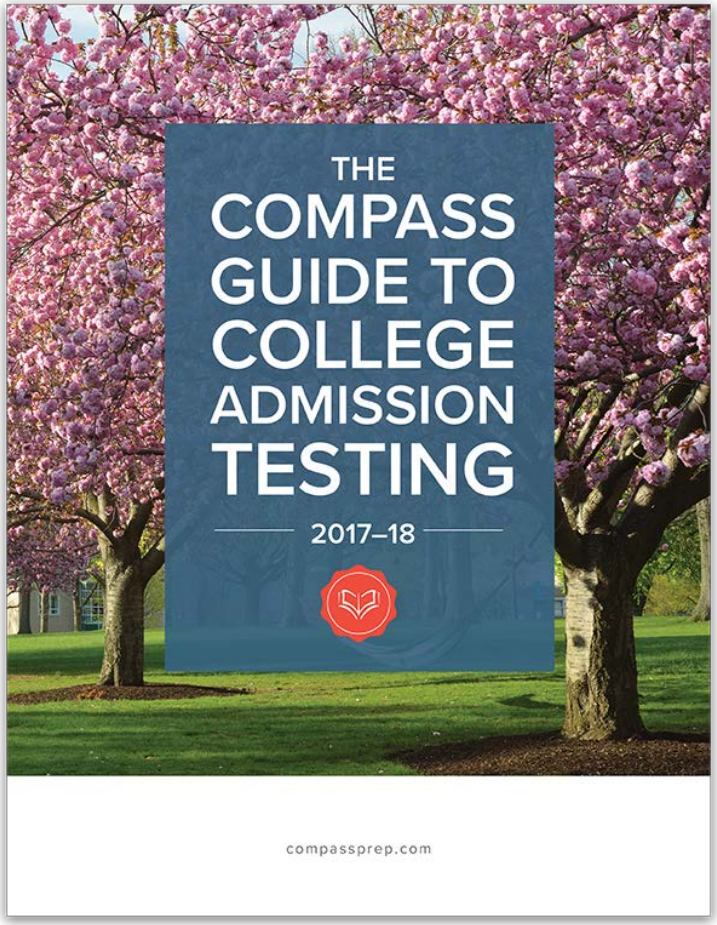
Navigating College Admission Tests

Redwood High School

Bruce Reed
Co-Founder
Compass Education Group

Beyond Tonight's Presentation



compassprep.com/schools/redwood

COMPASS EDUCATION GROUP

Please fill out this form to receive information on practice test opportunities and other helpful resources.

Student Name

School

Class Year

Parent Name

Parent Phone Number

Parent Email Address

Holistic Review

GPA

Rigor

Test Scores

Recommendation Letters

Personal Essay

Interview

AP/IB Scores

Demonstrated interest

Extracurriculars

Work / Internships

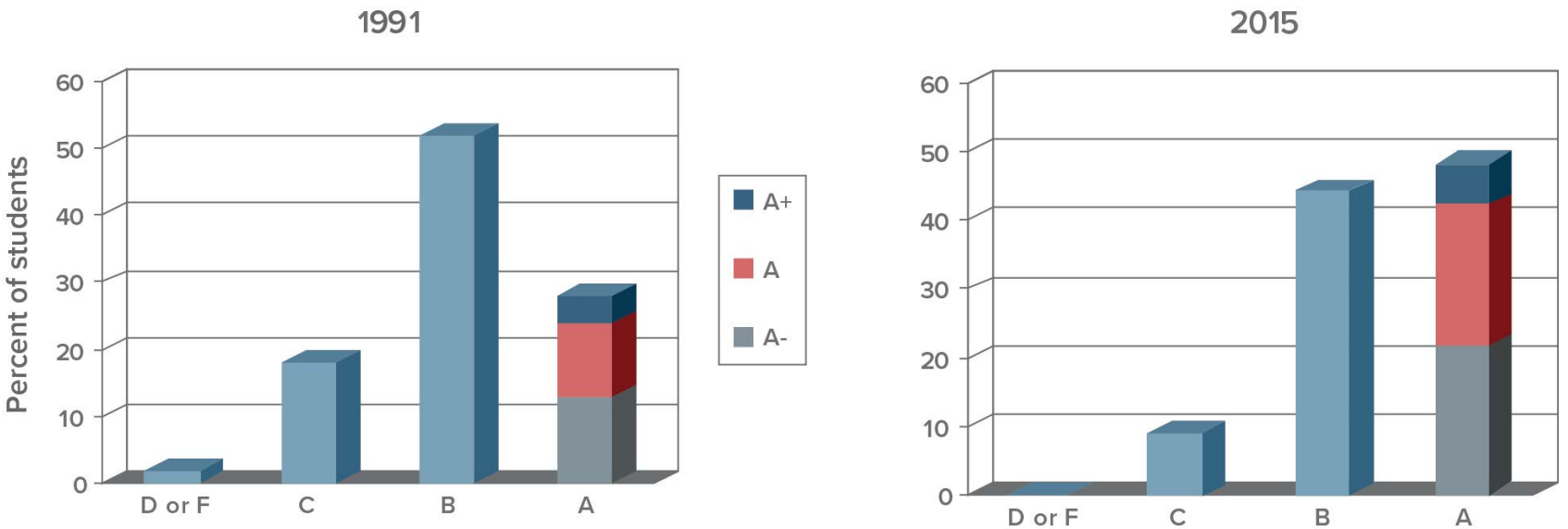
Class Rank

“A Maddening Mishmash of Competing Objectives”

Eric Hoover, NYT

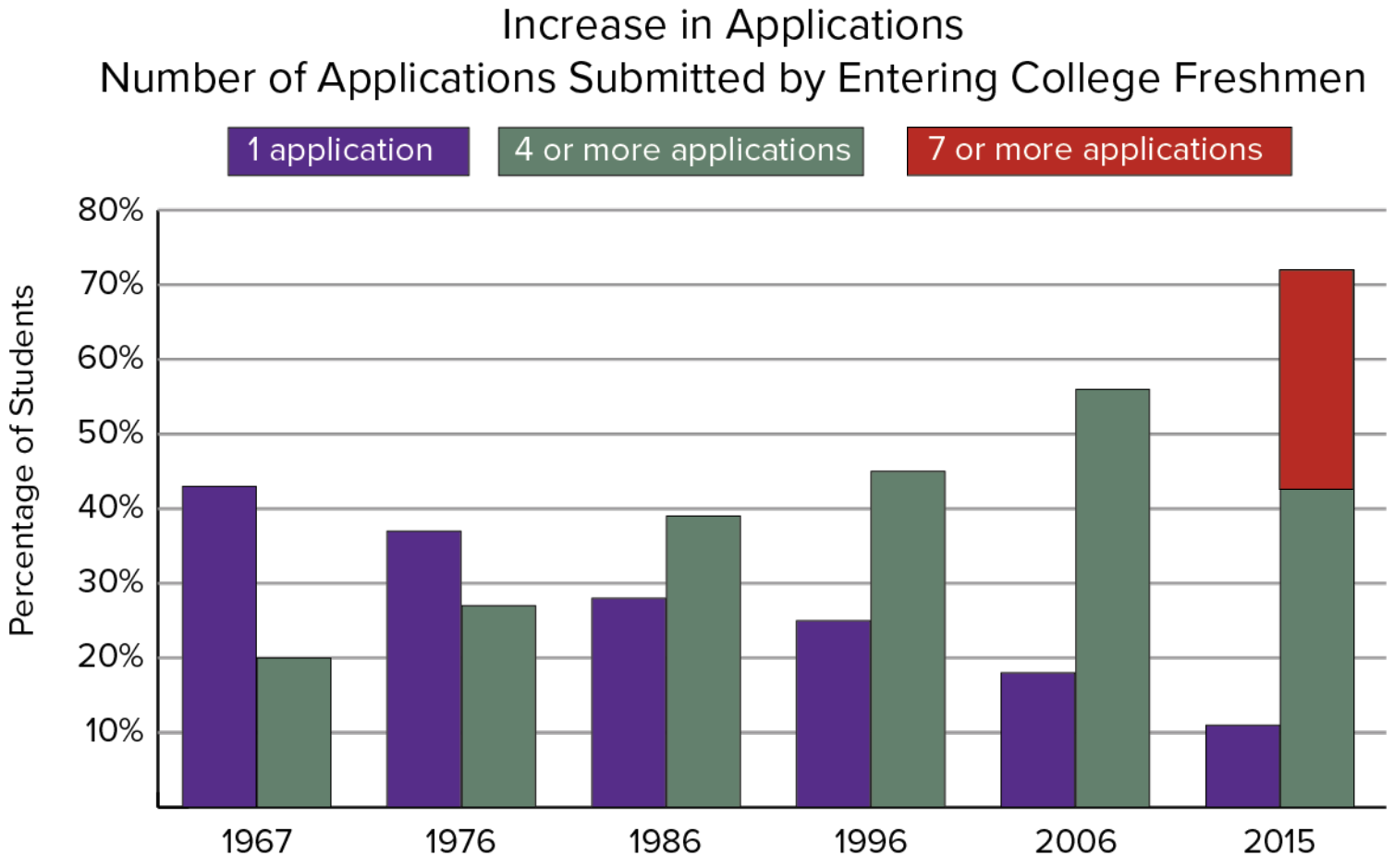
- Geography
- Legacy Status
- Ability to Pay
- Athletic Recruit
- Gender
- First Generation
- Socioeconomics
- Special Talent

