



North East London & Essex Group of Advanced Motorists

Registered Charity No. 1056280 Group No. 7043



Commentary

A good commentary demands practise and encourages concentration, exclusively on driving. It is not part of the test but may be given.

It reveals: Good Observation, Anticipation and an explanation of the action taken to deal with any hazard.

Initially we feel self conscious when talking aloud to a third party. By practise it increases Concentration, Observation and Fluency.

Motorways and rural roads, observations can be extended forwards, however, in all situations the driver should observe the far distance working towards the foreground but locking on to the hazards.

Introduction to commentary should begin on quiet roads and should be for short periods of time.

The following is suggested as a teaching aid

Traffic signs that are prohibitive, compulsory or give warnings usually have red borders or blue backgrounds. e.g. Stop sign, give way, keep left sign, double bend sign etc.

Traffic signs painted on the carriage way e.g. Give way lines, stop lines and hazard warning lines.

Direction signs - e.g. Route marker, motorways, primary, non primary, information.

Other traffic - e.g. HGVs, Children, stray dogs etc.

Identification of anticipated situations - from observations and geography. As proficiency increases longer periods of commentary can be undertaken whilst gradually increasing the content.

Do not drop into repetitive phrases. E.g. "The road bends away to the left and now goes off to the right....." etc. A shopping list can be used - E.g. "Junction right, junction left, school signs....." etc.

The next step is to be more descriptive. E.g. "Junction left - good open view into it and across the field - clear. Junction right - the mouth is clear - danger from the farm.." etc.

Plain simple language is by far the best for commentary. Use your own words and phrases that you would do in every day conversation. Don't fall into the trap of becoming tongue tied whilst trying to find the correct pronunciation.



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An example.

I am driving a (make and model) which is driven through the front/rear wheels by a four/five/manual/automatic gearbox. We are on the (road) travelling towards (town). The road surface is dry, and this will afford me maximum braking efficiency should I require it, or, is wet, and I shall be conscious of this when I brake, accelerate or steer. The road is an undivided two-lane carriageway separated by lane/hazard lines. It is restricted to a (speed) limit and that is my speed (or explain why speed is less).

Include reference to time of day (schools), bus routes and other expected or anticipated hazards. Consider making reference to relevant road signs - not forgetting regular mirror checks.

If there is something more pressing to talk about, talk about it immediately, e.g. "Lorry ahead indicating right and braking, no room to go through. So I'm holding back until he clears".

Keep commentary current, never historical, do not be afraid to ad-lib, avoid a monotonous voice, confidential whispers and muttering.

Try to sound interested and enthusiastic. All items under observation in Roadcraft can be subject to a commentary. Commentary is good training that extends, sharpens and broadens observations allowing early decisions to be made as to course, speed and action.

A good driving commentator can vary content, volume and rate of delivery to suit all conditions.