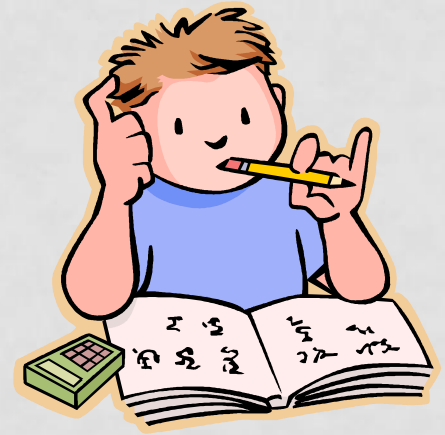


SAT TEST PREPARATION & TEST TAKING STRATEGIES

TOPICS

1. What is the SAT?
2. Test Anxiety
3. Study Strategies
4. Test Taking Strategies
5. Self-Care



SAT?

What is it? As the nation's most widely used college admission test, the SAT is the first step toward higher education for students of all backgrounds. It's taken by more than two million students every year and is accepted by virtually all colleges and universities. When used in combination with high school GPA, SAT scores are shown to be the best predictors of a student's potential to succeed in college. The SAT covers core content areas deemed essential for success in college — reading, mathematics, and writing and language. The SAT is connected to the College Board's earlier grade college readiness assessments, which work together to provide an ongoing grade-level picture of a student's progress.

WHAT'S THE PURPOSE OF THE TEST?

- ▶ Read, analyze, and use reasoning to comprehend challenging literary and informational texts, including texts on science and history/social studies topics, to demonstrate and expand their knowledge and understanding;
- ▶ Revise and edit extended texts across a range of academic and career-related subjects for expression of ideas and to show facility with a core set of grammar, usage, and punctuation conventions;
- ▶ Show command of a focused but powerful set of knowledge, skills, and understandings in math and apply that ability to solve problems situated in science, social studies, and career-related contexts;
- ▶ Make careful and considered use of evidence as they read and write;

- ▶ Demonstrate skill in analyzing data, including data represented graphically in tables, graphs, charts, and other formats, in reading, writing, and math contexts; and
- ▶ Reveal an understanding of relevant words in context and how word choice helps shape meaning and tone.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PSAT AND SAT

PSAT 8/9	PSAT/NMSQT AND PSAT 10	SAT
Draw a fairly simple, one-step conclusion spelled out clearly in text.	Draw an inference to reach the right conclusion.	Perform several steps to draw the right conclusion.
Identify relationships based on multiple, fairly straightforward pieces of information stated in the text.	Infer somewhat more complicated relationships based on more subtle pieces of information stated in the text.	Infer more complex relationships from the text by piecing facts or incidents together.
Determine explicit meaning from the graphic or text.	Recognize trends in graphical data.	Synthesize information from a graphic and passage.

WRITING AND LANGUAGE

PSAT 8/9

Use punctuation effectively in simple contexts, such as using commas to separate items in a list.

Edit straightforward sentences that pose some challenges, such as sentences with an introductory phrase.

Accurately incorporate basic information from graphics into a text.

PSAT/NMSQT AND PSAT 10

Use punctuation effectively in somewhat challenging contexts, such as using a colon to introduce a list.

Edit compound and complex sentences, including sentences with introductory phrases and clauses.

Accurately incorporate somewhat detailed or nuanced information from graphics into a text.

SAT

Use punctuation effectively in challenging contexts, such as using a semicolon to link independent clauses.

Edit syntactically challenging sentences, such as lengthy sentences that include several clauses.

Incorporate accurate, specific, and complex information from graphics into a text.

HOW WILL I BE TIMED ON THE NEW SAT?



COMPARISON OF THE MAJOR FEATURES: CURRENT SAT AND REDESIGNED SAT

CATEGORY	CURRENT SAT	REDESIGNED SAT
Total Testing Time	3 hours and 45 minutes	3 hours (plus 50 minutes for the Essay [optional])
Components	Critical Reading Writing Mathematics Essay	Reading Test Writing and Language Test Math Test Essay (optional)
Important Features	<p>Emphasis on general reasoning skills;</p> <p>Emphasis on vocabulary, often in limited contexts;</p> <p>Complex scoring (a point for a correct answer and a deduction for an incorrect answer; blank responses have no impact on scores).</p>	<p>Continued emphasis on reasoning, alongside a clearer, stronger focus on the knowledge, skills, and understandings most important for college and career readiness and success;</p> <p>Greater emphasis on the meaning of words in extended contexts and on how word choice shapes meaning, tone, and impact;</p> <p>Rights-only scoring (a point for a correct answer but no deduction for an incorrect answer; blank responses have no impact on scores).</p>
Essay	Required and given at the beginning of the SAT; 25 minutes to write the essay. Tests writing skill; students take a position on a presented issue.	Optional and given at the end of the SAT; postsecondary institutions determine whether they will require the essay for admission; 50 minutes to write the essay. Tests reading, analysis, and writing skills; students produce a written analysis of a provided source text.
Score Reporting	Scale ranging from 600 to 2400. Scale ranging from 200 to 800 for Critical Reading; 200 to 800 for Mathematics; 200 to 800 for Writing. Essay results scaled to multiple-choice Writing.	Total score: scale ranges from 400 to 1600. Section score: Scale ranges from 200 to 800, and 10 to 40 on test and cross-test scores. Essay results reported separately, with Reading, Analysis, Writing each reported on a 2 to 8 scale.
Subscore Reporting	None	Subscores on a 1 to 15 scale for every test, providing added insight for students, parents, admission officers, educators, and counselors.

