

College Entrance Exams



HOW WE CAN HELP NAVIGATE THE SAT & ACT WITH LESS STRESS AND MORE SUCCESS!

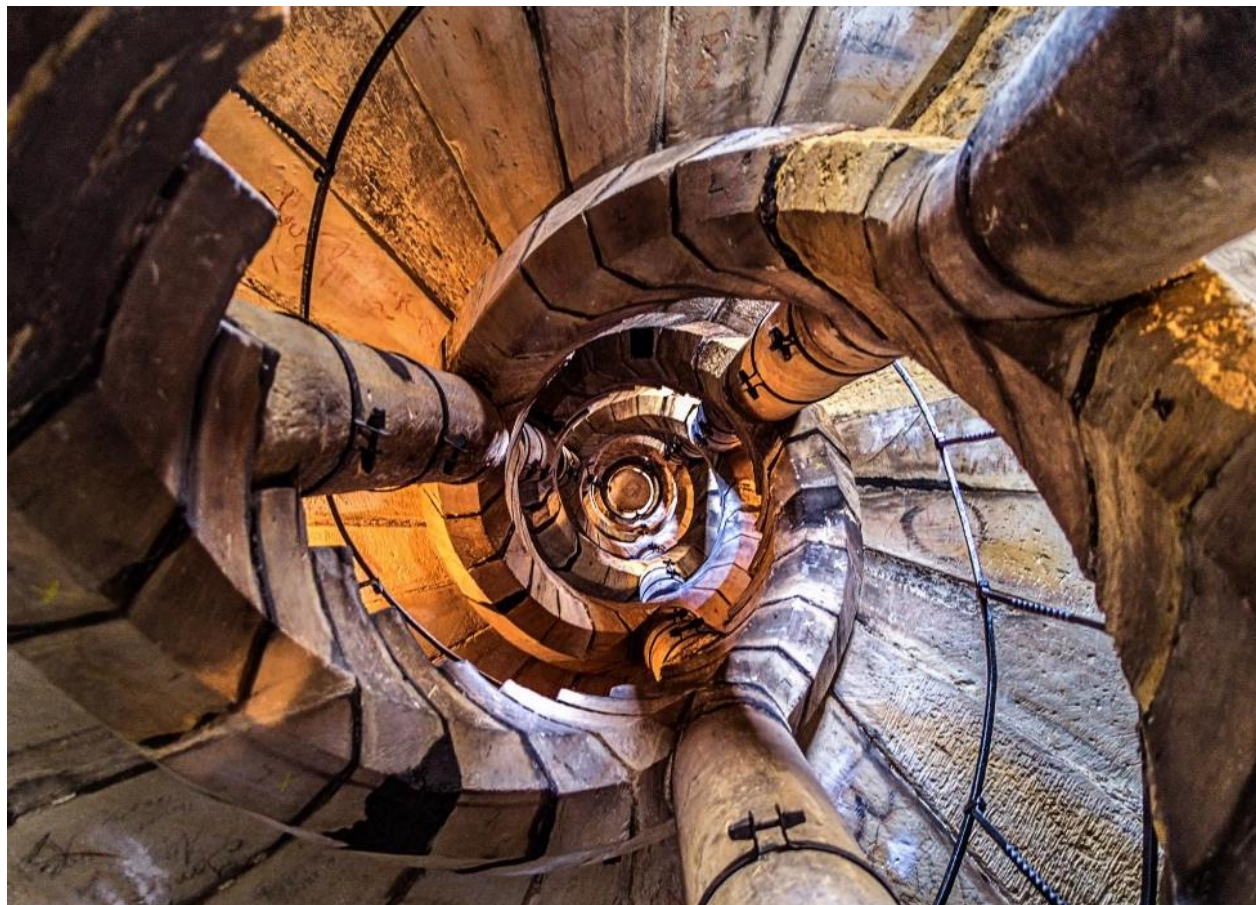


**THE
COLLEGE
CHECKLIST**



TODAY'S AGENDA

1. College Admission
2. The SAT
3. The ACT
4. Suggested
(Stress-Reducing)
Testing Timelines
5. Q&A Time



Understand Admission Factors

(Some schools are waiving test requirement for 2021 entrance – 2022 must test not USG)



Primary Factors

- Quality/Rigor of Academic Courses
- Academic Performance/ Grades – GPA
- Test Scores (SAT, ACT)

Additional Factors

- Extracurricular Activities
- Essay(s)
- Letters of Recommendation
- Demonstrated Interest
- Extracurricular/Community
- Interview

What colleges say matter most

- 94% **Grades** in college prep courses
- 90% Rigor of **curriculum**
- 87% **Grades** in all courses - GPA
- 87% **Standardized test scores**
- 59% Teacher and counselor recommendations
- 58% Essay or writing sample
- 50% Class rank
- 49% Student's demonstrated interest
- 46% Extracurricular activities
- 34% AP/IB scores



Admissions Statistics



FIRST-TIME FRESHMAN SELECTION PROCESS

Academic criteria :

- secondary school report very important
- class rank not considered
- recommendations considered
- standardized test scores important
- essay considered

Nonacademic criteria :

- interview not considered
- extracurricular activities considered
- particular talent/ability considered
- character/personal qualities considered
- alumni/ae relationship not considered
- geographical residence not considered
- state residency not considered
- religious affiliation/commitment not considered
- minority affiliation not considered
- volunteer work considered
- work experience considered

