

The New

SAT

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Information Bulletin

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About the New SAT

Overview

2003-04 sophomores, you will be the first class to take the new SAT for college admissions. Here's your testing timeline:

- Fall 2004: Take the new PSAT/NMSQT®
- Spring 2005: Take the new SAT

What Will Change?

Writing (new section)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Multiple-choice questions (grammar and usage) ▪ Student-written essay
Critical Reading (currently called Verbal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analogies eliminated ▪ Short reading passages added to existing long reading passages
Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Math content expanded to include topics from third-year college preparatory math ▪ Quantitative comparisons eliminated

Why Is the SAT Changing?

The SAT assesses student reasoning based on knowledge and skills developed by the student in school coursework. The new SAT will improve the alignment of the test with current curriculum and institutional practices in high school and college. By including a third measure of skills -- writing, the new SAT will help colleges make better admissions and placement decisions. In that way, the new SAT will reinforce the importance of writing throughout a student's education.

The Writing Section

Overview

Time	Content	Item Types	Score
60 min.	Grammar, usage, and word choice	Multiple choice questions (35 min.) and student-written essay (25 min.)	200-800

Students will be asked to write a short essay that requires them to take a position on an issue and use examples to support their position. Questions similar to the multiple-choice questions on the SAT II: Writing Subject Test and the PSAT/NMSQT® writing skills section will be included to see how well students use standard written English. These questions are designed to measure your ability to recognize errors and improve sentences and paragraphs.

The essay will be scored by experienced and trained high school and college teachers. Each essay will be scored by two people who won't know each other's score. They won't know the student's identity or school either. Each reader will give the essay a score from 1 to 6 (6 is the highest score) based on a [scoring guide](#).

Identifying Sentence Errors

In the following item, students are asked to identify the error in usage.

It is likely that the opening of the convention center, previously set for July 1, would be postponed
 (A) (B) (C)
because of the bricklayers' strike. No error
 (D) (E)

Correct answer: C

Explanation: "Would be" is the wrong tense of the verb in this sentence. The sentence concerns when the convention center is going to open. This is a time in the future, either July 1 or later if there is a strike. Since the opening will definitely take place, the future tense, "will be," is needed. "Would be" (the conditional tense) indicates only that an event might happen.

Improving Sentences

In the following item, students are asked to improve the sentence.

Although several groups were absolutely opposed to the outside support given the revolutionary government, other groups were as equal in their adamant approval of that support.

- (A) were as equal in their adamant approval of
- (B) held equally adamant approval of
- (C) were equally adamant in approving
- (D) had approved equally adamantly
- (E) held approval equally adamant of

Correct Answer: C

Explanation: (C) is correct because it expresses the second part of the sentence in a way parallel to the first part. Two groups are being compared: groups "absolutely opposed to" and groups "equally adamant in." Both phrases now have a common structure: an adverb modifying an adjective followed by a preposition.

Improving Paragraphs

Directions: The following passage is an early draft of an essay. Some parts of the passage need to be rewritten. Read the passage and select the best answers for the questions that follow. Some questions are about particular sentences or parts of sentences and ask you to improve sentence structure and word choice. Other questions refer to parts of the essay or the entire essay and ask you to consider organization and development. In making your decisions, follow the conventions of standard written English.

At one point in the movie *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, the evil archaeologist Belloq shows the heroic Indiana Jones a cheap watch. If the watch were to be buried in the desert for a thousand years and then dug up, Belloq says, it would be considered priceless. I often think of the scene whenever I consider the record album-collecting phenomenon, it being one of the more remarkable aspects of popular culture in the United States. Collecting record albums gives us a chance to make a low-cost investment that might pay dividends in the future.

When my aunt collected them in the mid-sixties, nobody regarded them as investments. A young fan shelled out dollar after dollar at the corner record store for no other reason than to assemble a complete collection of her favorite musical groups - in my aunt's case, the Beatles and the Supremes. By committing so much of her allowance each week to the relentless pursuit of that one group not yet in her collection - the immortal Yardbirds, let us say - she was proving her loyalty to her superstars.

The recording industry is a capitalist enterprise and so this hobby has become one. Just as everyone has heard of the exorbitant prices being paid for the Beatles' first album in mint condition, so everyone is certain that a payoff is among each stack of old records. But if that album was buried somewhere in my aunt's closet of dusty records, she never knew it. Long before she learned it, she had thrown them out.