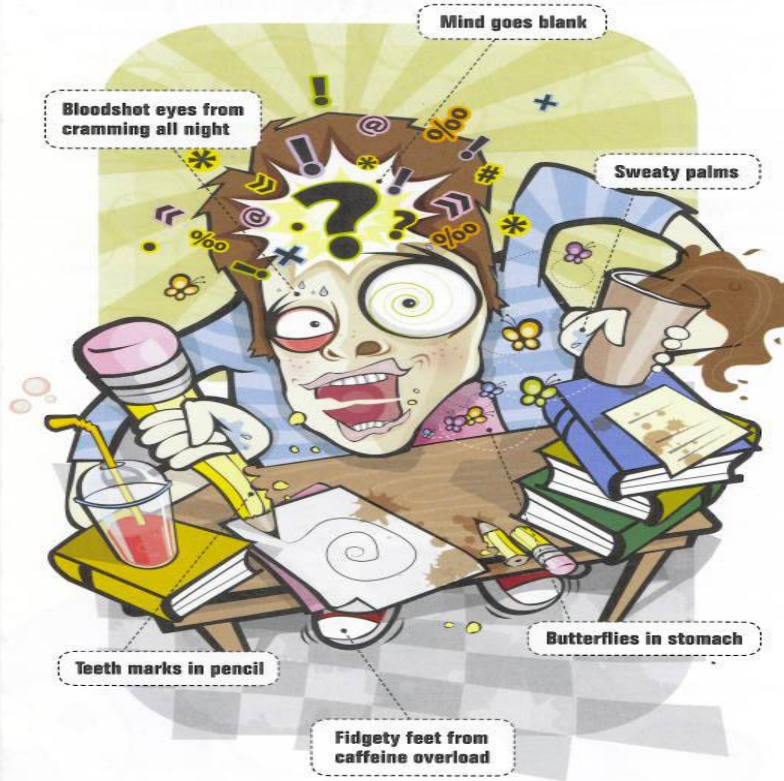
COMPARISON OF TEST LENGTH AND TIMING: CURRENT AND REDESIGNED SAT

CURRENT SAT			REDESIGNED SAT		
Component	Time Allotted (min.)	Number of Questions/ Tasks	Component	Time Allotted (min.)	Number of Questions/ Tasks
Critical Reading	70	67	Reading	65	52
Writing	60	49	Writing and Language	35	44
Essay	25	1	Essay (optional)	50	1
Mathematics	70	54	Math	80	57
Total	225	171	Total	180 (230 with Essay)	153 (154 with Essay)

HELPFUL RESOURCES

- <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/pdf/2015-16-counselor-resource-guide-redesigned-assessments.pdf>

Exam Stress?



It's what you do about it

Stress is a normal part of life. Some situations, like exams, are more stressful than others. It's what you do about it that makes a difference to your well-being.

REDUCING TEST ANXIETY

- Mental Preparation
- Physical Preparation



MENTAL PREPARATION

- What to do before your exam:
 - Be prepared
 - Review Material
 - Don't Cram
 - Arrive at exam location early
- What to do during your exam:
 - Be test wise and have a plan

PHYSICAL PREPARATION

- What to do before your exam:
 - Food
 - Rest
- What to do during your exam:
 - Be comfortable
 - Be aware of environment



TEN TIPS FOR TERRIFIC TEST TAKING



ANALYZE HOW YOU DID ON A SIMILAR TEST IN THE PAST



- Review your previous tests, and sample tests.
- Each test prepares you for the next.



ARRIVE EARLY FOR TESTS



- Before a test, list everything you need for it that is allowed (pencils/pens, calculator, dictionary, watch, etc.).
- Know the schools current policies around exams and expectations.



BE COMFORTABLE BUT ALERT

- Choose a good spot in the room and make sure you have enough space to work.
- Maintain a comfortable posture in your seat and don't "slouch".



STAY RELAXED AND CONFIDENT

- Keep a good attitude.
- Remind yourself that you are well prepared and are going to do well.
- If you find yourself anxious, take several slow, deep breaths to relax.
- Don't talk about the test to other students just before entering the room; anxiety is contagious.



