North Carolina School Bus Driver Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide

Everything you need from our exam experts!

Questions

1. What should the following distance be between your bus and the vehicle ahead in hazardous weather conditions?

A. 5 seconds

B. 7 seconds

C. 10 seconds

D. 15 seconds

2. What is synonymous with forceful intermittent braking?

A. Snubbing

B. Coasting

C. Hard braking

D. Creep braking

3. When approaching a railroad crossing, at what distance should a bus stop?

A. 10 to 30 feet

B. 15 to 50 feet

C. 20 to 40 feet

D. 25 to 55 feet

4. What should be monitored to ensure the parking brake is functioning correctly?

A. Dashboard lights

B. Air pressure gauge

C. Speedometer

D. Engine temperature

5. When is it appropriate to attempt repairs on a school bus?

A. When it is convenient

B. Naturally after any trip

C. When you notice a minor issue

D. Never

6. What does a following distance of 5 seconds mean when driving a 50-foot bus at 25 mph?

A. You are too close to the vehicle ahead

B. You are maintaining a safe distance

C. You should reduce your speed

D. You need to increase your speed

7. When must emergency exits be closed in a passenger bus?

A. At all times

B. Except during emergencies

C. When not in use

D. Never

8. In passenger buses, where must no rider stand in relation to the driver's seat?

A. Forward of the rear of the driver's seat

B. Behind the passenger area

C. In the front cabin

D. Adjacent to the driver

9. What should you do if a child is not waiting for the bus at their designated stop?

A. Continue with the route but report the incident to the school

B. Wait for a few minutes before moving on

C. Call the child's parents

D. Stop and search for the child

10. What should a driver do if their bus breaks down?

A. Activate warning lights and continue driving

B. Activate warning lights, pull off the roadway if possible, and contact assistance

C. Wait for help without warning signals

D. Attempt to fix the bus immediately

Answers

1. C
2. A
3. B
4. B
5. D
6. B
7. A
8. A
9. A
10. B

Explanations

1. What should the following distance be between your bus and the vehicle ahead in hazardous weather conditions?

A. 5 seconds

B. 7 seconds

C. 10 seconds

D. 15 seconds

In hazardous weather conditions, increasing the following distance to 10 seconds provides a crucial buffer that allows for safer stopping distances and reaction times. During inclement weather like rain, snow, or fog, road traction is compromised, and vehicles may take significantly longer to stop. By maintaining a 10-second gap, school bus drivers can better accommodate the unpredictable nature of slippery roads and reduced visibility, giving them ample time to react to sudden stops or emergencies from the vehicle ahead. This long following distance is an essential practice to ensure the safety of the students on board as well as other road users, especially in challenging driving situations. In contrast, shorter following distances, such as 5, 7, or even 15 seconds, may not provide the same level of safety in these weather conditions. While 15 seconds might sound safe, it could be excessive in terms of how tthat distance might affect traffic flow and could be impractical depending on the speed of travel. Thus, 10 seconds strikes a balance between safety and practical driving conditions.

2. What is synonymous with forceful intermittent braking?

A. Snubbing

B. Coasting

C. Hard braking

D. Creep braking

Snubbing refers to a braking technique used to slow down or control the speed of a vehicle, especially when driving downhill. This technique involves applying the brakes intermittently and with varying amounts of pressure, which creates a forceful braking effect. Snubbing is often applied to maintain control and prevent the vehicle from gaining excessive speed, particularly when dealing with heavy loads or in challenging driving conditions. The practice of snubbing is essential for school bus drivers, as it allows them to adjust their speed effectively while ensuring the safety of the passengers. In scenarios where continuous braking may lead to overheating of the braking system, using forceful intermittent braking through snubbing helps manage speed without compromising the brakes' integrity. Other techniques mentioned, like coasting, hard braking, and creep braking, do not align with the concept of forceful intermittent braking in this context. Coasting involves taking the foot off the accelerator and allowing the vehicle to gradually slow down without applying the brakes. Hard braking involves applying strong and continuous pressure to stop the vehicle quickly, rather than in an intermittent manner. Creep braking is characterized by very light braking pressure, which is used primarily for maintaining a slow speed or making small adjustments rather than managing speed effectively in a dynamic situation.

3. When approaching a railroad crossing, at what distance should a bus stop?

A. 10 to 30 feet

B. 15 to 50 feet

C. 20 to 40 feet

D. 25 to 55 feet

The appropriate distance for a bus to stop when approaching a railroad crossing is 15 to 50 feet. This range is specifically designed to ensure the safety of the bus passengers while providing enough visibility for the driver to assess whether it is safe to proceed or not. Stopping within this distance allows the driver to adequately see any oncoming trains, which is crucial for preventing accidents at crossings. Stopping too far from the crossing could impair the driver's ability to gauge the situation effectively, while stopping closer than 15 feet might put the bus in a hazardous position where it's too close to the train tracks. Therefore, the 15 to 50 feet range balances safety and visibility, making it the correct answer in this context.

4. What should be monitored to ensure the parking brake is functioning correctly?

A. Dashboard lights

B. Air pressure gauge

C. Speedometer

D. Engine temperature

Monitoring the air pressure gauge is crucial for ensuring that the parking brake is functioning correctly, especially in larger vehicles like buses that often utilize air brakes. The parking brake in these vehicles typically depends on air pressure to engage and disengage properly. If the air pressure drops below a certain level, the parking brake may not hold effectively, which can lead to safety issues. In addition, the air pressure gauge provides real-time feedback about the system's pressure levels, allowing the driver to assess whether the brakes are functioning properly before operating the vehicle. Adequate air pressure is necessary for both the effective operation of the parking brake and for the overall safety of transporting students. Other options, while important for different aspects of vehicle operation, do not directly relate to the functionality of the parking brake.