In the context of the first paragraph, which revision is most needed in sentence 3?

- (A) Insert "As a matter of fact" at the beginning.
- (B) Omit the words "it being."
- (C) Omit the word "scene."
- (D) Change the comma to a semicolon.
- (E) Change "think" to "thought" and "consider" to "considered."

Correct Answer: B

Explanation: The words "it being" are unnecessary.

Essay

Directions: Think carefully about the issue presented in the following excerpt and the assignment below.

The principle is this: each failure leads us closer to deeper knowledge, to greater creativity in understanding old data, to new lines of inquiry. Thomas Edison experienced 10,000 failures before he succeeded in perfecting the lightbulb. When a friend of his remarked that 10,000 failures was a lot, Edison replied, "I didn't fail 10,000 times, I successfully eliminated 10,000 materials and combinations that didn't work."

Myles Brand, "Taking the Measure of Your Success"

Assignment: What is your view on the idea that it takes failure to achieve success? Plan and write an essay in which you develop your point of view on this issue. Support your position with reasoning and examples taken from your reading, studies, experience, or observations.

How the Essay Is Scored

The essay will be scored by experienced and trained high school and college teachers. Each essay will be scored by two people who won't know each other's score. They won't know the student's identity or school either. Each reader will give the essay a score from 1 to 6 (6 is the highest score) based on the following scoring guide.

SCORE OF 6

An essay in this category is **outstanding**, demonstrating **clear and consistent mastery**, although it may have a few minor errors. A typical essay

- effectively and insightfully develops a point of view on the issue and demonstrates outstanding critical thinking, using clearly appropriate examples, reasons, and other evidence to support its position
- is well organized and clearly focused, demonstrating clear coherence and smooth progression of ideas
- exhibits skillful use of language, using a varied, accurate, and apt vocabulary
- demonstrates meaningful variety in sentence structure
- is free of most errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics

SCORE OF 5

An essay in this category is **effective**, demonstrating **reasonably consistent mastery**, although it will have occasional errors or lapses in quality. A typical essay

- effectively develops a point of view on the issue and demonstrates strong critical thinking, generally using appropriate examples, reasons, and other evidence to support its position

- is well organized and focused, demonstrating coherence and progression of ideas
- exhibits facility in the use of language, using appropriate vocabulary
- demonstrates variety in sentence structure
- is generally free of most errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics

SCORE OF 4

An essay in this category is **competent**, demonstrating **adequate mastery**, although it will have lapses in quality. A typical essay

- develops a point of view on the issue and demonstrates competent critical thinking, using adequate examples, reasons, and other evidence to support its position
- is generally organized and focused, demonstrating some coherence and progression of ideas
- exhibits adequate but inconsistent facility in the use of language, using generally appropriate vocabulary
- demonstrates some variety in sentence structure
- has some errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics

SCORE OF 3

An essay in this category is **inadequate**, but demonstrates **developing mastery**, and is marked by **one or more** of the following weaknesses:

- develops a point of view on the issue, demonstrating some critical thinking, but may do so inconsistently or use inadequate examples, reasons, or other evidence to support its position
- is limited in its organization or focus, but may demonstrate some lapses in coherence or progression of ideas
- displays developing facility in the use of language, but sometimes uses weak vocabulary or inappropriate word choice
- lacks variety or demonstrates problems in sentence structure
- contains an accumulation of errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics

SCORE OF 2

An essay in this category is **seriously limited**, demonstrating **little mastery**, and is flawed by **one or more** of the following weaknesses:

- develops a point of view on the issue that is vague or seriously limited, demonstrating weak critical thinking, providing inappropriate or insufficient examples, reasons, or other evidence to support its position

- is poorly organized and/or focused, or demonstrates serious problems with coherence or progression of ideas
- displays very little facility in the use of language, using very limited vocabulary or incorrect word choice
- demonstrates frequent problems in sentence structure
- contains errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics so serious that meaning is somewhat obscured

SCORE OF 1

An essay in this category is **fundamentally lacking**, demonstrating **very little or no mastery**, and is severely flawed by one or more of the following weaknesses:

- develops no viable point of view on the issue, or provides little or no evidence to support its position
- is disorganized or unfocused, resulting in a disjointed or incoherent essay
- displays fundamental errors in vocabulary
- demonstrates severe flaws in sentence structure
- contains pervasive errors in grammar, usage, or mechanics that persistently interfere with meaning

SCORE OF 0

Essays not written on the essay assignment will receive a score of zero.

