

## The National College Planning Summit

### The New SAT! Learn What Is Changing And How To Prepare!

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**1. For our listeners who are unfamiliar with the SAT test, can you give us a brief History of the SAT?**

- a. The first SAT was introduced in 1926 and has gone through various changes over the years.
- b. The last major change was in 2005 when the 2400 grading scale was introduced with the advent of the new Writing section.
- c. SAT has always tested Math & Verbal skills.

**2. How do colleges use SAT scores?**

- a. It is a metric to evaluate applicants for admission purposes.
- b. It is also used for scholarship purposes as well. It is an opportunity for students to get money for college by doing as well as they can on the test.

**3. How many students took the SAT from the Class of 2015?**

- a. 1.7 million in 2014

**4. How many students received a perfect score? What is the average score?**

- a. 583 received a perfect score of 2400 -which is well under 1%.
- b. The Average SATscore is 1490 - which is approximately 500 in Reading, Math and Writing.
- c. It is important for students to understand that the average is right around 1500. It is very different from tests that students take in high school where they are scored on a scale of 0 to 100.
- d. Many schools accept scores around 1500 in the 1300 -1400 or 1600 -1700 range.
- e. The higher the score, the more opportunities there can be for the student.

**5. How is the new SAT different than the current test?**

- a. The redesigned SAT launches in March 2016.
- b. The scoring will go back to 1600.
- c. The Essay will be optional.

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### 6. How many sections will the new SAT have?

- a. 4 required sections and 1 optional section which is the Essay.
  - i. Reading - 52 questions and 65 minutes to complete
  - ii. Writing & Language - 44 questions and 35 minutes
  - iii. Math - No Calculator allowed - 20 questions 25minutes
  - iv. Math - Calculator allowed - 38 questions 55 minutes
  - v. Optional Essay will occur at the end and will be 50 minutes.
- b. There are fewer sections but the sections are longer.

### 7. How is the SAT scored?

- a. Scoring the SAT is going back to 1600.
- b. The total score will be reported from the 2 sections.
  - i. Section One is Evidenced Based Reading & Writing or what used to be called Verbal.
  - ii. Section Two is Math.
- c. The two Section Scores will make up the total score. The top score is 1600.

### 8. What are the other scoring changes?

- a. Test scores are based on the Reading Test, the Writing Test and the Math Test.
- b. Each test is scored from 10 - 40 as well as the 2 cross test scores. The 2 cross test scores are "Analysis in History or Social Studies" and the "Analysis in Science."
- c. These 2 cross test scores will span the Reading, Writing & Language, and Math Tests.
- d. All of these scores put together, going from the top down - from the broadest to more specific, will result in 7 sub scores.
  - i. The Reading, Writing & Language test together will have 2 sub scores which are the "Command of Evidence" and "Words in Context."
  - ii. The Writing & Language test will exclusively have the "Expression of Ideas" sub score and the "Standard English Convention" sub score.
  - iii. And the Math test will have its own 3 sub scores involving "Heart of Algebra," "Problem Solving and Data Analysis" and "Passport to Advanced Math."
- e. The new Essay will have 3 scores which are Reading, Analysis, and Writing. (The current SAT Essay score is a single score.)

### 9. What is the purpose of all the sub scores? Is it for the students or the colleges and universities?

- a. It is more for the high schools and colleges and universities.

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- b. College Board says the new SAT will help colleges form a clearer picture of the student and their readiness for college.
- c. Sub scores will help educators and students monitor growth across the grades in school and identify areas that need improvement.

### 10. Can you review the 4 required sections?

- a. 4 required - Reading, Writing & Language, Math No Calculator, and Math Calculator Allowed.
- b. The Reading and Writing & Language will make up one element where the top score is 800 and the 2 Math Sections will make up the other element where the top score is 800 and the two section scores added together will give the student their score where 1600 is the top score.

### 11. How long is the test?

- a. 3 hours
- b. With the optional essay- 3 hours 50 minutes.
- c. On test day, students need to be focused for about 5 hours – starting with reporting to the testing center, following the directions of the administrators and proctors and then taking the test.

### 12. How many answer choices are there for each question?

- a. 4 answer choices for every multiple choice question. This reduces the possibility of incorrect answers.
- b. For some of the math problems the student will have to write in (actually “bubble in” the corresponding numbers.)

