

J. J. Keller®

# Tractor-Trailer Driver Training

## Instructor's Supplement

**3rd Edition**

**Based on the FHWA Model Curriculum  
Follows PTDI's curriculum standards**



**J. J. Keller**  
& Associates, Inc.®

Since 1953

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Welcome to the *J. J. Keller Tractor-Trailer Driver Training Manual, Instructor Supplement*. This publication is intended to provide tools that you can use to enhance the instruction you present to your students.

This Instructor Supplement covers all 33 chapters of the *J. J. Keller Tractor-Trailer Driver Training Manual*. Each chapter of the Instructor Supplement is divided into the following sections.

1. Objectives. The objectives are the same ones listed in the manual. These objectives give both the student and you (the instructor) a shared understanding of the information covered in the chapter and what the student is expected to get out of the lesson.
2. Introduction. This section provides a brief explanation of the general intent of the lesson contained in the chapter.
3. Classroom recommendations.\* This section provides suggestions for enhancing your classroom presentation; from ideas for discussion sessions to suggestions on the use of training aids such as videos.
4. Lab recommendations.\* This section provides suggestions for activities/exercises that take place outside the classroom, but do not involve the actual operation of the tractor-trailer or its components. Examples of lab sessions include conducting a vehicle inspection or practicing the coupling and uncoupling of a tractor-trailer.
5. Range recommendations.\* These recommended activities take place on a closed-access driving range where students may practice driving skills in a controlled environment.
6. Road recommendations.\* These recommended activities take place in road and traffic conditions that are conducive to the objective(s) of the lesson being presented.
7. Chapter quiz with answers. This quiz is a review of the information presented in the chapter. The quiz is intended to assist you in measuring your students' understanding of the material presented.
8. CDL pre-test with answers. In order to obtain a commercial driver's license (CDL) an individual must pass a knowledge test. This pre-test provides practice questions to help students prepare for the knowledge test. The pre-test and answers in this publication are based on the *Model Commercial Driver License Manual* (May 2015).

\*Note: Not all chapters will include this section. Inclusion is based on the applicability of the lesson to the section.

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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce your students to the skills needed to perform a safe and effective visual search while on the road.

### ■ Classroom

This is the first of a series of chapters designed to get your students ready to operate on the road. Discuss the importance of mastering the skills that will be covered when it comes to safe operations. Consider the use of a video to introduce this topic.

### ■ Lab/range recommendations

This lesson is intended to help the student understand proper mirror adjustment.

Prior to beginning the lesson, position the tractor-trailer in a straight line with an unobstructed view to the rear. Also place the mirrors out of adjustment.

Divide your students into groups of three or four. One student should sit behind the wheel. Two other students should act as reference objects for proper mirror adjustment:

- One should stand 100 feet to the rear and 15 feet to the left side of the trailer; and
- One should stand 100 feet to the rear and 15 feet to the right side of the trailer.

Each student should take at least two turns behind the wheel adjusting the mirrors and making judgments about the distance of the objects in each mirror's field of view.

### ■ Street recommendations

#### Commentary driving

Below is the outline for a commentary driving exercise. In commentary driving, the student should be able to identify (out loud) obstacles and potential obstacles while driving. The following are recommended general rules for commentary driving.

1. Identify obstacles by using short phrases such as:
  - ◆ Stop sign;
  - ◆ Upcoming stop light; or
  - ◆ Vehicle passing ahead.
2. Identify only the most important/critical obstacles. It's impossible to point out all obstacles without becoming distracted.
3. Students shouldn't look at the instructor while talking.
4. Identify, don't explain.



## Exercise

The purpose of this session is to allow students to practice visual search under highway conditions.

As with other exercises, break your class into groups of three students per instructor. Each student should have 2 to 3 hours behind the wheel.

The route you select for this session should expose the student to a broad range of roadways under low density traffic conditions. When selecting a route, keep in mind that this may be the student's first experience driving a tractor-trailer on a public roadway. That alone could cause anxiety for the student and could pose a distraction. It isn't necessary to select a route with a large volume of traffic. The route you select should include the following:

- Path obstructions that force a change in speed or direction that are observable from a distance;
- Intersections at which left and right turns may be made;
- Blind intersections at which the student must yield the right-of-way;
- Multi-lane streets that permit lane changes;
- Freeway interchanges, including weave-type interchanges that are used to enter, exit, and traverse;
- Lane control signs and signals; and
- Tight turns (alleys, driveways, etc.).

Follow the following procedures during the session:

1. Each student should spend a maximum of 20 minutes behind the wheel. As this is probably the student's first on-the-road experience, the intensity and stress of the activity can cause fatigue within a short period of time.
2. The student should use commentary driving techniques for up to one-half of the time he/she is behind the wheel. If this seems to be too distracting to the student at first, discontinue the use of commentary driving until the student is more confident.
3. As the instructor, you should give directions involving changes in speed or direction well in advance.
4. Make sure your students perform the following maneuvers at some point during the session: lane changes, right and left turns, and entering, exiting, and traveling through a freeway interchange.

When you are confident that students have had sufficient practice under low-density traffic conditions, additional practice should be taken in moderate traffic conditions, but avoid high-density traffic situations.