Grade Inflation



Source: College Board

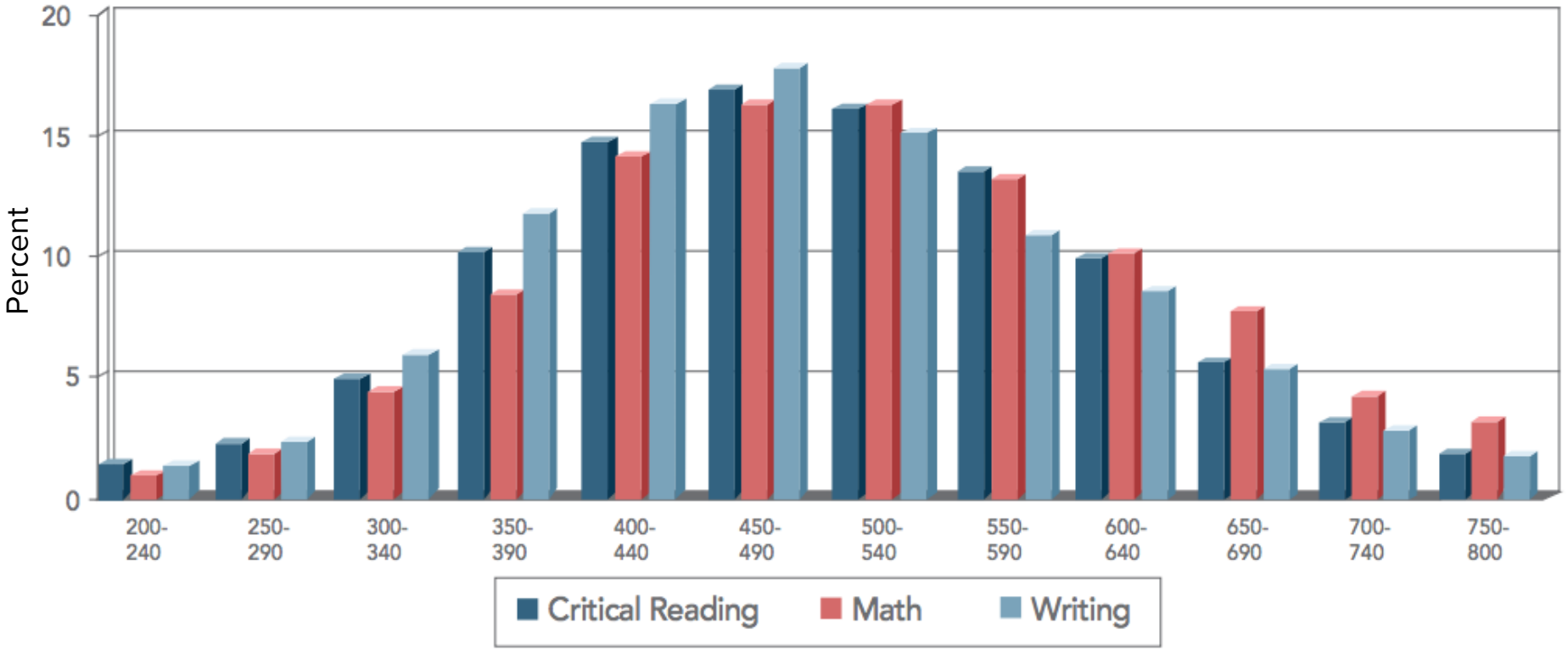
Application Bubble



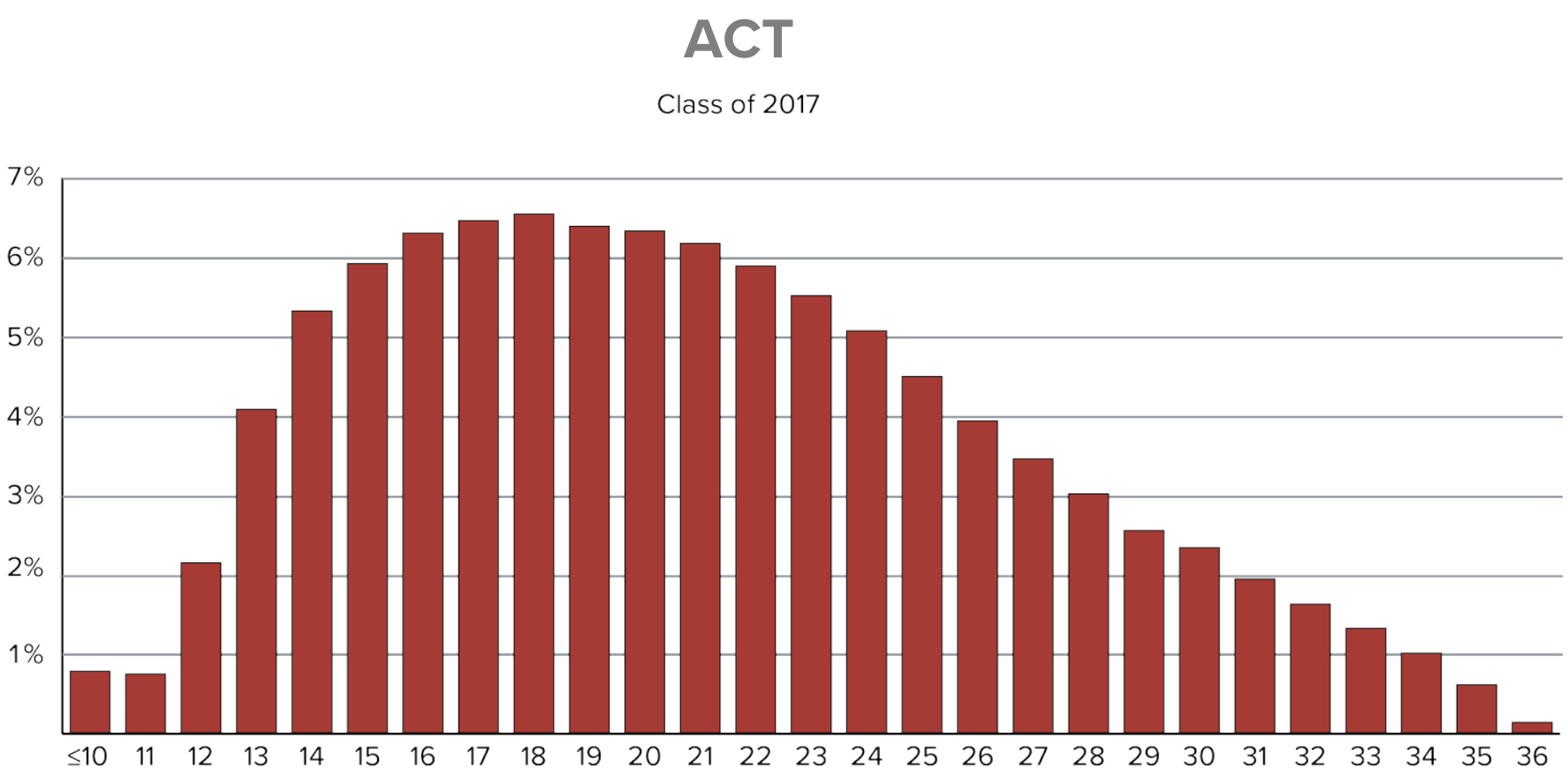
Source: Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA

Mean = Median = Mode

SAT (2015)

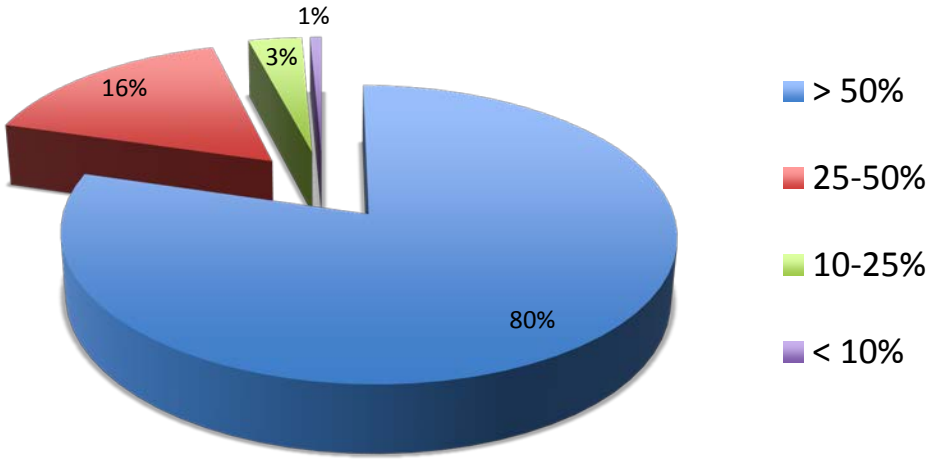


Different Test, Same Story



Advantage: Students (in most cases)

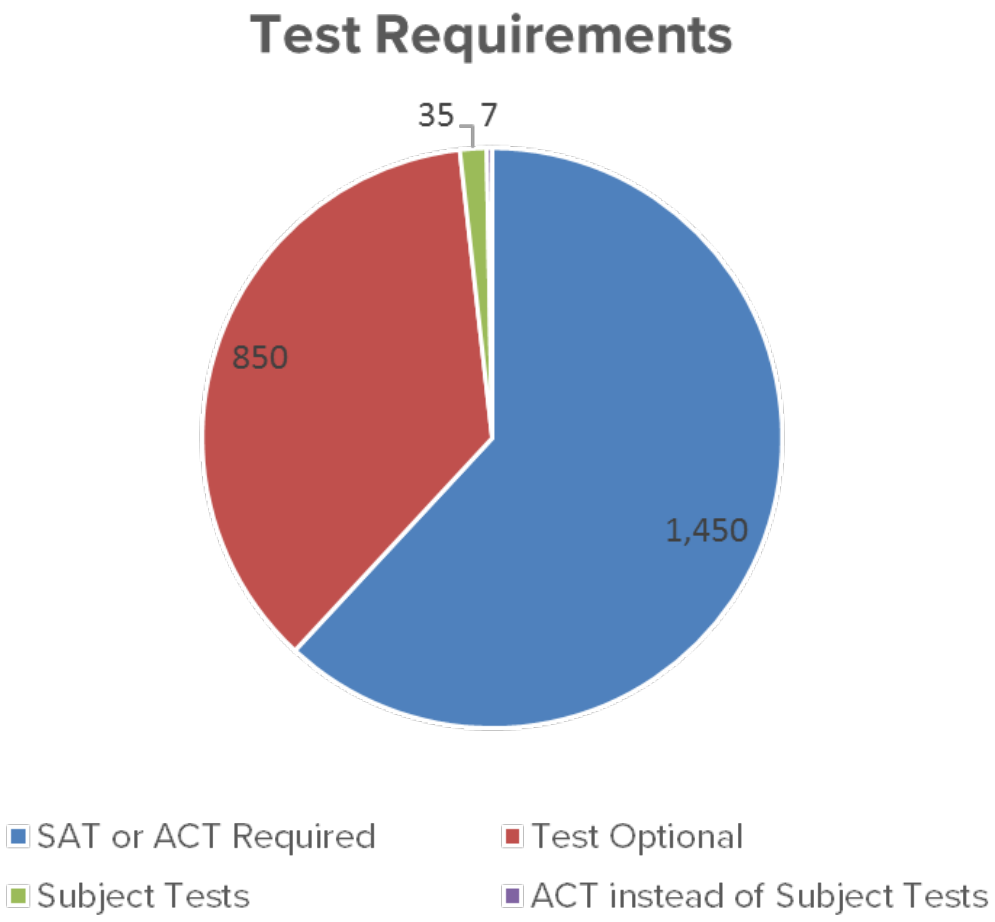
Enrollment by Admission Rate



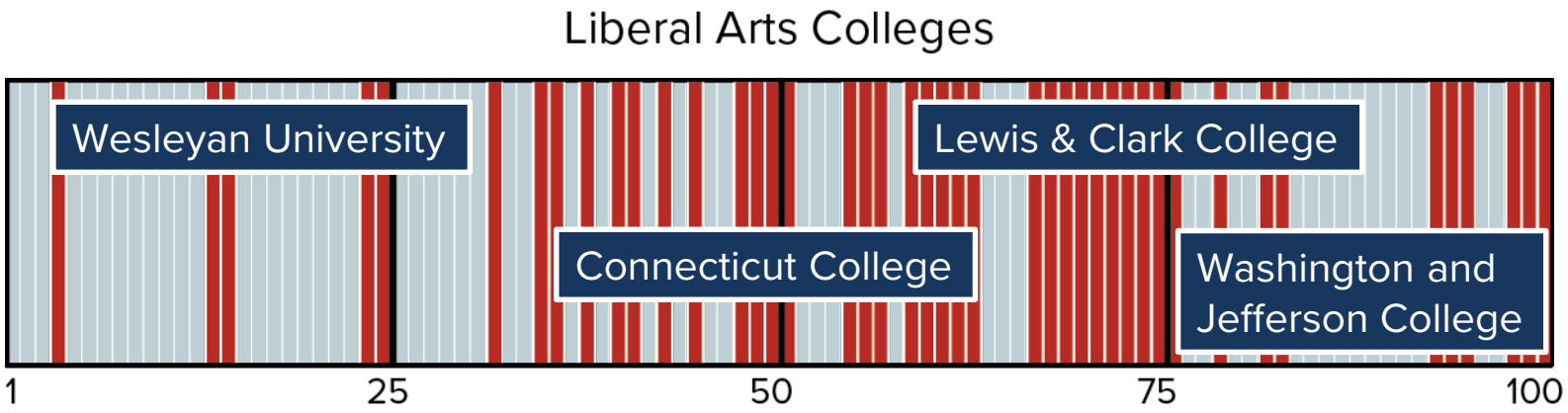
- **Admit Rate: ~ 70%**
- **Yield: ~ 33%**