### 13. Is there a penalty for guessing?

- a. There is no penalty for guessing or incorrect answers.
  - i. In the past, for incorrect answers students have been docked one quarter point off the raw score.
  - ii. Wrong answers do not result in a penalty in the redesigned SAT.
- b. What this means is- no question should be left blank.

### 14. Can you take the SAT on computer?

- a. College Board originally said there would be a computer based option, but at this time, the Princeton Review has not received any information about that.
- b. It will remain a pencil and paper test.

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### 15. What is changing in the Reading section?

- a. No more SAT words - no more sentence completions that strictly test vocabulary.
- b. Instead there will five longer 500-750 word passages with 10-11 questions each. Some passages may have graphics and 1 or 2 questions may relate to graphs, tables or chart.
- c. Not just comprehension of passages but comprehension of data.

### 16. What about the Writing & Language section?

- a. On the current SAT, 43 of 49 questions are single sentence based.
- b. In the new SAT, every “Writing & Language” question will be passage based.
- c. Students will have to check punctuation, conjunctions, and transitions with respect to surrounding sentences.
- d. There will be 4 passages with 11 questions each.
- e. There are a few graphics based questions.

### 17. Is reading is the best way to prepare for the test?

- a. Reading articles online, or in a newspaper, for 10 or 15 minutes at a time would help students sustain a high level of concentration and focus.

### 18. Should students read novels or articles about current events or magazine articles?

- a. Both - the passage content in the reading section will be based on history, literature and science. To practice reading and focusing, the student should read whatever they enjoy reading the most. Then diversifying into history, literature, or science would be helpful too.

### 19. What about the Math sections?

- a. Section 3 is Math No Calculator. There will be theory and real world applications of algebra and arithmetic. There will be much less plane geometry. There will be questions dealing with trigonometry and other advanced math concepts that have been historically reserved for the Math Subject Test.
- b. What this means – Students will need to know how to solve the question algebraically AND be able to translate a real world problem and build equations from that. Here is an example of a real word question:
  - i. Telephone Carrier “A” charges 1 dollar for the first minute and 5 cents for each additional minute. What is the algebraic equation of this?
  - ii.  $1 + .05(X - 1)$
- c. This tests the Student’s ability to put together an equation based on translating English into Math.

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- i. Students will have to break down the problem, not just the numbers, but how they relate to each other.
- ii. Once that is deduced, they have to translate that to the corresponding math operations.

### 20. How should students prepare?

- a. When students are first learning algebra they learn to solve for variables.
- b. Once they get into advanced algebra, they start to learn how to construct equations based on word problems or stories.
- c. First master how to solve problems algebraically and once they understand that, they should go through SAT prep materials or advanced algebra books on how to translate English into Math.

### 21. What is the format of the Optional Essay?

- a. For the current SAT, students are given a prompt and then have to support their views on that topic.
- b. For the redesigned SAT, the essay will have a passage 80-90 lines long. The student will have to read and analyze the passage for the author's tone and effectiveness of the author's argument in that passage and then write a very convincing essay in which he/she is able to analyze the author's position.
- c. Students will be scored on their ability to pull excerpts from the passage in their defense.
- d. This is the type of situation students will encounter in the working world –They will read, pull information and then write an analysis about it.
- e. The time limit for the essay is 50 minutes.

### 22. Where do student register?

- a. [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)–This is the official SAT website.
- b. The cost is \$43 without the essay and \$54.50 with the essay.
- c. Fee waivers are available - investigate those options from College Board.

### 23. When does the student receive their scores?

- a. Approximately 3 weeks after the test.
- b. The first new SAT will be in March 2016 and those scores won't be released until May or June.
- c. College Board will need to analyze the results from the inaugural test.

### 24. Where do you find out the scores?

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- a. Students will log into their College Board account.

### 25. How are scores sent to individual colleges?

- a. Students don't send scores directly to the colleges - College Board sends the SAT scores to the colleges at the request of the student.
- b. Students enter codes that correspond to the colleges where they want the scores sent.
- c. When you register, four scores are included in your test fee. Additional scores cost \$11.25 each. (fee waivers are available)

### 26. After I've taken the SAT, can I get copy of the test & the answers?

- a. Every test has the Student Answer Service – this tells the question number they missed.
- b. Question and Answer Service – For the January, May and October test, the student can get their test booklet and see the questions that they missed.
- c. [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org) can answer all your questions about the SAT.