The Critical Reading Section

Overview

Time	Content	Item Types	Score
70 min. (two 25-min. sections and one 20-min. section)	Critical reading and sentence-level reading	Reading comprehension, sentence completions, and paragraph-length critical reading	200-800

The critical reading section, currently known as the verbal section, will include short reading passages along with the existing long reading passages. Analogies will be eliminated, but sentence-completion questions will remain.

Directions: *The passage below is followed by two questions based on its content. Answer the questions on the basis of what is stated or implied in the passage.*

Dinosaurs have such a powerful grip on the public consciousness that it is easy to forget just how recently scientists have become aware of them. A two-year-old child today may be able to rattle off three dinosaur names, but in 1824 there was only one known dinosaur. Period. The word "dinosaur" didn't even exist until 1841. Indeed, in those early years, the world was baffled by the discovery of these absurdly enormous creatures.

1. The reference to the "two-year-old child" (line 2) primarily serves to

- (A) challenge a popular assumption
- (B) highlight the extent of a change
- (C) suggest that a perspective is simplistic
- (D) introduce a controversial idea
- (E) question a contemporary preoccupation

Correct answer: B

Choice (B) is correct because the reference to the "two-year-old child" who can "rattle off three dinosaur names" shows how dramatically the situation has changed since 1824. Today even little children know more about dinosaurs than many scientists did in the 1820s.

2. The statement "Period" in line 4 primarily serves to emphasize the

- (A) authoritative nature of a finding
- (B) lack of flexibility in a popular theory
- (C) stubborn nature of a group of researchers
- (D) limited knowledge about a subject
- (E) refusal of the public to accept new discoveries

Correct answer: D

Choice (D) is correct because the word "Period" gives emphasis to the preceding statement that "there was only one known dinosaur" in 1824. Clearly, people at that time had "limited knowledge" about dinosaurs.

The Mathematics Section

Overview

Time	Content	Item Types	Score
70 min. (two 25-min. sections and one 20-min. section)	Number and operations; algebra and functions; geometry; statistics, probability, and data analysis	Five-choice multiple-choice questions and student-produced responses	200-800

The new SAT will include expanded math topics, such as exponential growth, absolute value, and functional notation, and place greater emphasis on such other topics as linear functions, manipulations with exponents, and properties of tangent lines.

Another change will be the elimination of the quantitative comparison questions. Important skills now measured in the quantitative comparison format, such as estimate and number sense, will continue to be measured through the multiple choice and student response (grid-in) questions.

Can I use a calculator?

Yes. Students can continue to use a four-function, scientific, or graphing calculator. The College Board recommends that students use a scientific level calculator for the new SAT, although it's still possible to solve every question without a calculator.

Number & Operations

Sequences Involving Exponential Growth

The new SAT will include mathematics questions that require knowledge of exponential growth sequences, also called geometric sequences. In a geometric sequence, there is a constant ratio between consecutive terms. For example, 7, 21, 63, 189, ... is a geometric sequence that has constant ratio 3 and begins with the term 7. The term obtained after multiplying n times by 3 is 7×3^n . Since these sequences have real-life applications, questions in this area might be presented in contexts such as population growth. One example might be that of a population that initially numbers 100 and grows by doubling every eight years. The expression $100 \times 2^{\frac{t}{8}}$ would give the population t years after it begins to grow.

Sets (Union, Intersection, Elements)

If a set is a collection of things, then the "things" can be referred to as "elements" or "members" of the set. Questions on the new SAT might ask about the union of two sets (i.e., the set consisting of elements that are in either set or both sets) or the intersection of two sets (i.e., the set of common elements). For example, if set X is the set of positive even integers and set Y is the set of positive odd integers, a question might ask students to recognize that the union of the two sets is the set of all positive integers.