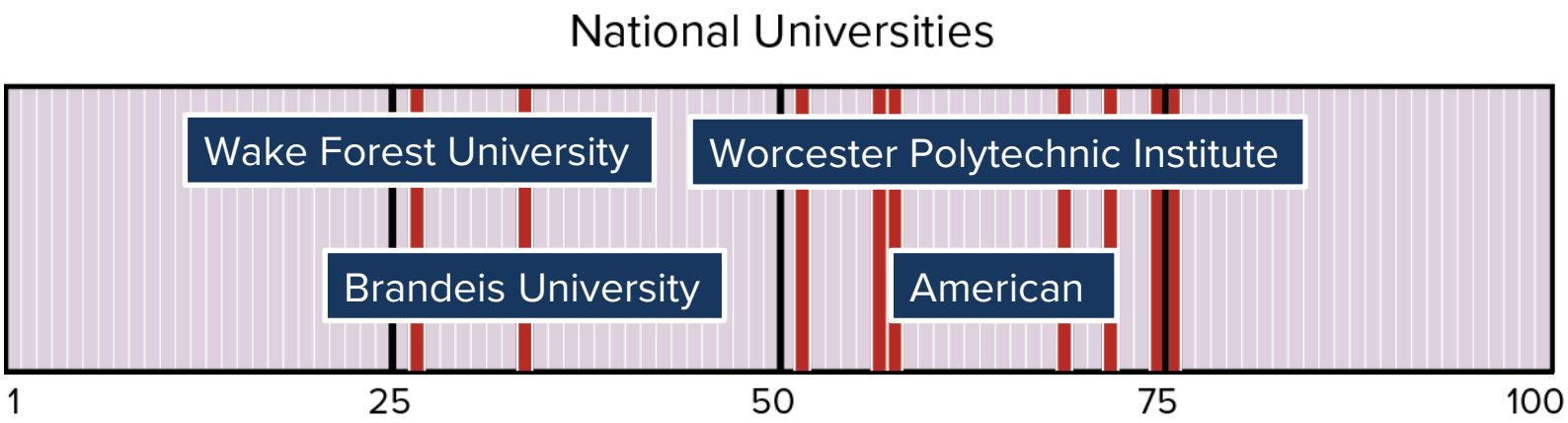
*Stanford (<5%) denied 70% of applicants with **perfect test scores***

Testing Pathways



Test-Optional

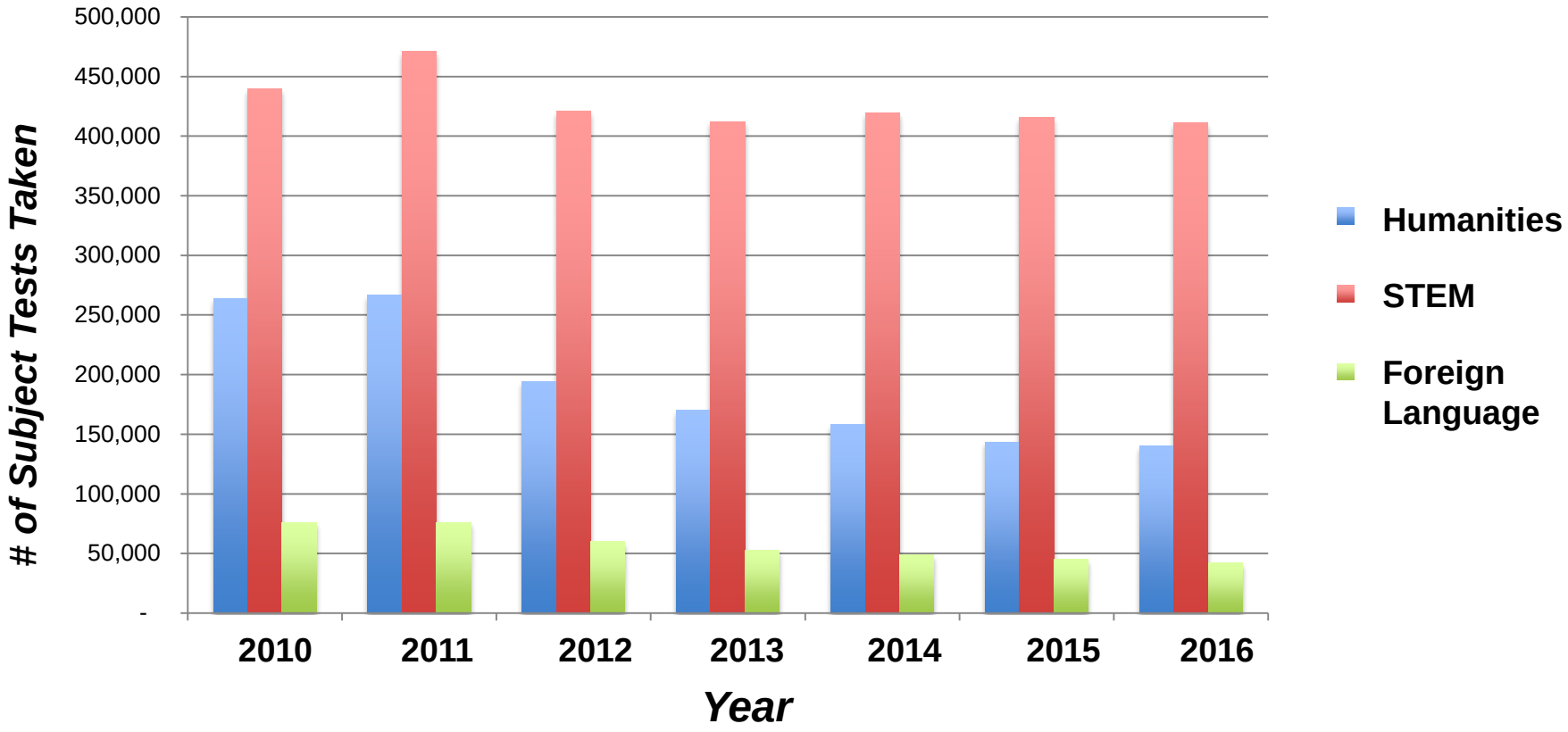




Subject Tests: Added Value For Some

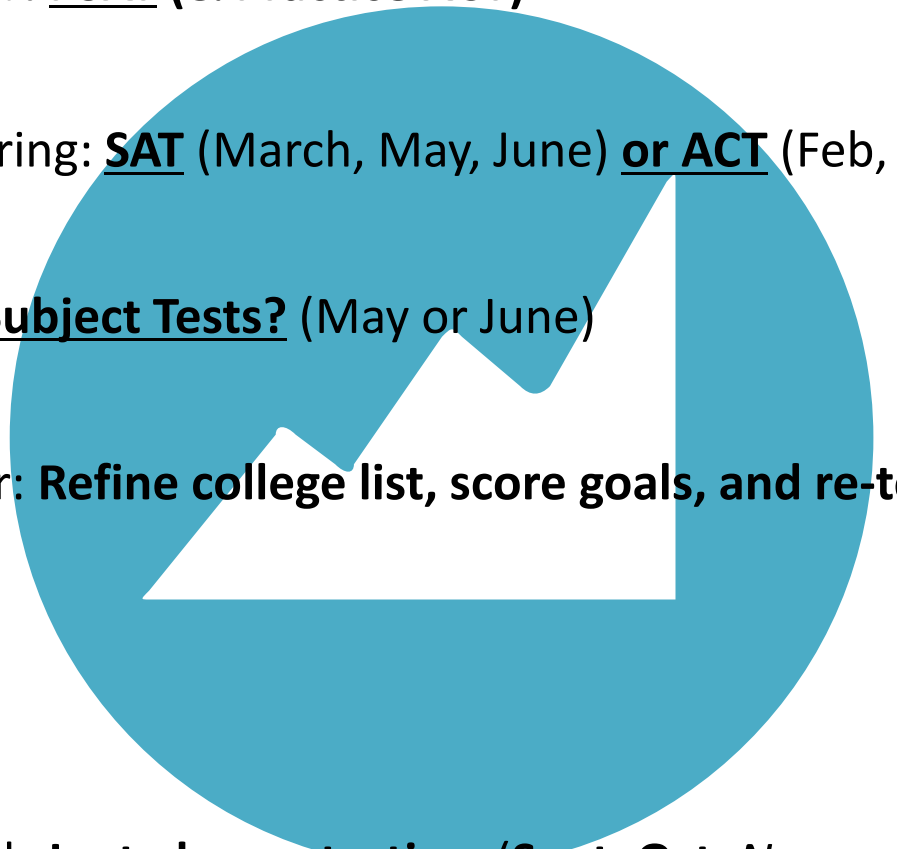
- Literature
- Math Level 2 or Math Level 1
- U.S. History, World History
- Biology (E/M), Chemistry, and Physics
- French, Chinese, German, Spanish, Modern Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Korean, and Latin

Subject Tests Trends



A Sensible Timeline

- ✓ 11th grade Fall **: <u>PSAT</u> (& Practice ACT)**
- ✓ 11th grade Spring: **<u>SAT</u>** (March, May, June) **<u>or ACT</u>** (Feb, April, June)
- ✓ Late Spring: **<u>Subject Tests?</u>** (May or June)
- ✓ Early Summer: **Refine college list, score goals, and re-testing plans**
  - ✓ July ACT
  - ✓ August SAT
- ✓ 12th grade Fall : **<u>Last-chance testing</u>** (**Sept, Oct**, *Nov, or Dec*)



Timelines for Preparation

EARLY

SAT: > 1200
ACT: > 25
1 in 6 Students

Formal prep in summer before 11th grade

May be seeking National Merit recognition

1st SAT or ACT in **winter** of 11th grade

Subject Tests
May/June of 11th

TRADITIONAL

SAT: 900-1200
ACT: 17-25
1 in 2 Students

Foundational prep in summer before 11th grade

PSAT relevant only as a benchmark

1st SAT or ACT in **spring** of 11th grade

Subject Tests
May/June of 11th

DEFERRED

SAT: < 900
ACT: < 17
1 in 3 students

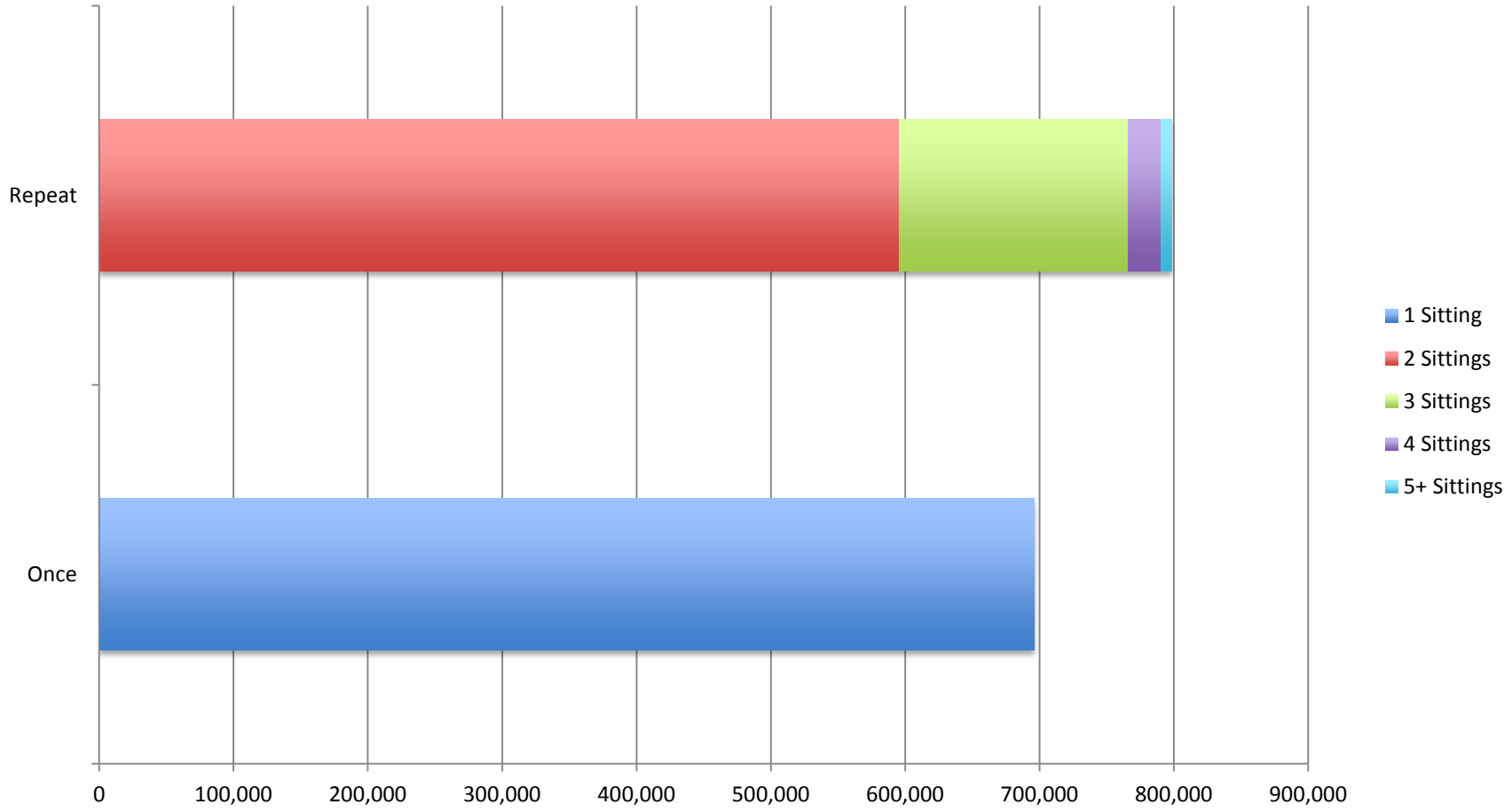
Little to no prep in summer prior to 11th grade