5. When is it appropriate to attempt repairs on a school bus?

A. When it is convenient

B. Naturally after any trip

C. When you notice a minor issue

D. Never

Performing repairs on a school bus should never be attempted by someone who is not trained or certified to do so. The safety of the students being transported is paramount, and any repair work requires a professional understanding of the vehicle's systems and maintenance protocols. Professional repairs ensure that safety standards and regulations are met, and they help avoid potential hazards that could arise from improper repairs. Attempting repairs for the sake of convenience or when a minor issue is noticed can lead to inadequate fixes or overlooking significant maintenance needs that require expert attention. Similarly, performing repairs after every trip can create unnecessary wear and tear on the bus, adding to maintenance costs and potentially diverting focus from more critical issues. Thus, the policy of never attempting repairs by unqualified individuals helps maintain the integrity and safety of school transportation.

6. What does a following distance of 5 seconds mean when driving a 50-foot bus at 25 mph?

A. You are too close to the vehicle ahead

B. You are maintaining a safe distance

C. You should reduce your speed

D. You need to increase your speed

Maintaining a following distance of 5 seconds at 25 mph when driving a 50-foot bus indicates that you are ensuring a safe space between your vehicle and the one in front of you. This distance allows for ample reaction time in case the vehicle ahead suddenly stops or slows down. The concept of a following distance is critical, especially when operating a larger vehicle like a bus. Larger vehicles require more stopping distance due to their weight and momentum. By measuring distance in seconds instead of feet, it takes into account variables such as speed, visibility, and road conditions. A 5-second gap provides a buffer that contributes to overall safety. Driving with such a distance helps prevent rear-end collisions, which are particularly dangerous when transporting passengers. Thus, this following distance is aligned with best practices for safe driving, ensuring that you have enough time to respond to any sudden changes on the road.

7. When must emergency exits be closed in a passenger bus?

A. At all times

B. Except during emergencies

C. When not in use

D. Never

Emergency exits on a passenger bus must be closed at all times to ensure the safety and security of all passengers on board. Having the exits closed prevents unauthorized access to the vehicle and protects passengers from falling out, especially during transit. This rule also minimizes the risk of accidents that could occur if exits are inadvertently opened while the bus is in motion. In emergency situations, the exits should be opened quickly and efficiently, but during regular operations, keeping them shut is critical for maintaining the structural integrity of the bus and ensuring that passengers are securely inside. This practice is a fundamental safety protocol for school bus drivers, emphasizing the need to prioritize the well-being of everyone on the bus.

8. In passenger buses, where must no rider stand in relation to the driver's seat?

A. Forward of the rear of the driver's seat

B. Behind the passenger area

C. In the front cabin

D. Adjacent to the driver

In passenger buses, it is important for safety reasons that no rider stands forward of the rear of the driver's seat. This rule is in place to ensure that passengers do not obstruct the driver's view or interfere with their ability to operate the vehicle safely. If a passenger were to stand too close to the front, it could create a risk of distraction or impede the driver's access to controls and the ability to react to emergencies. The other choices do not provide the clarity of safety regarding the driver's operational zone. For example, standing behind the passenger area or in the front cabin does not specify the potential for interference with the driver's visibility and task focus. Additionally, standing next to the driver could also pose distractions or safety hazards while the bus is in motion. Therefore, ensuring all passengers remain behind the designated line, specifically at or behind the rear of the driver's seat, is crucial in creating a safe environment for the driver and everyone on board.

9. What should you do if a child is not waiting for the bus at their designated stop?

A. Continue with the route but report the incident to the school

B. Wait for a few minutes before moving on

C. Call the child's parents

D. Stop and search for the child

The best choice in this situation is to continue with the route but report the incident to the school. As a school bus driver, your primary responsibility is the safe and timely transportation of all students. If a child is not present at their designated stop, it is important to adhere to the bus schedule and keep the route moving for the safety and punctuality of the other passengers. While it is essential to be concerned about the child who is missing, notifying the school allows trained staff to handle the situation appropriately. They can then take the necessary steps to ensure the child's safety, such as contacting parents or checking if the child is absent that day. Waiting for a few minutes may seem considerate, but it could disrupt the entire bus schedule and potentially delay other students. Calling the child's parents directly may not be effective in the moment, as they might not be reachable or aware of the situation. Lastly, stopping and searching for the child poses a safety risk for all passengers on board and could lead to unnecessary delays. Therefore, reporting to the school while continuing the route ensures a balanced approach to maintaining order and safety on the bus.

10. What should a driver do if their bus breaks down?

A. Activate warning lights and continue driving

B. Activate warning lights, pull off the roadway if possible, and contact assistance

C. Wait for help without warning signals

D. Attempt to fix the bus immediately

When a bus breaks down, the correct course of action is to activate the warning lights, pull off the roadway if it is safe to do so, and then contact assistance. This approach ensures the safety of both the bus driver and the passengers, as well as other road users. Activating the warning lights alerts other drivers to the situation, making them aware that the bus is not moving normally and that caution is needed. Pulling off the roadway, when possible, reduces the risk of blocking traffic or causing an accident. It also places the bus in a safer position away from moving vehicles. Finally, contacting assistance allows for prompt help to be dispatched to address the breakdown, ensuring that the issue is resolved appropriately and efficiently without putting the driver or passengers at risk. The other options lack a focus on safety and proper procedure, which are crucial when dealing with a breakdown situation.