Algebra & Functions

Absolute Value

The absolute value of a number is its distance on the number line from the origin. The absolute value of the number w is denoted by $|w|$. Students who take the new SAT should be familiar with both the concept and notation of absolute value and be able to work with expressions, equations, and functions that involve absolute value.

Rational Equations and Inequalities

An example of a rational algebraic expression is $\frac{2x+1}{x-3}$. Equations or inequalities involving such expressions will be included on the new SAT.

Radical Equations

An example of a radical equation is $5\sqrt{x+14}=29$. The new SAT will include questions involving such equations.

Integer and Rational Exponents

On the current SAT, exponents are restricted to positive integers. The new SAT will have expressions such as z^{-3} involving negative exponents. There will also be expressions such as $m^{\frac{3}{4}}$ where the exponent is a rational number.

For example:

If $x^3=64$, what is the value of $x^{\frac{1}{2}}$?

- (A) $\frac{1}{4}$
- (B) $\frac{1}{2}$
- (C) 4
- (D) 8
- (E) 16

Correct answer: B

Explanation: If $x^3=64$, then $\frac{1}{x^3}=64=4^3$. So $x^3=\frac{1}{4^3}$ and the value of x is $\frac{1}{4}$. Substituting $\frac{1}{4}$ for x in $x^{\frac{1}{2}}$ gives $x^{\frac{1}{2}}=\sqrt{x}=\sqrt{\frac{1}{4}}=\frac{1}{2}$. The correct answer is B.

What's new about this question? The current SAT has questions involving positive-integer exponents. The new SAT will also have expressions involving negative exponents, such as x^{-3} , and fractional exponents, such as $x^{\frac{1}{2}}$.

Direct and Inverse Variation

The new SAT may include questions involving quantities that are directly proportional to each other and quantities that are inversely proportional to each other. The quantities x and y are

directly proportional if $y = kx$, for some constant k . They are said to be inversely proportional if $y = \frac{k}{x}$ for some constant k .

Function Notation

Students should be familiar with both the concept of a function and with function notation. For example, if the function f is defined by $f(x) = x + 2^x$, students should know that $f(5) = 5 + 2^5 = 37$.

If f is a linear function and if $f(6) = 7$ and $f(8) = 12$, what is the slope of the graph of f in the xy -plane?

Explanation: If f is a linear function and $f(6) = 7$ and $f(8) = 12$, then the points $(6,7)$ and $(8,12)$ are on the graph of f . Therefore, the graph of f is a line with slope $\frac{y_2 + y_1}{x_2 + x_1} = \frac{12 - 7}{8 - 6} = \frac{5}{2}$. Grid $\frac{5}{2}$ or 2.5.

What's new about this question? The new element in this question is the use of the notation $f(x)$ to talk about the function.

Concepts of Domain and Range

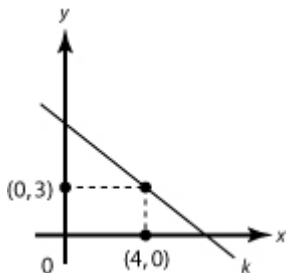
The domain of a function is the set of all values on which the function is defined. The range is the set of all values that are the output or the result of the function for values in the domain. The new SAT will include questions that ask about values of x at which a particular function is not defined (outside the domain), or values that $f(x)$ cannot equal (outside the range).

Functions as Models

The new SAT will include questions that involve mathematical models of real-life situations. For example, a question might present information about the projected sales of a product at various prices and ask for a mathematical model in the form of a graph or equation that represents projected sales as a function of price.

Linear Functions -- Equations and Graphs

The new SAT will include questions involving linear equations, such as $y = mx + b$, where m and b are constants. Some questions may involve identifying graphs of linear functions.



Note: Figure not drawn to scale

In the figure above, if line k has a slope of -1 , what is the y -intercept of k ?

- (A) 6
- (B) 7
- (C) 8
- (D) 9
- (E) 10

Correct answer: B

Explanation: Line k has equation $y = mx + b$ where m and b are constants. Since k has slope -1 , the value of m is -1 . From the information in the graph, it is possible to determine that the point $(4,3)$ is on line k . This means that $(x,y) = (4,3)$ satisfies the equation $y = -x + b$ so $3 = -4 + b$. Solving for b gives $b = 7$. This is the y -intercept of k , so the correct answer is B.