1st SAT or ACT in **late spring** (minimal prep)

Majority of prep after end of 11th grade

Peaks **late fall** of 12th

Repeat Testing



Super-scoring

www.compassprep.com/super-scoring-and-score-choice

April ACT	
English	26
Math	27
Reading	27
Science	23
Composite	26

September ACT	
English	29
Math	25
Reading	24
Science	27
Composite	26

Super-scored ACT	
English	29
Math	27
Reading	27
Science	27
Composite	28

Test Prep Trends at Compass

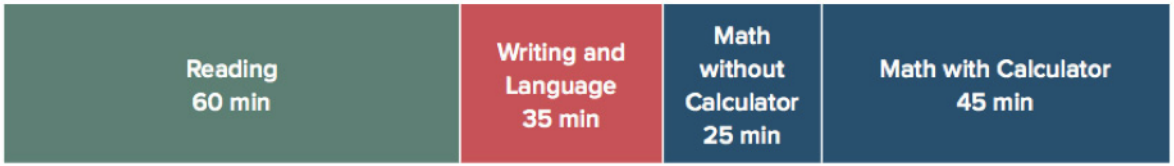
Competitive Similarities

- ✓ No “guessing” penalty (Both)
- ✓ Long sections; similar structure & timing (Both)
- ✓ “Optional” essay at the end (Both)
- ✓ Calculator (Both) & non-calculator Math (SAT)
- ✓ Tests “Science skills” (ACT Section; SAT mixed in)
- ✓ Broad survey of HS math and verbal skills (Both)
- ✓ Scale accounts for minor difficulty differences (Both)

Structural Similarities

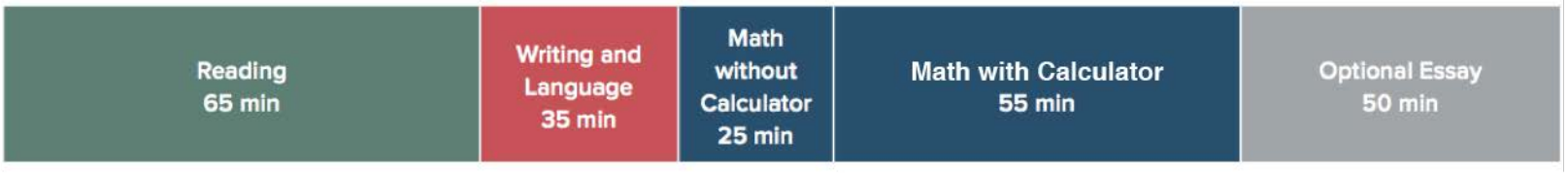
PSAT

4 Sections; 2 Hours and 45 Minutes



SAT

4 Sections + Essay; 3 Hours and 50 Minutes



ACT

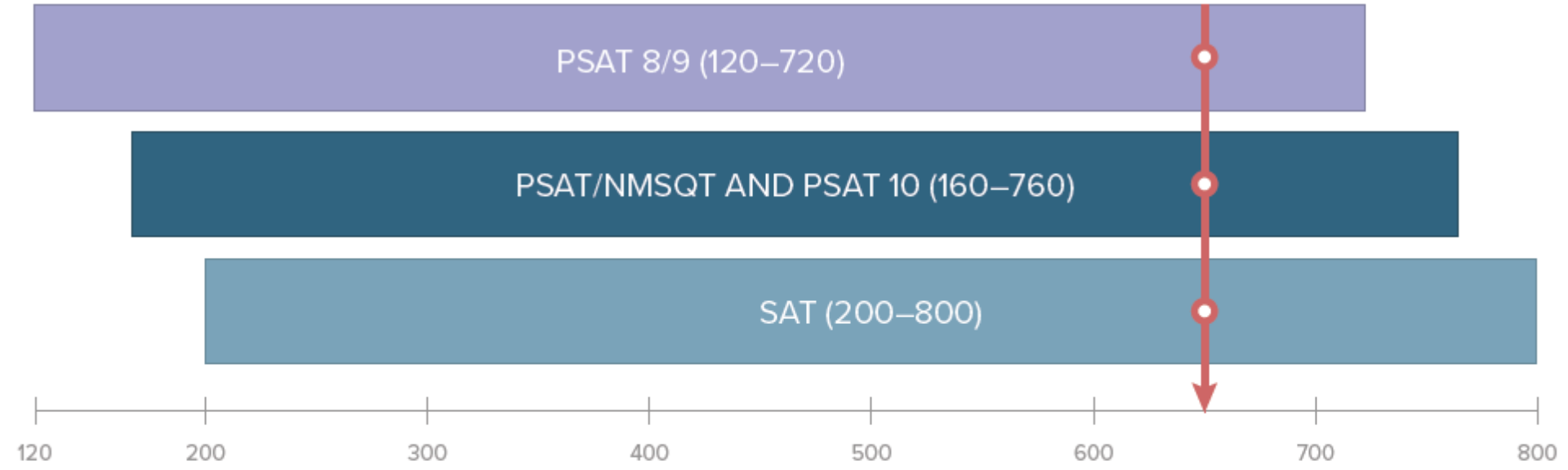
4 Sections + Essay; 3 Hours and 35 Minutes

Weighing Math Topics Differently

Algebra	Geometry			SAT	ACT
Simplifying Equivalent Expressions	Area and Perimeter				
Exponential Change	Geometric Visualizations				
Quadratic Formula	Pythagorean Theorem				
Parabolas	Mean, Median, and Mode				

*See **pages 48-49** of Compass Guide*

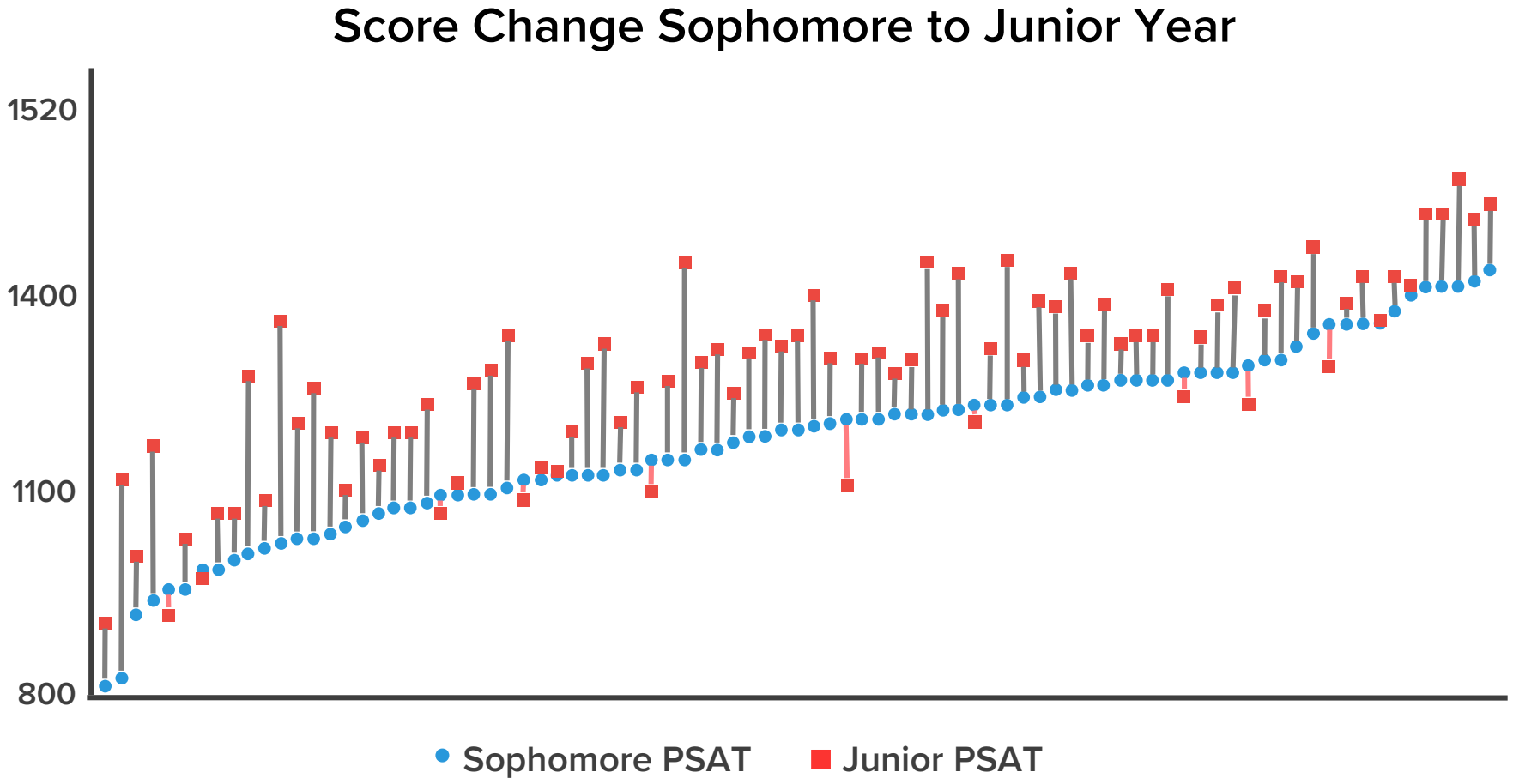
Vertical Alignment



A score of 650 on the PSAT 8/9 would predict that a student would have scored a 650 on the PSAT 10 or the SAT had the student taken those exams at the same time.

