Lesson 6: RMV Practice Tests- Introduction to the Test

Goal: This lesson will introduce students to the RMV written permit exam. Students will learn what to expect and common exam subjects.

Practice Tests Lesson Part A

Review: Describe how you feel about the driving curriculum. List 2-3 things that you have learned. List 2-3 questions that you have.

- confident
- concerned about fines (suspensions)
- more comfortable with fines and the courses

Eliciting Prior Knowledge:

To be given directly to tutee:

- Describe what you know about the written permit exam. List 1-2 things you already know. (signals, parts of the car)
- List 2-3 questions that you have about the exam.

For tutor to explain to tutee: In the following discussion, be sure to cover the fact that any information in the MA driver's manual may be tested, which means that there are many potential questions.
Mae’s Permit Test:

It’s time for Mae to take her **permit exam**! First, she gives the RMV examiner the necessary documents, her application, and the $30 testing fee. Mae sits in front of a computer screen at the RMV and prepares to take the test. She asks to take the exam in Korean because she knows that the RMV offers the written exam in 34 languages. Mae must answer 25 questions in 25 minutes. She must answer 18 questions correctly to pass. The exam will ask questions based on the information in the **MA Driver’s Manual**, which Mae has been studying. Mae knows the exam is a **multiple choice test**. She carefully reads each possible choice before answering the question. She answers questions about common **rules of the road**, including **blind spots**, **tailgating**, and **the two-second rule**. Finally, she answers 22 questions correctly so she passes the test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RMV Test Word</th>
<th>Cultural term, when relevant and image</th>
<th>Relating to your own experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Permit Exam**

A written exam that drivers must pass to receive their MA driving permit. Test takers must answer 18/25 questions correctly. The test lasts 25 minutes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Have you ever taken a driving exam before?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**MA Driver’s Manual**

The official guide for Massachusetts drivers, covering the laws and rules of driving in MA. Every question on the Permit Exam comes from information found in the MA Driver’s Manual.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you think is most important about the driver’s manual?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

---

Designed by the UMass Amherst/International Language Institute project on Driving in English. See [https://ili.edu/](https://ili.edu/) for more information and contact rlorimer@umass.edu with questions.
## Multiple Choice Test

A written exam that presents test-takers with four options, only one of which is correct.

**This sign is**

- an advance warning sign for a railroad crossing.
- a one-way road sign.
- a road repair sign.
- a crossroad sign.

(image from: [https://driving-tests.org/massachusetts/massachusetts-dmv-practice-test/](https://driving-tests.org/massachusetts/massachusetts-dmv-practice-test/))

Describe a time when you have answered a multiple choice question. What strategies did you use to answer it?

## Rules of the road

The laws and rules that drivers must follow at all times while driving.

**Warning**

- School zone
- School crossing
- Pedestrian crossing
- Traffic signal ahead
- Circular intersection ahead
- Lane merging from right, watch for other traffic
- Lane merging from left, watch for other traffic
- Lane merging from both sides of sign
- Right Lane End - Road Narrows
- Traffic may flow on both sides of sign
- Deer crossing
- Railroad crossing ahead
- Added lane
- Crossroad ahead
- Winding road, multiple curves ahead
- Road entering from the right
- Two-way traffic
- Right Lane End - Road Narrows
- Road slippery when wet
- Road ends at junction
- Area off paved road is soft dirt hazardous
- No passing zone
- You may not cross the yellow line
- 7-16" Maximum height
- Road turns right
- Road curves right
- Road curves left
- Soft shoulder
- Soft shoulder

What are the rules of the road in another place that you have lived? Describe similarities or differences.
Blind Spots

Spaces that car mirrors do not reflect back to the driver. Blind spots may hide people or objects behind the vehicle.

The accompanying diagram shows the “blind spots” around your vehicle, in which you cannot see with your vehicle’s mirrors.

Do you have a word to refer to this in another language that you speak? If so, what is it?
Tailgating

Tailgating is a form of dangerous driving in which a driver follows another vehicle too closely. According to the MA guide, “Tailgating is illegal and the main cause of rear-end crashes. The fine for tailgating can be as high as $100.”