What's new about this question? The current SAT has questions involving lines and points in the coordinate plane, as well as the slope of one or more lines. The new element in this question is the use of the term "y-intercept."

Quadratic Functions -- Equations and Graphs

Questions involving quadratic equations and/or their graphs may appear on the new SAT. For example, a question might involve comparing the graphs of $y = 2x^2$ and $y = 2(x - 1)^2$.

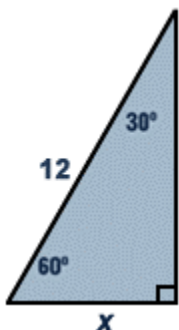
Geometry & Measurement

Geometric Notation for Length, Segments, Lines, Rays, and Congruence

The new SAT will use the geometric notation commonly found in high school textbooks. For example \overleftrightarrow{PQ} will be used to represent the line that passes through points P and Q , and \overrightarrow{PQ} will indicate the ray beginning at point P and passing through point Q . The line segment with points P and Q as endpoints will be represented by \overline{PQ} and PQ will represent the length of \overline{PQ} . The term "congruent" and the congruence symbol, \cong , will be used.

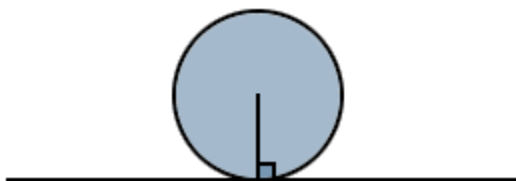
Problems in Which Trigonometry May Be Used as an Alternative Method of Solution

The SAT will include more questions that rely on the special properties of 30-60-90 triangles or 45-45-90 triangles. These questions can be answered by using trigonometric methods, but may also be answered using other methods. For example, in the triangle below, it is possible to find the value of x by using trigonometry ($\sin 30^\circ = x/12$). But the value of x can also be determined with the knowledge that in a 30-60-90 triangle, the leg opposite the 30-degree angle is half as long as the hypotenuse.



Properties of Tangent Lines

Questions on the new SAT may require knowledge of the property that a line tangent to a circle is perpendicular to a radius drawn to the point of tangency, as illustrated below.



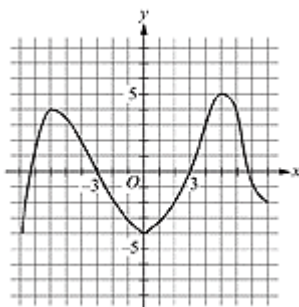
Coordinate Geometry

Some questions on the new SAT may require knowledge of the properties of the slopes of parallel or perpendicular lines. In addition, some questions may require students to find the equations of lines, the midpoints of line segments, or the distance between two points in the coordinate plane.

The midpoint formula gives the midpoint of \overline{PQ} in terms of the coordinates of points P and Q: that is, if P has coordinates (x_1, y_1) and Q has coordinates (x_2, y_2) then the midpoint has coordinates $(\frac{x_1 + x_2}{2}, \frac{y_1 + y_2}{2})$. The distance formula gives the value of PQ in terms of the coordinates of P and Q: $\sqrt{(x_1 - x_2)^2 + (y_1 - y_2)^2}$.

Qualitative Behavior of Graphs and Functions

A question on the new SAT might show the graph of a function in the xy -coordinate plane, as shown below, and ask students to give, for the portion of the graph shown, the number of values of x for which $f(x) = 3$. (The answer to this question is 4, because there are 4 different points at which the portion of the graph shown and the graph of the line $y = 3$ intersect.)



Transformations and Their Effect on Graphs of Functions

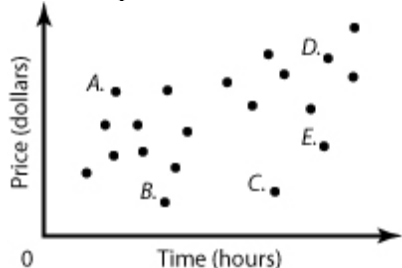
The new SAT will include questions that ask students to determine the effect of simple transformations on graphs of functions. For example, the graph of a function $f(x)$ could be given and students would be asked questions about the graph of the function $f(x + 2)$.