*See **page 30** of Compass Guide*

PSAT Gains – Sample Class

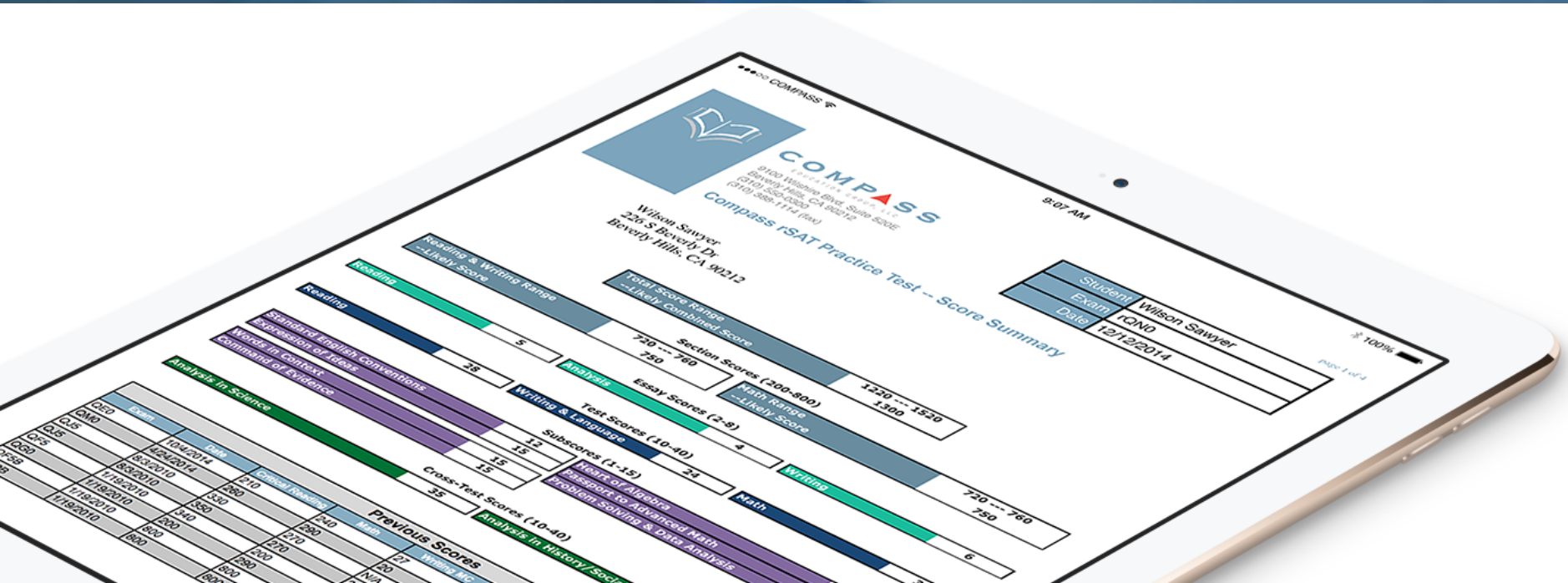


Diagnostic Testing

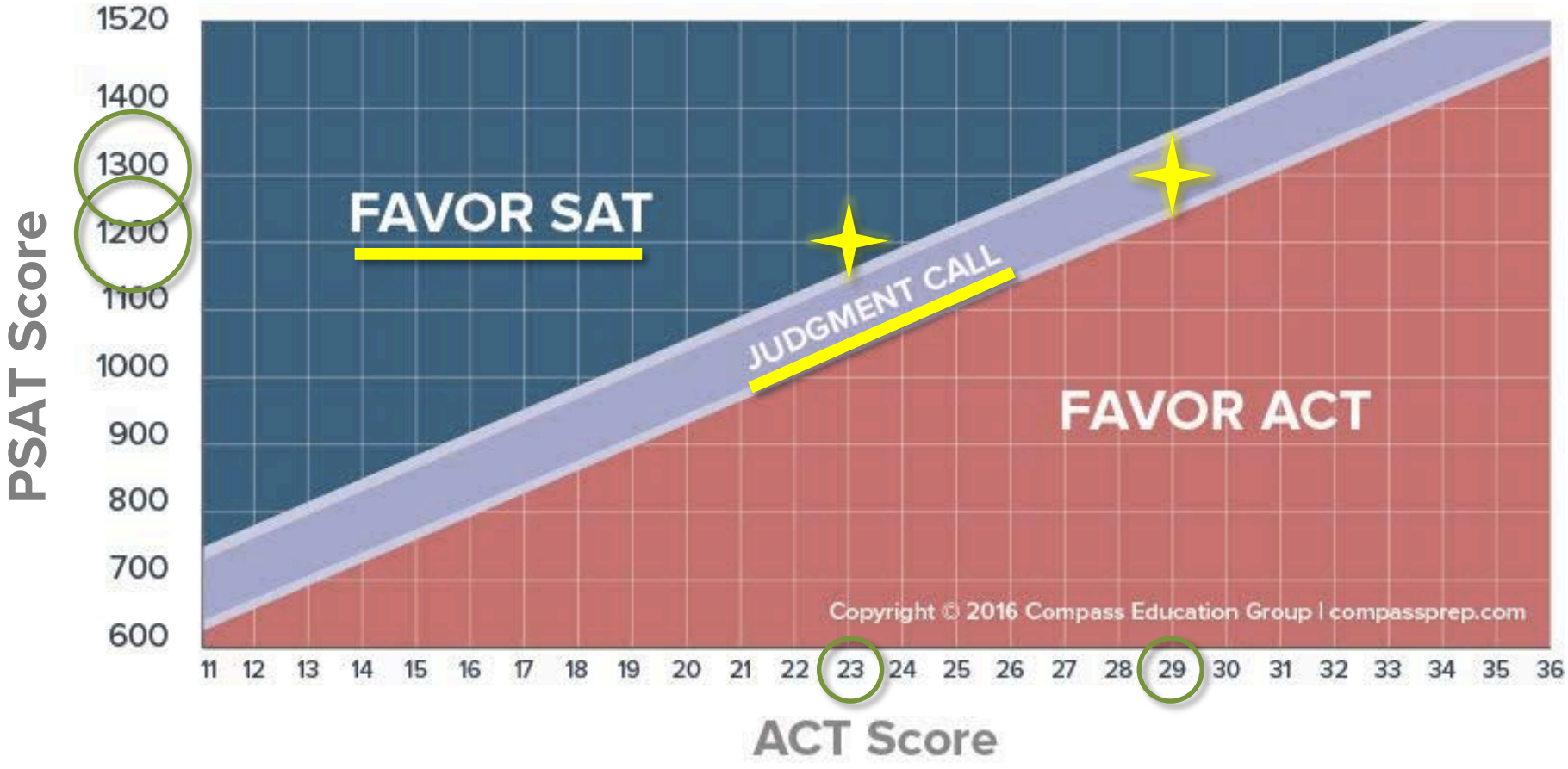
Compass hosts weekly proctored practice tests

for the SAT, ACT, and Subject Tests

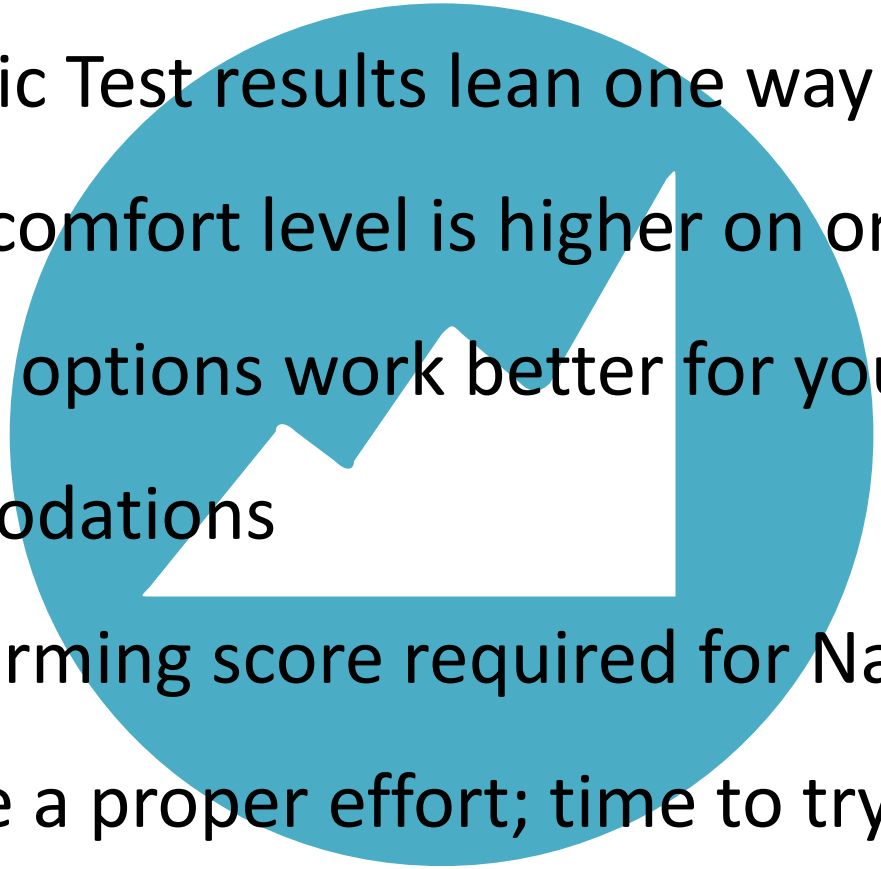
San Francisco | Marin | East Bay | Peninsula | South Bay



P/SAT vs ACT Comparison

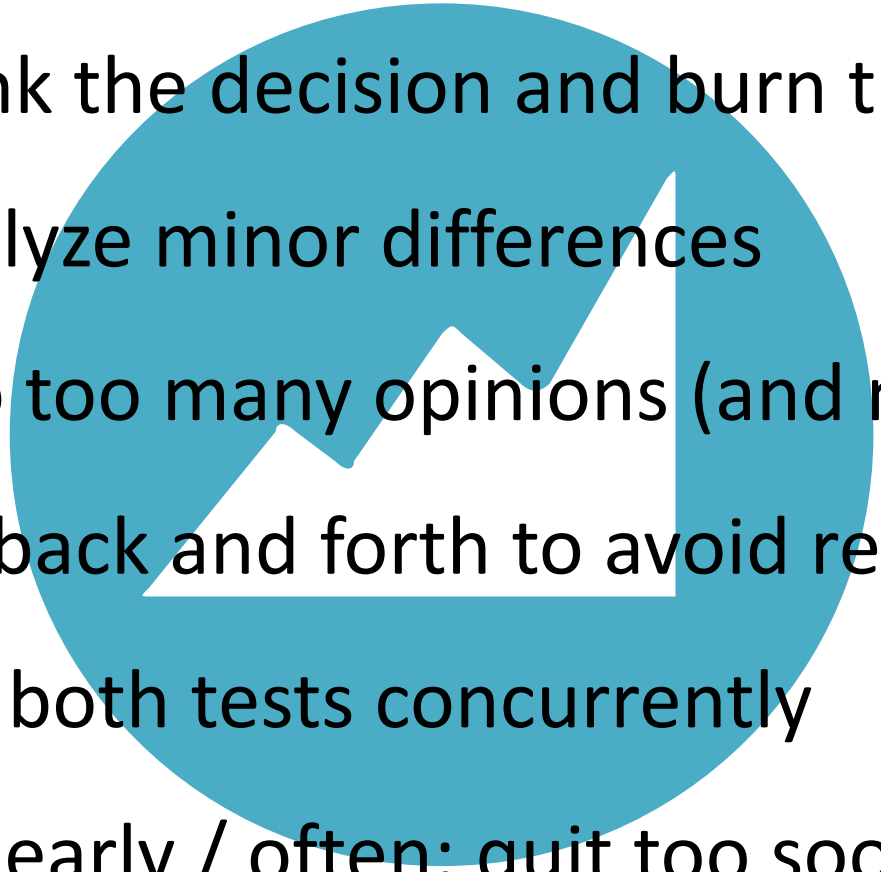


Good Judgment



- ✓ Diagnostic Test results lean one way
- ✓ Student comfort level is higher on one
- ✓ Test date options work better for you
- ✓ Accommodations
- ✓ SAT confirming score required for National Merit
- ✓ Gave one a proper effort; time to try the other

Poor Judgment



- ✓ Overthink the decision and burn time
- ✓ Overanalyze minor differences
- ✓ Listen to too many opinions (and myths)
- ✓ Bounce back and forth to avoid real issues
- ✓ Prep for both tests concurrently
- ✓ Test too early / often; quit too soon

What Do Test Scores Reflect?