Relax

READ THE DIRECTIONS CAREFULLY

- This may be obvious, but it will help you avoid careless errors.

READ
CAREFULLY



IF THERE IS TIME, QUICKLY LOOK THROUGH THE TEST FOR A PREVIEW



- Note key terms: jot down brief notes.
- If you can, mark the test or answer sheet with comments that come to mind. Ask if that is permitted!!!



ANSWER QUESTIONS IN A STRATEGIC ORDER:

- Answer easy questions first.
- Then answer difficult questions or those with the most point value.
- With objective tests, first eliminate those answers you know to be wrong, or are likely to be wrong, don't seem to fit, or where two options are so similar as to be both incorrect.
- With essay/subjective questions, broadly outline your answer and sequence the order of your points.





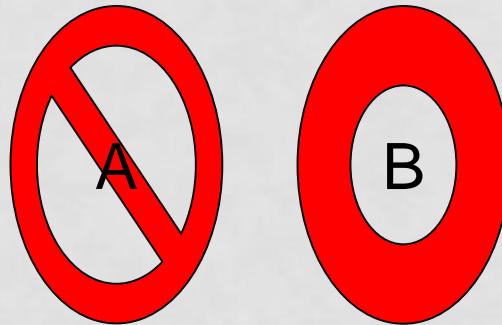
REVIEW

- Resist the urge to leave as soon as you have completed the test. Review and make sure that you:
 - Have answered all the questions
 - Did not mis-mark answers
 - Did not make simple mistakes
- Proofread spelling, grammar, punctuation, decimal points, etc.



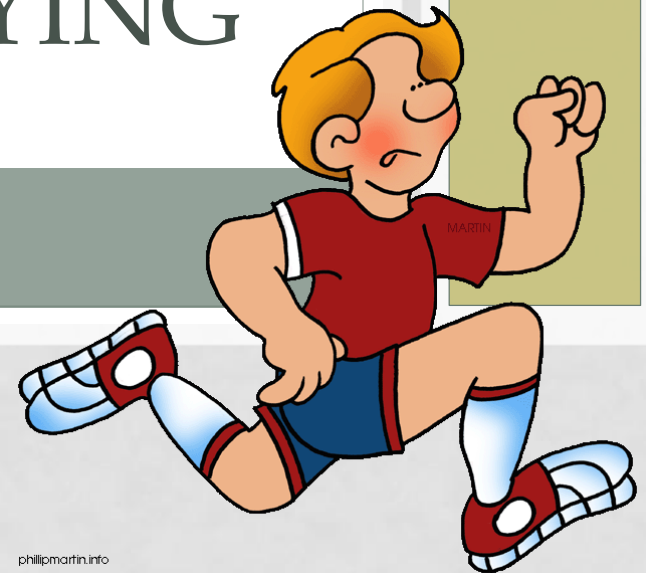
CHANGE ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS IF YOU MADE A MISTAKE, OR MISREAD THE QUESTION!

- Or if you find information elsewhere in the test that indicates that your first choice is incorrect.





SELF CARE STRATEGIES WHILE STUDYING



SLEEP FOR TEENS

- Scientific research shows that to function at your best, you need between 9 and 10 hours of sleep every day.
- This is more sleep than you needed before you were a teenager, and it is more than you will need when you are an adult.
- Teens need more sleep because you are in a time of very fast physical, intellectual and emotional growth.

Make a sleep objective – sleep should be 8 or 9, or even 10 hours of sleep every night.

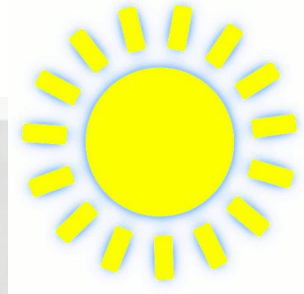
WHY IS SLEEP SO IMPORTANT?

While you are sleeping...

- Your brain is preparing for the next day – forming new pathways to help you learn and remember information.
- Your brain is maintaining a healthy balance of the hormones that make you feel hungry (ghrelin) or full (leptin).

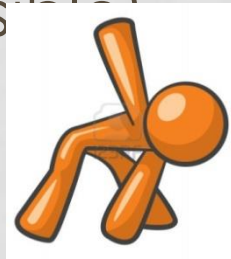
If you're sleep deficient, you have trouble making decisions, solving problems and produce more levels of ghrelin.