Data Analysis, Statistics, & Probability

Data Interpretation, Scatterplots, and Matrices

A question on the new SAT might ask about the line of best fit for a scatterplot. Students would be expected to identify the general characteristics of the line of best fit by looking at the scatterplot. For example, students might determine that this line has a slope that is positive but less than 1. Students would not be expected to use formal methods of finding the equation of the line of best fit. Students will also be expected to be able to interpret data displayed in tables, charts, and graphs.

For example:



A science class bought 20 different batteries of various brands and prices. They tested each battery's duration by seeing how long it would help a motor running before losing power. For each battery, the class plotted the duration against the price, as shown above. Of the five labeled points, which one corresponds to the battery that cost the least amount *per hour* of duration?

- A) *A*
- B) *B*
- C) *C*
- D) *D*
- E) *E*

Correct answer: C

Explanation:

For each battery, the cost per hour of duration is equal to the price of the battery divided by the duration of that battery. For each of the points on the graph, this value corresponds to the slope of the line segment from point O to that point. Of the line segments \overline{OA} , \overline{OB} , \overline{OC} , \overline{OD} , and \overline{OE} , the one with the smallest slope is \overline{OC} . So, battery C is the one for which the cost per hour of duration was least. The correct answer is C.

What's new about this question? The new SAT will have more questions involving scatterplots and proportional reasoning, of which this question is an example.

Geometric Probability

Some questions on the new SAT may involve geometric probability. For example, if a point is to be chosen at random from the interior of a region, part of which is shaded, students might be asked to find the probability that the point chosen will be from the shaded portion of the region. These questions could be presented in a context such as throwing darts at a target.

How to Prepare

The best way to prepare for the new SAT is to participate actively in your own education. The following suggestions are ways to make the most of your classes, teachers, and counselor.

Choose challenging classes.

- Sign up for the hardest classes you're ready for, including advanced Math subjects such as Algebra II.
- Your counselor can help you make decisions about your class schedule.

Read, read, read, and read some more.

- Read for fun.
- Ask your teachers for ideas on what to read.
- Read material that is hard to understand at first.
- Choose a variety of reading materials. Read novels, newspapers, and poetry.
- Read about history and science.
- [Check out the Great Books List.](#)

Improve your writing skills.

- Practice writing. If your teachers don't assign much writing, keep a journal, in print or online, and practice making thoughtful entries.
- Write about what you read, not just in English, but in other classes too.
- Discover which writing methods work best for you. For example, try outlining your essays before you write them.
- [Get more writing tips.](#)

Improve your grammar and sentence structure.

- Ask your English teacher for help with any areas of grammar that you don't understand.
- Ask your English teacher to show you examples of grammar and sentence structure in your old essays that could be improved.
- Practice good grammar and sentence structure by editing your essays carefully.

Improve your math skills.

- Practice being careful when you solve problems in homework and on tests. Always check your work when you have time.
- Practice solving complicated math problems that ask you to use reading skills and logic as well as many different math skills.

- Review what you learned in Algebra I and Geometry.
- Ask your math teacher for help with any areas you don't understand.
- Solve extra math problems when you need more practice.

Learn about the new SAT.

- Ask your teachers and counselor for other ways to prepare.
- Review the sample questions and information on this site.

Take the new PSAT/NMSQT[®] in 2004.

- The new PSAT/NMSQT will give you a chance to practice for the new SAT.
- Your PSAT/NMSQT Score Report *Plus* will show you which skills you need to improve the most.
- Your PSAT/NMSQT Score Report *Plus* will include practice questions for the new SAT, including advanced Math topics.

Keep an eye out for future practice opportunities.

- In fall 2004, the online SAT Learning Center[™] will include new SAT sample questions.
- When you register for the new SAT, you'll receive a free guide to preparing for the SAT, including sample questions.

How Scores Will Change

Each section of the test will be scored using the familiar scale of 200-800, and scores for the current and future tests will remain equivalent. The new writing test will also be scored using a scale of 200-800.

The new SAT will provide you, your high school counselor and admissions offices with three separate scores: math, critical reading, and writing. Two subscores will be given for the writing section: a multiple-choice subscore on a scale of 20-80, and an essay subscore, on a scale of 2-12.