Content Knowledge	Command of Strategies
Optimal Time Management	Emotional Control

Content Knowledge

$(x - h)^2 + (y - k)^2 = r^2$

Center: (h, k)

Which of the following is an equation of a circle with its center at (3, 4) and tangent to the x-axis in the standard (x, y) coordinate plane?

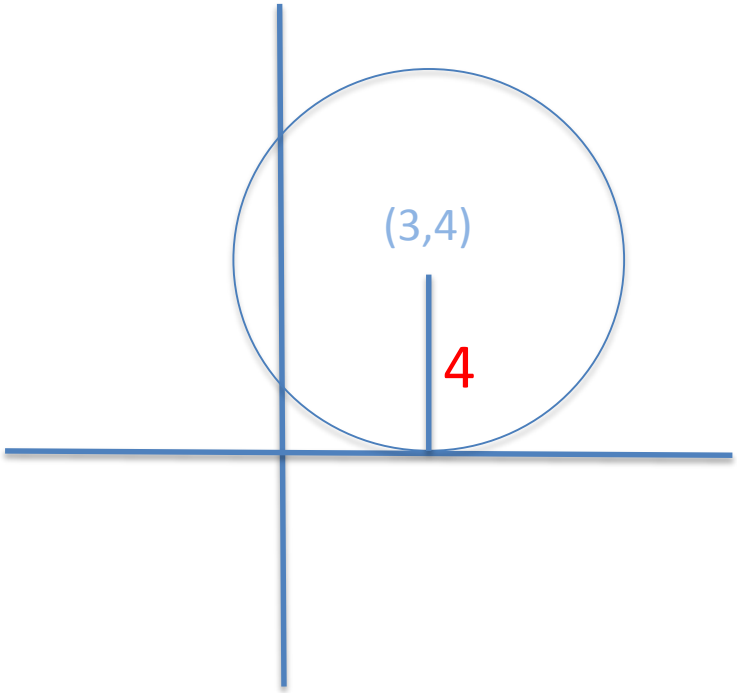
A. $(x - 3)^2 + (y - 4)^2 = 16$

B. $(x - 4)^2 + (y - 3)^2 = 16$

C. $(x - 4)^2 + (y - 3)^2 = 9$

D. $(x - 3)^2 + (y - 4)^2 = 9$

E. $(x + 4)^2 + (y + 3)^2 = 16$



Command of Strategies

If $\frac{1}{2}x + \frac{1}{3}y = 4$, what is the value of $3x + 2y$?

Clue: focus on what the question asks for, NOT on solving for x and y.

$$6\left(\frac{1}{2}x + \frac{1}{3}y\right) = (4)6$$

$$3x + 2y = 24$$

Answer: 24

Time Management

A *bomb calorimeter* is used to determine the amount of heat released when a substance is burned in oxygen (Figure 1). The heat, measured in kilojoules (kJ), is calculated from the change in temperature of the water in the bomb calorimeter. Table 1 shows the amounts of heat released when different foods were burned in a bomb calorimeter. Table 2 shows the amounts of heat released when different amounts of sucrose (table sugar) were burned. Table 3 shows the amounts of heat released when various chemical compounds were burned.

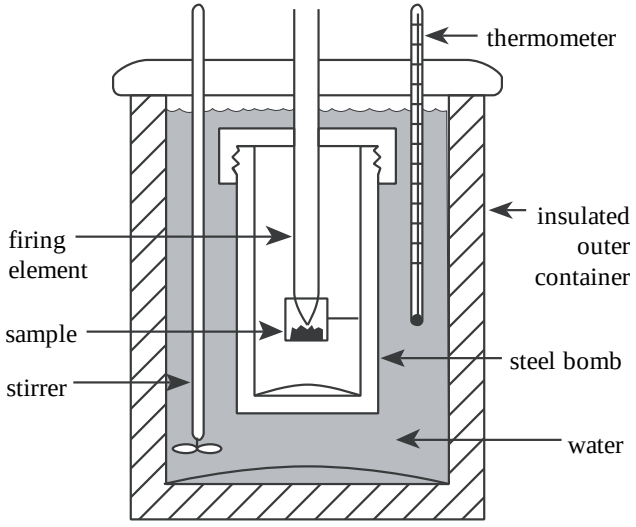


Figure 1

Table 1

Food	Mass (g)	Change in water temperature (°C)	Heat released (kJ)
Bread	1.0	8.3	10.0
Cheese	1.0	14.1	17.0
Egg	1.0	5.6	6.7
Potato	1.0	2.7	3.2

Table 2

Amount of sucrose (g)	Heat released (kJ)
0.1	1.6
0.5	8.0
1.0	16.0
2.0	32.1
4.0	64.0

Table 3

Chemical compound	Molecular formula	Mass (g)	Heat released (kJ)
Methanol	CH_3OH	0.5	11.4
Ethanol	C_2H_5OH	0.5	14.9
Benzene	C_6H_6	0.5	21.0
Octane	C_8H_{18}	0.5	23.9

Time Management

Based on the data in Table 2, one can conclude that when the mass of sucrose is decreased by one-half, the amount of heat released when it is burned in a bomb calorimeter will:

A. increase by one-half.
B. decrease by one-half.
C. increase by one-fourth.
D. decrease by one-fourth.

Table 2

Amount of sucrose (g)	Heat released (kJ)
0.1	1.6
0.5	8.0
1.0	16.0
2.0	32.1
4.0	64.0

Emotional Control

Evidence-Based Responses

...But we have not come here to laugh, or to talk of fashions—men's and women's. We are here, on the bridge, to ask ourselves certain questions. And they are very important questions; and we have very little time in which to answer them. The questions that we have to ask and to answer about that procession during this moment of transition are so important that they may well change the lives of all men and women for ever. For we have to ask ourselves, here and now, do we wish to join that procession, or don't we? On what terms shall we join that procession? Above all, where is it leading us, the procession of educated men? The moment is short; it may last five years; ten years, or perhaps only a matter of a few months longer. . . . But, you will object, you have no time to think; you have your battles to fight, your rent to pay, your bazaars to organize. That excuse shall not serve you, Madam.

1. Woolf characterizes the questions in lines 53-57 ("For we . . . men") as both

A) controversial and threatening.
B) weighty and unanswerable.
C) momentous and pressing.
D) provocative and mysterious.

2. Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

A) Lines 46-47 ("We . . . questions")
B) Lines 48-49 ("And . . . them")
C) Line 57 ("The moment . . . short")
D) Line 62 ("That . . . Madam")

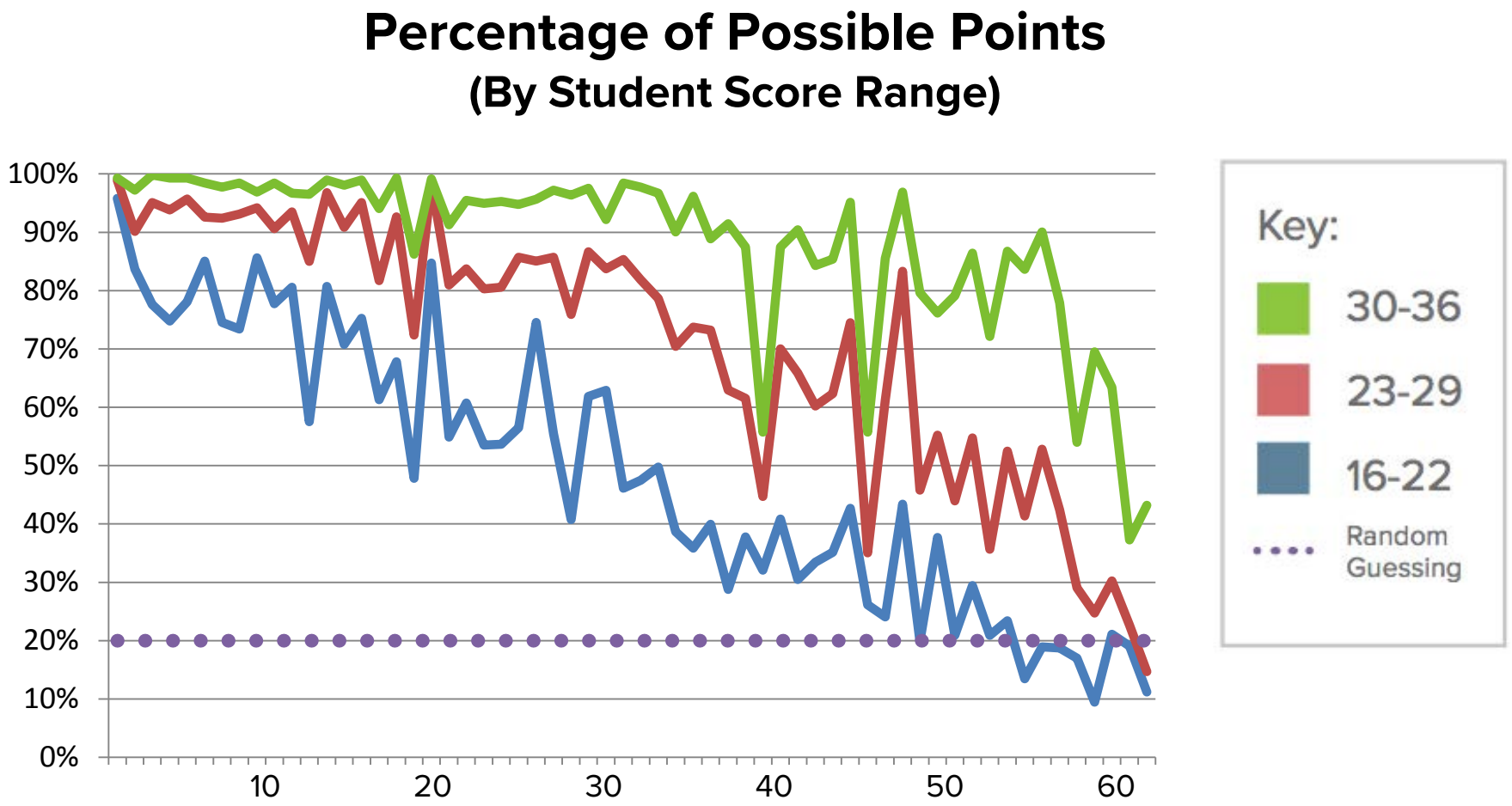
ACT English: Difficulty Distribution

Data reflects performance of several thousand ACT takers on 11 different tests.