DURING THE DAY



DO:

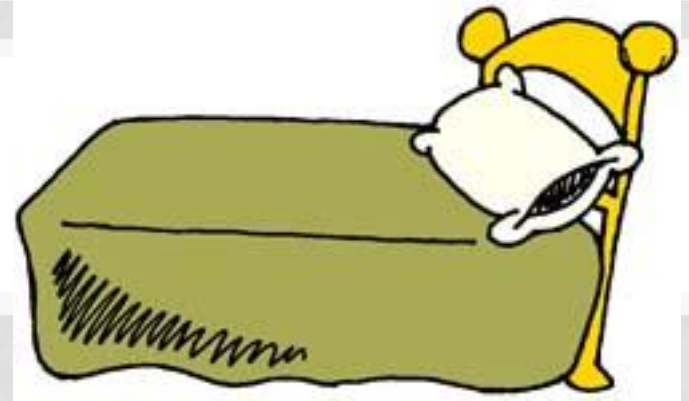
- Get regular exposure to outdoor or bright lights, especially in the late afternoon.
- Good exercise leads to good sleeping (exercise every day if possible)



DON'T:

- Have caffeine in the mid-afternoon/evening (coffee, many teas, chocolate, sodas, energy drinks).
- Take daytime naps (if you do, keep it short – less than 30 minutes).

BEFORE BED...



DO...

- Go to bed at the same time each day (and rise at the same time).
- Have a relaxing bedtime routine.
- Keep the bedroom **dark** enough to facilitate sleep.
- Use your bed **only** for sleep.
- Remove electrical devices (cell phones, radios) from around your head when you sleep. Electromagnetic fields have been found to reduce melatonin levels.



BEFORE BED...

DON'T:

- Engage in stimulating activity, such as playing a video game, watching an exciting program on television, or having an important discussion with a friend.
- Worry time needs to stop well before bed time.
- Read or watch television in bed.
- Got to bed too hungry or too full.
- Take over-the-counter sleeping pills without your doctor's knowledge.

AT NIGHT..

Melatonin:

- Hormone secreted by the pineal gland during the dark phase of the day-night cycle.
- Peaks between 2:00 am – 4:00 am in the morning.



ON WEEKENDS

- On weekends, no matter how late you go to bed, try to get up within 2 hrs to 4 hrs of your usual wake time.



NUTRITIOUS FOODS



- Eat “REAL” food
- Learn to recognize true hunger and fullness. Skip the urge to nibble while you are studying or if you are stressed.
- There should be **2 hours** between meals and snacks
- Beverages should include only water – milk is considered part of a snack.
- Skip the juice – eat the fruit/vegetable instead.

HEALTHY SNACKS WHILE STUDYING

- Snacks are important during adolescence (body needs more nutrients to grow)

What is a snack?

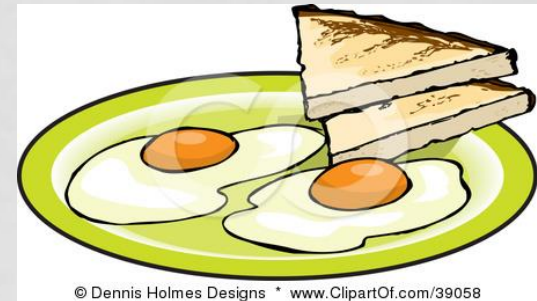
- Smaller than a meal – usually 2 food groups.
- Keeps your blood glucose (sugar) stable throughout the day.
- Snacks should be 200 calories or less.

Example: Apples slices and peanut butter

PRE-EXAM EATING

Choose a meal that prevents hunger, provides lots of energy and doesn't leave you with an upset stomach

- High carbohydrate choices (grains, fruits and vegetables) with small amounts of protein and fat is best.



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Eat.... Porridge or whole grain cereals with milk (dairy, soy or rice milk), wholegrain toast with nut butter, yoghurt and fresh fruit and eggs on toast.

THE FACTS ON CAFFEINE...

How much is too much?

Health Canada (HC) has not developed definitive advice for adolescents 13 and older because of insufficient data.

- HC suggests daily caffeine intake to be no more than 2.5mg/kg body weight.

EFFECTS OF CAFFEINE...

- Mild stimulant of the central nervous system
- It triggers an adrenaline rush—a false sense of energy.

Side effects include:

Increased heart rate

Change in mood

Stomach upset
sleeping

Nervousness

Restlessness

Irritability

Trouble

Headaches

THE IMPORTANCE OF EXERCISE



- Boosts your brain power
- The hormone, epinephrine, stimulated by exercise increases your awareness
- Improves attention, speed of processing and ability to perform cognitive tasks
- When you are exercising you change your blood chemistry making more nutrients available to the brain.

HOW MUCH EXERCISE?



- Youth aged 12-17 years should accumulate at least **60** minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity daily.

Every 50 minutes you study, spend 10 minutes moving around.

If you spend 4 hours studying with active breaks – you will have already completed 40 minutes of physical activity.

REMEMBER!

Always have a **PLAN**

- Prepare nutritious snacks before studying (if you are not at home).
- Schedule your day so you can go to bed on-time
- Make time for exercise.