Scoring the Essay

The essay will be scored by experienced and trained high school and college teachers. Each essay will be scored by two people who won't know each other's score. They won't know your identity or school either. Each reader will give the essay a score from 1 to 6 (6 is the highest score) based on the overall quality of the essay and your demonstration of writing competence. The two scores will then be added together to arrive at your essay subscore.

Spelling, Punctuation, and Handwriting

Even with some errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar, you can still get a top score on the essay. The essay will be scored using a holistic approach. That means readers will consider the essay as a total piece of work and will judge it on the overall impression it produces. Handwriting will not count against you, but essay readers must be able to read your writing in order to score your essay, so you should try to write legibly.

FAQs

[Will I be taking the new SAT?](#)

[If I already took the old SAT, should I take the new one too?](#)

[What will the new SAT cost? What about fee waivers?](#)

[Will the new SAT be harder?](#)

[Will the test be longer?](#)

[What will the new SAT scores look like?](#)

[What will I be asked to write about in the essay?](#)

[Will colleges see my essay? How will they use the new writing score?](#)

[What about students with disabilities?](#)

[Will the PSAT/NMSQT[®] change too?](#)

[Will the SAT II: Writing Test still be offered after the new SAT is introduced?](#)

Q: Will I be taking the new SAT?

The test begins with the class of 2006, so it will be given starting in March 2005.

Q: If I already took the old SAT, should I take the new one too?

You should check with each college to which you are applying. Some colleges might accept scores from either the current or new SAT for students entering college in 2006. However, many colleges will require the new SAT with writing for students graduating from high school in 2006.

Q: What will the new SAT cost? What about fee waivers?

The test fee will increase by \$10 to \$12. Continuing our current policy, disadvantaged students can apply for fee waivers to cover test fees.

Q: Will the new SAT be harder?

The new SAT will be different, not necessarily harder. A few math questions on the new SAT will cover some topics from Algebra II. However, the test will still measure reasoning ability and problem-solving skills gained through activities and learning in and out of school. The critical reading section may actually seem easier than the current verbal section to students who don't like analogies. With the addition of the writing section, students will have the opportunity to demonstrate how they have learned to organize and express their thoughts.

Q: Will the test be longer?

The total testing time for the new SAT will be 3 hours and 45 minutes.

Q: What will the new SAT scores look like?

The new SAT will have three scores, each on the familiar scale of 200-800. Your score will include writing (W 200-800), mathematics (M 200-800), and critical reading (CR 200-800). Your math and reading scores can be compared to the existing math and verbal scores. This is something colleges need for consistency in admissions requirements. However, the SAT writing score is completely new.

Q: What will I be asked to write about in the essay?

The essay question will ask you to take a position on an issue and support it persuasively with examples from your studies and experience. It will be an open-ended question so you can answer it successfully in many different ways. You won't have to have any prior knowledge about the topic to write an effective essay.

Q: Will colleges see my essay? How will they use the new writing score?

A college will be able to view and print your essay only if you send that college your test scores. Different colleges will use your writing score in different ways. Writing scores may be used for admissions decisions and possibly for placement in English Composition courses. However, for the first few years, some schools may choose to use writing scores for research purposes only, and not for decisions about admission or placement.

Q: What about students with disabilities?

College Board's policies for students with disabilities are not changing, and still apply to the new SAT. Students with disabilities, whose documentation has been validated by the College Board, will be provided testing accommodations. Students with disabilities that preclude them from writing legibly will be given the same accommodations they would presently receive for taking the SAT II: Writing Test. [Learn more about Services for Students with Disabilities](#)

Q: Will the PSAT/NMSQT change too?

Yes, beginning in the fall of 2004, the PSAT/NMSQT, which is typically taken by sophomores and juniors, will include many changes similar to those on the new SAT. However, the PSAT/NMSQT will not include an essay. In addition, there will be no third-year college preparatory math questions in the math section of the PSAT/NMSQT, but there will be additional concepts in numbers and operations, algebra and geometry.

Q: Will the SAT II: Writing Test still be offered after the new SAT is introduced?

When the new SAT is introduced in March 2005, it will include a writing section with content similar to the SAT II: Writing Test. For this reason, the SAT II: Writing Test will no longer be offered after January 22, 2005. To determine which SAT II: Subject Tests you should take for college admissions, talk to your counselor and check with the college admissions offices.