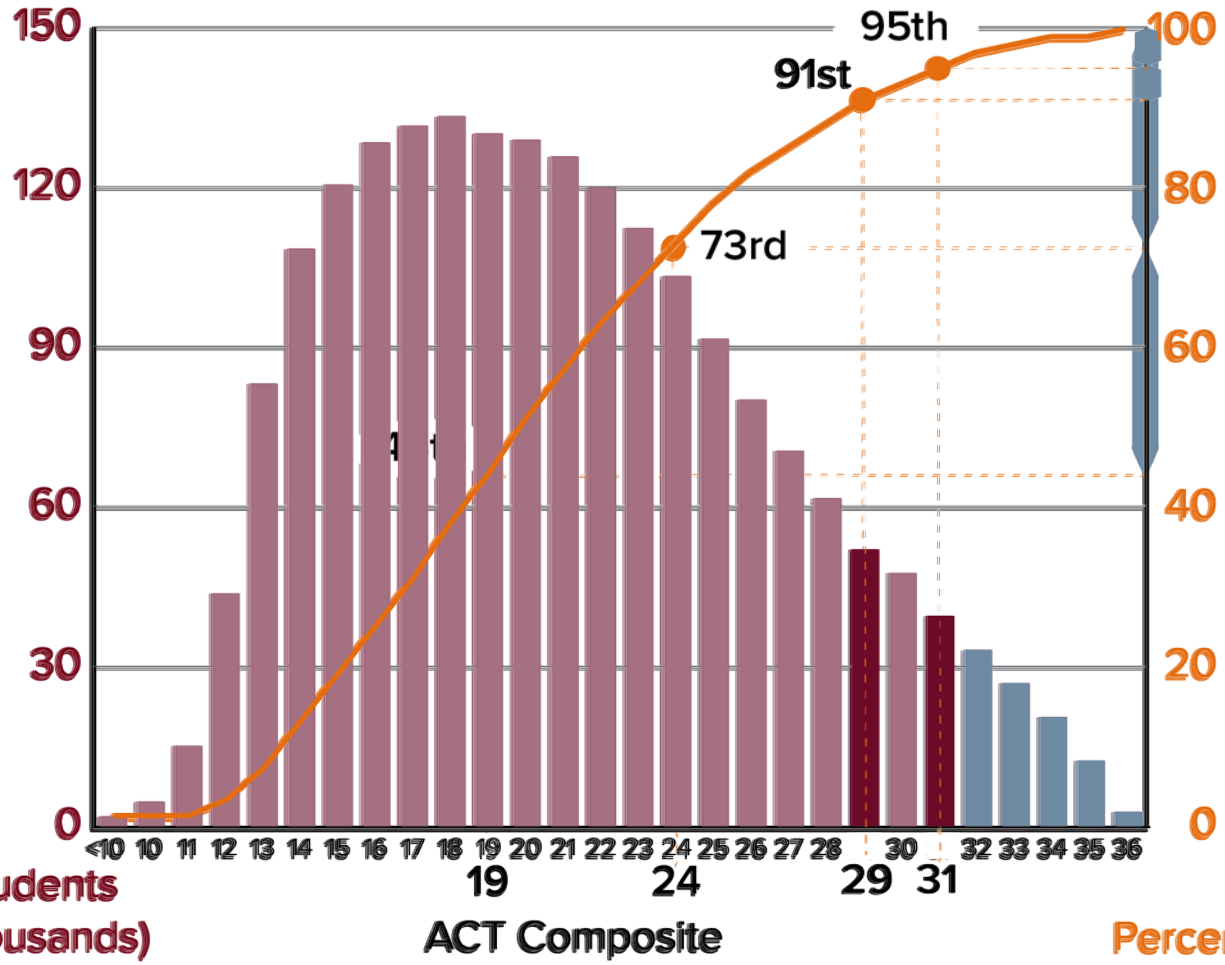
ACT Math: Difficulty Distribution

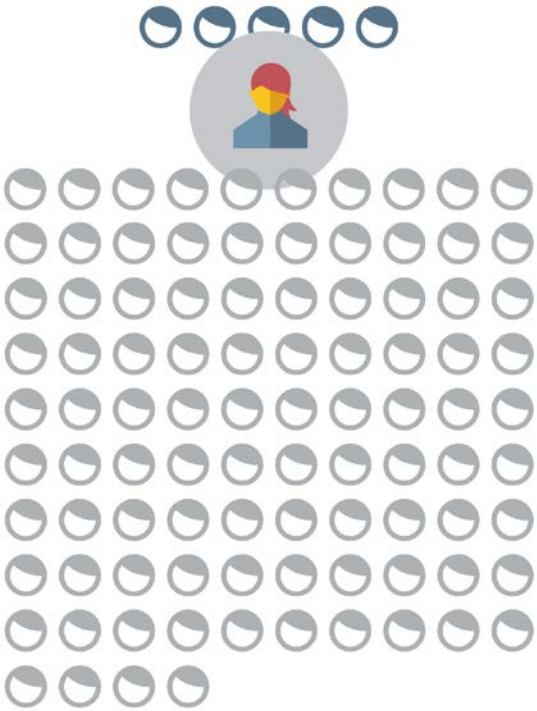
Data reflects performance of several thousand ACT takers on 11 different tests.

ACT Math: Where to Invest Effort



Setting Scoring Goals





2007: 44 COLLEGES REQUIRE THE SAT SUBJECT TESTS

AMHERST	COLUMBIA	HAVERFORD	UC DAVIS	UVA
BARNARD	CONNECTICUT COLLEGE	HOLY CROSS	UC IRVINE	VASSAR
BOSTON COLLEGE	CORNELL	MIT	UCLA	WASHINGTON & LEE
BOSTON UNIVERSITY	DARTMOUTH	POMONA	UC MERCED	WELLESLEY
BRANDEIS	DUKE	PRINCETON	UC RIVERSIDE	WESLEYAN
BROWN	FRANKLIN OLIN	RICE	UC SAN DIEGO	WILLIAMS
BRYN MAWR	GEORGETOWN	SWARTHMORE	UC SANTA BARBARA	WPI
CALTECH	HARVARD	TULANE	UC SANTA CRUZ	YALE
CARNEGIE MELLON	HARVEY MUDD	UC BERKELEY	UPENN	

2017: 4 COLLEGES REQUIRE THE SAT SUBJECT TESTS

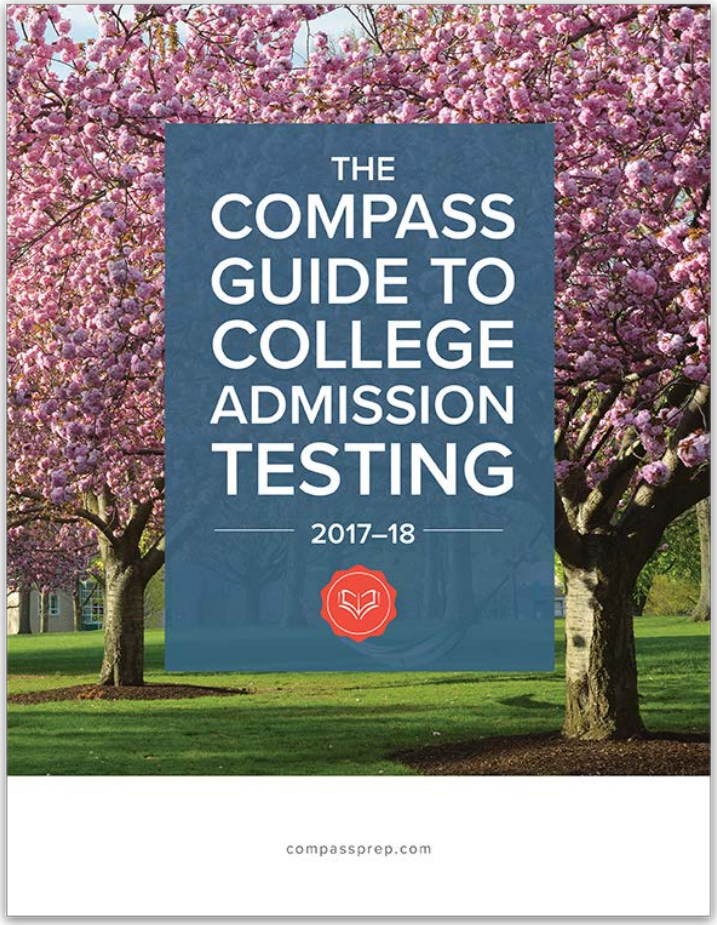
“Recommend” or “Consider” Subject Tests

Amherst
Babson
Barnard
Bates
Boston College
Boston University
Bowdoin
Brandeis
Brown
Bryn Mawr
Bucknell
Carleton
Case Western
Claremont McKenna
Colby
Colorado College
Columbia
Connecticut College
Cooper Union
Dartmouth
Davidson
Duke
Emory
Franklin Olin
George Washington
Georgetown
Hamilton
Harvard
Haverford
Holy Cross
Ithaca
Johns Hopkins
Kenyon
Lafayette
Macalester
Miami (FL)
Michigan
Middlebury
Mills
Northwestern
Notre Dame
NYU
Oberlin
Occidental
Pomona
Pratt Institute
Princeton
Reed
Rice
RPI
Scripps
Smith
Stanford
Stevens Institute
Swarthmore
Tufts
Tulane
Union
UC Berkeley
UC Irvine
UCLA
UC Riverside
UC San Diego
UC Santa Barbara
UC Santa Cruz
U of Delaware
U of Georgia
UNC
U of Rochester
UPenn
USC
UVA
Vanderbilt
Vassar
Wake Forest
Washington & Lee
Wash U St. Louis
Wellesley
Wesleyan
William & Mary
Williams
WPI
Yale

Subject Tests: Status Quo

- **“Guessing Penalty”** is still in effect
- 200-800 scale; 1 hour per test (up to 3 in one day)
- “Softer” scale but “Tougher” testing pool
- Cannot take SAT and Subject Tests on same date
- www.subject-tests.com (Policies by college)

Q & A



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Please fill out this form to receive information on practice test opportunities and other helpful resources.

Student Name

School

Class Year

Parent Name

Parent Phone Number

Parent Email Address

In-home Test Preparation | 800-620-6250

What's a Good Subject Test Score?

