" the plastic girl-friend. Usually the rabbit will quickly go to the plastic face and perform. Now we raise the face a few inches. The rabbit then kisses the plastic face at the new height. When the rabbit has been rewarded a few times at this height, we again raise the face. And so we continue until the face is raised to the desired height.

Once the plastic face is at the proper height, we begin to move the feeder towards the rabbit's house, a few inches at a time. Finally, when the feeder is in its final position inside the house, and the rabbit has learned to go

back and forth between the plastic face and the feeder, the show is complete. It takes about two to three months to train a Kissing Bunny.