Two-Second Rule

The Two-Second Rule is a safe driving practice that ensures drivers are not tailgating. According to the RMV: “Use the "two-second" rule to keep a safe distance from the vehicle in front of you. Pick an object in front of you, like a sign post or a tree. When the vehicle in front of you reaches that object, count out "one one-thousand, two one-

How do you feel when another driver tailgates you?

Have you heard of this rule before?

Designed by the UMass Amherst/International Language Institute project on Driving in English. See https://ili.edu/ for more information and contact rlorimer@umass.edu with questions.
thousand…..". If you reach the object before you count two, you are too close. Slow down until you’ve put enough distance between you and the other vehicle.”

Practice Tests Lesson Part B

Practice Test Activity:

For tutee: In this exercise, students will first answer several permit test practice questions, and then design their own multiple choice questions using the material in the MA Driver’s Manual.

First, show these practice questions and then use the **Driver’s Manual** to find the answers (page numbers are given as hints beneath each question, but it’s preferable to answer the questions without them).

Q: If you feel your vehicle pull to one side when you brake, you may need to adjust or repair:

a) The steering wheel
b) The engine
c) The brakes
d) The headlights
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q: When must a driver use their headlights?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) One hour after sunset and one hour before sunrise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) 15 minutes after sunset and one hour before sunrise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) At all times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) One-half hour after sunset until one-half hour before sunrise.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Answer: D

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q: A lane with a white diamond, as in the illustration below, is designated for:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Left turns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Passing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Special lane restrictions, like “bus only”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Police and emergency vehicles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Answer: C
After answering these questions, students will design their own multiple choice questions as if they were in charge of designing the permit test. Ask them to consider what information they, as a test designer, would want to assess in permit applicants.

Students should draft questions based on the principles listed below, which are all adapted from the “Rules of the Road” section of the guide.

**Pedestrian Signals, p. 84-85**

**Pedestrian Signals**

Special lighted signals are often used at crosswalks to tell pedestrians when to cross a roadway. Pedestrians must obey white and orange DON'T WALK and WALK signals. Some crosswalk signals include a numeric countdown timer. Pedestrians who are already in the crosswalk when the countdown reaches zero have the right of way.

**Laws for Drivers**

- You must yield to pedestrians entering or using a crosswalk in your travel path.
- Never let your vehicle block a crosswalk.
- You must yield to pedestrians if your traffic signal is red or if it is red and yellow.

**Laws for Pedestrians**

- Never pass a vehicle that is stopped or slowing for a pedestrian.
- You must yield to pedestrians when turning into a driveway or parking lot.

**Using Lanes, p. 93**

**Using Lanes**

Always use traffic lanes as they are defined by pavement markings and road signs. Many intersections have special lanes marked for turns. Follow the rules of the road, using the proper lanes for turning and driving straight ahead.

On roadways with two or more lanes in your travel direction, use the right lane for driving unless...

- You are passing another vehicle.
- You are making a left turn.
- The right lane is blocked.

Here are a few more general rules for using lanes properly:

- Never change lanes in the middle of an intersection. It is illegal and dangerous.
- As a general rule, do not use a highway breakdown lane for travel or passing. On some highways, however, you may use the breakdown lane for travel during specific times.
- If you come to a curve in the road and cannot see ahead, keep to the right and slow down.

The use of breakdown lanes as travel lanes is very restricted, and hours of use are posted clearly.

Special rules for motorcycles:

- Do not ride along pavement lines, between lanes of traffic.
- Ride no more than two abreast.
- Unless your motorcycle can safely drive at minimum posted speeds, do not travel on highways or expressways.

**Restricted Lanes**

You must not drive in lanes posted as restricted, except when preparing for a turn. Look for signs like the ones to the right.
Reflection

Describe how you picked the questions that you chose. What information did you want to include? Why? Given what you now know, how can you best prepare for the permit test? List 2-3 studying strategies that you will develop.

Optional Homework

If the student has access to a computer, they may wish to answer several of the unofficial practice exams located here: https://driving-tests.org/massachusetts/