Rule #1: *Ignore Percentiles*

20K students take the Spanish Test

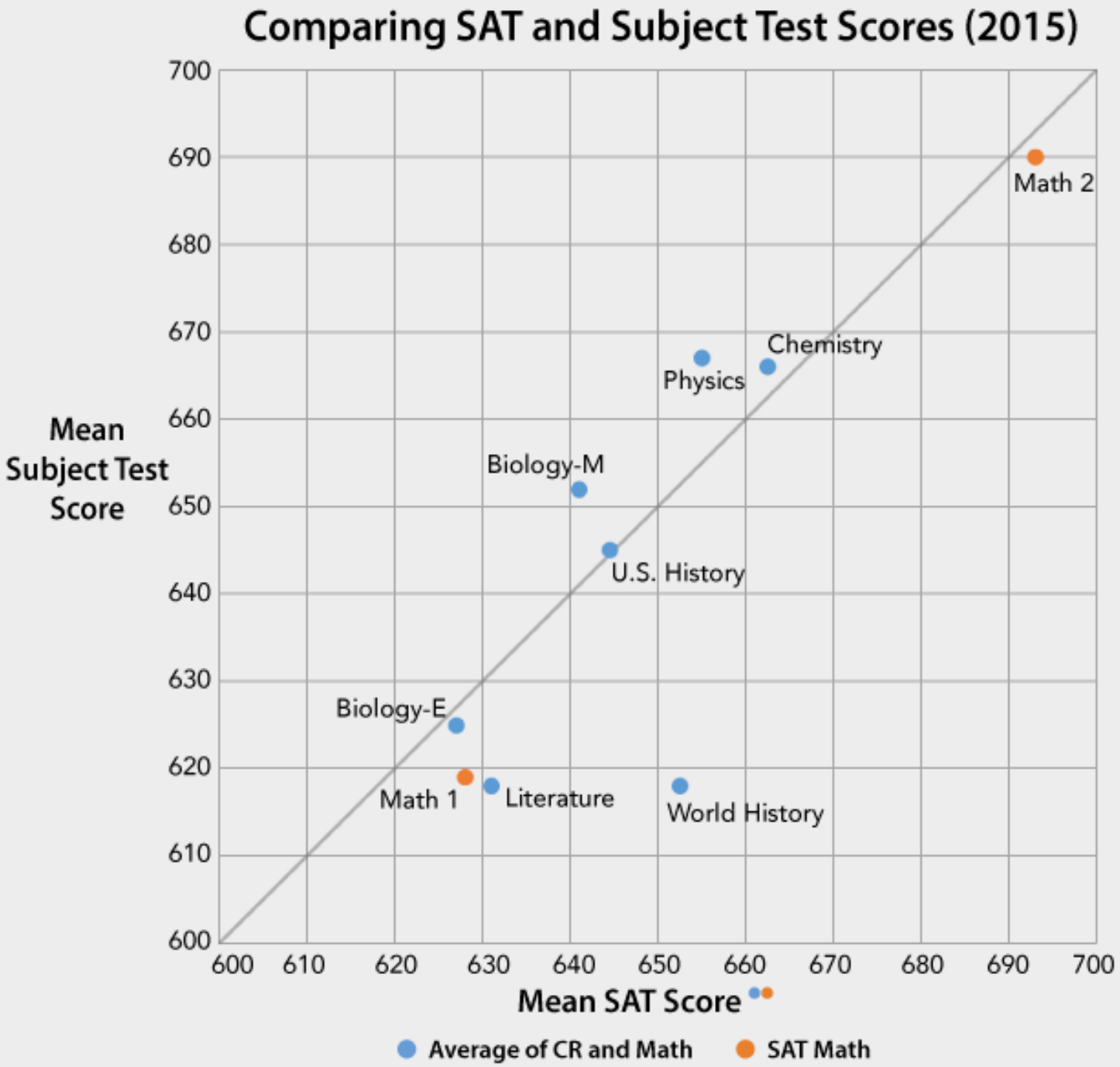
2 MILLION students take the ACT

1.8 MILLION students take the SAT

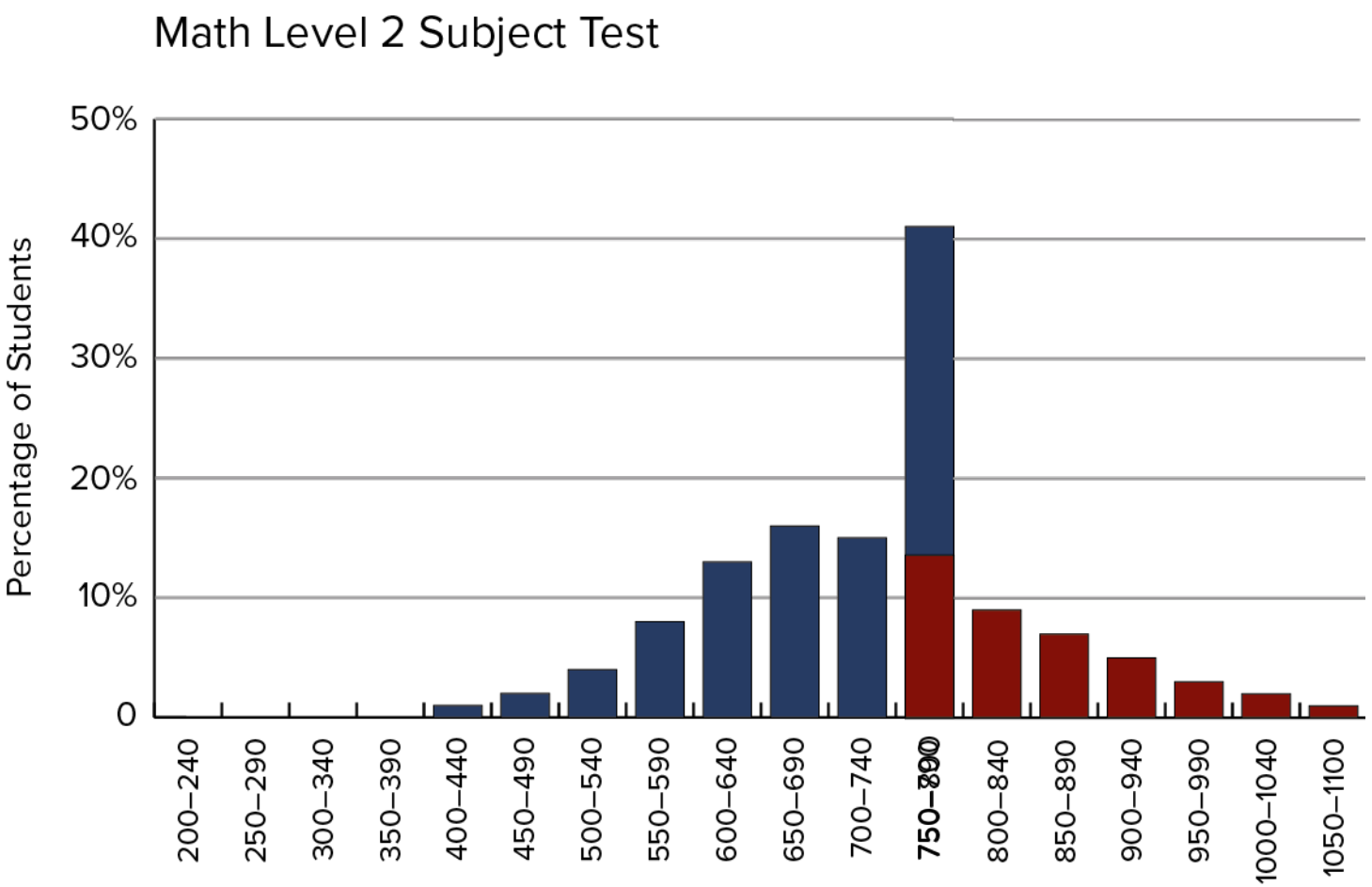
Differences in size and composition of testing populations make percentiles *incomparable.*

Rule #2: *Compare Means*

SAT scores help explain why some average Subject Tests are much higher than others.


Comparing SAT and Subject Test Scores (2015)
Mean Subject Test Score
700
690
680
670
660
650
640
630
620
610
600
Math 2
Chemistry
Physics
Biology-M
U.S. History
Biology-E
Math 1
Literature
World History
600 610 620 630 640 650 660 670 680 690 700
Mean SAT Score
Average of CR and Math
SAT Math

SAT Subject Test: Math Level 2



New ACT Essay

Issue: *Privacy*

Technology is changing our ideas about privacy. *Our social media posts help us connect to friends, families, and people across the globe, but they also supply a steady stream of information to advertisers and, potentially, to governments, employers, and law enforcement agencies. Smartphone apps track our locations, buying habits, and Internet searches; that data can be both used to improve services and sold to companies to better target marketing. We're increasingly willing to share our opinions, images, and relationships online and to turn to the Internet to run searches on others.* ***As sharing our lives with a global audience increasingly becomes the norm, it's important to consider how our connected lifestyle is changing the value we place upon privacy.***

Perspective One

Social media and smartphone apps help us navigate the world and our relationships with greater knowledge and insight. The only people who should be worried about losing privacy are those who have something to hide.

Perspective Two

When we lose our sense of private lives, we lose part of ourselves. Being on public display hinders introspection and a sense of our independent identities. When nothing is private, nothing is personal.

Perspective Three

Our desire for privacy is often rooted in embarrassment about common human issues like illness. Letting go of old ideas about privacy would break down barriers and help create a more open and empathetic society.

Scoring Trends

- ✓ **On average, students score a composite of 6, 7, or 8.**
- ✓ Test has lower **reliability**
- ✓ **Less than .6% of essays receive a top score**
- ✓ **Retest?** Most students should **not retake** the ACT simply for an improved Essay score

SAT Essay

*As you read the passage below, consider how **Paul Bogard** uses:*

- *evidence, such as facts or examples, to support claims*
- *reasoning to develop ideas to connect claims and evidence*
- *stylistic or persuasive elements, such as word choice or appeals to emotion, to add power to the ideas expressed*

[650-750 word Source Text]

Assignment:

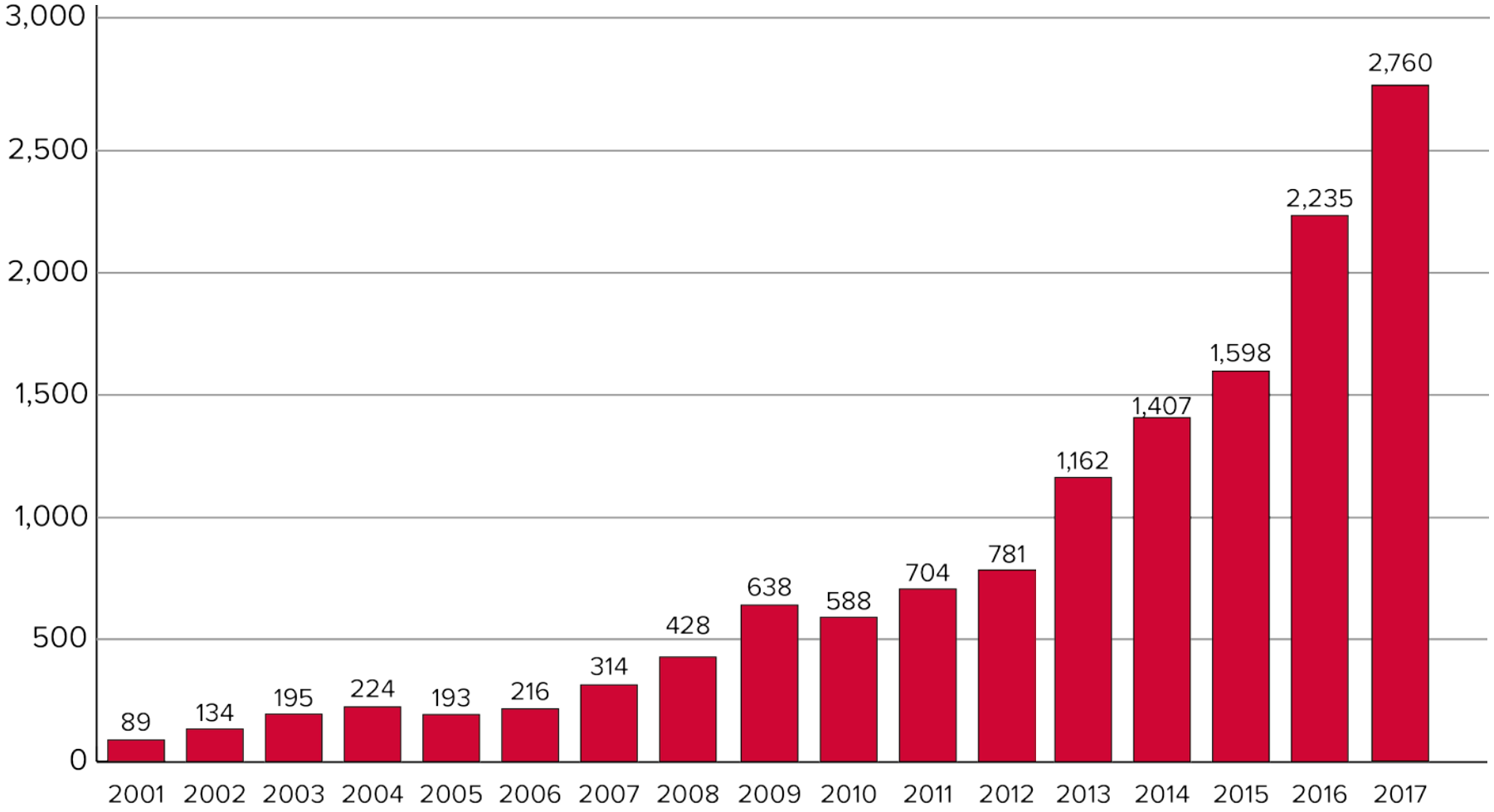
Write an essay in which you explain how **Paul Bogard** builds an argument to persuade **his** audience that **natural darkness should be preserved**. In your essay, analyze how **Bogard** uses one or more of the features listed in the box above (or features of your own choice) to strengthen the logic and persuasiveness of his argument. Be sure that your analysis focuses on the most relevant features of the passage.

Your essay should not explain whether you agree with **Bogard's** claims, but rather explain how **Bogard** builds an argument to persuade his audience.

Scoring Trends

- ✓ Scores are totaled and kept separate:
  - ✓ **Reading: 6 (3 + 3)**
  - ✓ **Analysis: 5 (3 + 2)**
  - ✓ **Writing: 6 (3 + 3)**
- ✓ **Average: 5, 4, 5**
  - ✓ 90% of students score a 4-6 in each area
  - ✓ Analysis scores tend to be more conservative
- ✓ **Retest?** Strong test-takers **who score** 2 points below national avg. in each area should consider retesting

Increase in ACT 36s



Growth Rate by Score