### 27. Are students in the Class of 2016 impacted by new SAT?

- a. They are not impacted by new SAT (unless they have opted to do Rolling Admissions)

### 28. How will the Class of 2017 be impacted?

- a. Current High School Juniors will have option to take the current SAT, the redesigned SAT, and the ACT.
- b. Check each college's website to determine their policies regarding the new SAT.
- c. Scores from the redesigned SAT will not be mixed with scores from the current SAT.
  - i. Example - You cannot take the Reading score from the current SAT and the Math score from the redesigned SAT.

### 29. How should students decide which is the best test to take?

- a. We encourage students to take a practice, full length, proctored test for the three tests.
- b. Actually sitting down and taking all 3 tests is the best way to determine which is the best test for you.
- c. You don't need to study for any test before you take the 3 tests.

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- d. The student's experience during the test is as important as the score itself.
- e. Students need to ask "Which test felt most comfortable?"
- f. Then concentrate preparing for just one test.

### 30. Do you have any other tips for deciding which test to take?

- a. It is so important to understand the structure of each test - Which areas are the student's strongest points and which are the student's weakest points?
- b. Knowing exactly which areas to work on and then going in and working practice problems is a much more beneficial way to prepare than to repeatedly take tests and look at results.
  - i. Identifying areas of strength and weakness is super important.
  - ii. Just like a race car needs to go back to the garage for tune-ups, students need to "tune-up" particular skills.

### 31. How much time should I allow to prepare for taking the test?

- a. At least 1-2 months prior to test date.
- b. While it doesn't require memorization, it is a skills based standardized test.
  - i. Students need to practice their skills over time - you don't prepare for a marathon in one week.
  - ii. Prior to the marathon you are working on stretching, nutrition, training so that on marathon day you are ready.
  - iii. Test prep is the same way.
- c. Take a baseline test to see what areas you need to work on.
- d. Testing is game day!

### 32. Is it valuable to practice under timed conditions –either individual sections or a full length test?

- a. Yes, you build success not by cramming 5 hours the day before the test but by preparing well for 20 minutes every day with one or two goals in mind.
- b. Doing a little bit everyday - consistently - is the best preparation.

### 33. What advice do you have for students who are only taking the new SAT? How should they approach it?

- a. Learn everything you can about the test. [www.princetonreview.com](http://www.princetonreview.com) has great resources to help you.
- b. New SAT - Math
  - i. Identify which areas you need to review and practice your problem solving skills.

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- ii. A really great way to prepare for the Math Without Calculator is to do multiplication and addition in your head. Review your flash cards! Work on basic computation without a calculator.
- c. New SAT – Reading
  - i. Read an entire article in one sitting and once you have practiced that - diversify your reading into more "SAT related" topics such as history, literature and science.
  - ii. Finally, take a timed full length practice test - no distractions and no cell phones!

### 34. How should students prepare for the optional essay?

- a. First, find out from the college if the essay will be required, if it is not, then there is no reason to take it.
- b. If your college does require it, then you need to practice.
- c. Write a short synopsis of an article you just read.
  - i. Give the synopsis to a friend to read, and see if they are able to understand the article based on your synopsis.
- d. This is a great exercise to do once or twice a week –It sharpens your reading and processing skills.

### 35. What advice do you have for students who say, “I don't do well with the pressure of standardized tests?”

- a. This is totally understandable. At Princeton Review, we don't underestimate the pressure of this high stakes test.
- b. Start early. Do a little at a time - be goal oriented and don't feel you have to get your target score in 1 or 2 weeks.
- c. The best way to prepare is have a strategy in place. Plan ahead & set smaller goals.
  - i. “Today I'm going to review all my multiplication tables and get everyone right.”
  - ii. “Tomorrow I'm going to learn how to effectively use the semicolon.”
  - iii. “The next day I'm going to read 3 paragraphs of something I'm not necessarily that interested in and still write a good synopsis of it.”
- d. Good preparation and understanding the test structure will help lessen the anxiety and pressure of the test because you will know what to expect.

### 36. What resources are available on [www.princetonreview.com](http://www.princetonreview.com)?

- a. Admissions information for colleges including costs.
- b. There is a College Search function.
- c. Majors Search function - to help students decide their major.



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- d. Test prep for college and graduate school.
- e. CollegeGuides and Test Prep Books. (The Best 380 Colleges and Cracking the New SAT)
- f. Students can take a complimentary free test at Princeton Review offices nationwide.

**At Princeton Review we teach our students how to prepare and complete the test effectively and we give them strategies and techniques that are built to raise their confidence levels.**