

## Guidelines for Constructing Knowledge Questions

The following guidelines are presented to assist in the creation of quality questions for testing students' knowledge of the material covered in the driver education curriculum

### General Guidelines

- The content of the test questions should be drawn directly from the course curriculum and be accompanied by page references. Ideally, each question you create should address a particular learning objective with the correct answer originating directly from the curriculum.
- The questions should cover sampled content covering the full range of the driver education curriculum.
- Each question should focus on a single concept.
- Each item should be completely independent of every other question, so that, on any given quiz, a student is not given two questions that cover exactly the same knowledge content.
- All questions should be clear and understandable to students at a seventh grade reading level.
- Most questions should have *three* or four answer choices.
- True/false questions are appropriate when the content area to which the question pertains is most conducive to two answer choices. Avoid true/false questions when there are any exceptions to the rule.

### Multiple Choice Question Guidelines

Multiple choice questions consist of three parts: the stem (the phrase or sentence that sets up the question and leads to the answer choices), the key (the correct answer choice), and the distractors (the incorrect answer choices).

#### The Stem:

- Asks the question or states a problem.
- Should not contain vague or confusing language.
- Should be a complete thought and include all the information required to answer the question.

- Should avoid “giving away” the correct answer through grammatical clues, such as by having distractors that do not logically follow the stem, or by having a word or phrase from the stem repeated in the correct answer.
- Should not be phrased in the negative. For example, “Which of the following is not true?”

The Key:

- Must be the only correct answer.
- Should be obvious only to students who truly know the subject matter.
- Should be of approximately the same length and detail as the distractors.
- Should not be “all of the above” or “none of the above.”

The Distractors:

- Should be relevant to the content area of the question.
- Must be definitely incorrect (avoid “less correct” distractors).
- Should be at least somewhat plausible and appear to be a viable option to students who are less familiar with the material.
- Should be similar to the correct answer in terms of vocabulary, sentence length, grammatical structure, and point of view.
- Should not be absolutes such as “always” or “never.”
- Should not be “all of the above” or “none of the above.”

\*These guidelines were adapted from material created by Mike Willihnganz, Ph.D., of the California State Personnel Board.