Admissions is need blind :	yes
Average secondary school GPA :	3.82
Percent of freshmen who submitted GPA :	100%
Percent of student body in each high school class rank :	Top tenth: 53% Top quarter: 90% Top half: 98% Bottom half: 2%
Percent of freshmen who submitted class rank :	77
Average SAT:	616 critical reading, 623 Math, 1239 combined
Combined SAT I middle 50% range:	1160 - 1360
Average ACT :	29 English, 27 Math, 28 composite
Combined ACT middle 50% range :	25 - 29
Test taken by majority of applicants :	SAT I
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted SAT scores :	90%
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted ACT score :	55%

FIRST-TIME FRESHMAN SELECTION PROCESS

Academic criteria :

- secondary school report very important
- class rank not considered
- recommendations not considered
- standardized test scores very important
- essay not considered

Nonacademic criteria :

- interview not considered
- extracurricular activities not considered
- particular talent/ability not considered
- character/personal qualities not considered
- alumni/ae relationship not considered
- geographical residence not considered
- state residency not considered
- religious affiliation/commitment not considered
- minority affiliation not considered
- volunteer work not considered
- work experience not considered

Admissions is need blind :	yes
Average secondary school GPA :	3.34
Percent of freshmen who submitted GPA :	99%
Average SAT:	550 critical reading, 543 Math, 1095 combined
Average ACT :	23 English, 23 Math, 23 composite
Combined ACT middle 50% range :	20 - 25
Test taken by majority of applicants :	SAT I
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted SAT scores :	86%
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted ACT score :	45%



Admissions Statistics



FIRST-TIME FRESHMAN SELECTION PROCESS

Academic criteria :

- secondary school report important
- class rank not considered
- standardized test scores important
- essay important

Nonacademic criteria :

- interview not considered
- extracurricular activities important
- particular talent/ability important
- character/personal qualities not considered
- alumni/ae relationship not considered
- geographical residence considered
- state residency considered
- religious affiliation/commitment not considered
- minority affiliation not considered
- volunteer work important
- work experience important

Average secondary school GPA :	3.8
Percent of freshmen who submitted GPA :	100%
Average SAT:	680 critical reading, 725 Math
Average ACT :	29 English, 30 Math, 30 composite
Test taken by majority of applicants :	SAT I
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted SAT scores :	96%
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted ACT score :	42%

REQUIREMENTS

Official Documentation Needed

High School Transcript

- If you are currently enrolled in your senior year, please include a copy your current schedule along with your transcript.

SAT Scores or ACT Scores

Verification of Lawful Presence

Requirements for Regular Admission

- Fall 2016: 2240 Freshman Index
- Minimal SAT Scores: Critical Reading of 430 and Math 400 or minimal ACT Scores: of 17 for English and 17 for Mathematics
- Required High School Curriculum (RHSC): 17 units must have been completed by time of graduation

Freshman Index

The most important consideration for determining eligibility for freshman admissions at Georgia Regents University is the Freshman Index (FI). The FI is determined by the following formula(s)

$$FI = \text{SAT critical reading} + \text{SAT math} + (\text{High School GPA} \times 500)$$

$$FI = (\text{ACT Composite} \times 42) + (\text{High School GPA} \times 500) + 88$$

Required High School Curriculum (RHSC)

These requirements are for students who graduated from high school in 2012 or later.

FIRST-TIME FRESHMAN SELECTION PROCESS

Academic criteria :

- secondary school report very important
- class rank not considered
- recommendations not considered
- standardized test scores very important
- essay not considered

Nonacademic criteria :

- interview not considered
- extracurricular activities not considered
- particular talent/ability not considered
- character/personal qualities not considered
- alumni/ae relationship not considered
- geographical residence not considered
- state residency not considered
- religious affiliation/commitment not considered
- minority affiliation not considered
- volunteer work not considered
- work experience not considered

Admissions is need blind :	yes
Average secondary school GPA :	3.11
Percent of freshmen who submitted GPA :	98%
Average SAT:	485 critical reading, 476 Math
Average ACT :	20 English, 20 Math, 20 composite
Combined ACT middle 50% range :	18 - 22
Test taken by majority of applicants :	SAT I
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted SAT scores :	76%
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted ACT score :	52%

FIRST-TIME FRESHMAN SELECTION PROCESS

Academic criteria :

- secondary school report not considered
- class rank not considered
- recommendations not considered
- standardized test scores very important
- essay not considered

Nonacademic criteria :

- interview not considered
- extracurricular activities not considered
- particular talent/ability not considered
- character/personal qualities not considered
- alumni/ae relationship not considered
- geographical residence not considered
- state residency not considered
- religious affiliation/commitment not considered
- minority affiliation not considered
- volunteer work not considered
- work experience not considered

Admissions is need blind :	yes
Average secondary school GPA :	3.15
Percent of freshmen who submitted GPA :	100%
Average SAT:	515 critical reading, 503 Math, 1018 combined
Average ACT :	22 English, 21 Math, 22 composite
Combined ACT middle 50% range :	20 - 24
Test taken by majority of applicants :	SAT I
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted SAT scores :	68%
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted ACT score :	30%



Admissions Statistics



Admissions Information

All prospective students should fall under one of the following categories. Please refer to the descriptions below to determine which category best describes the student group under which you would be classified.

NEW FRESHMAN STUDENT - Applicants who have **NEVER** attended college:

- Application and \$20.00 non-refundable application fee
- Official high school transcript with graduation date or GED scores. An applicant with a GED must be at least 18 years old, or the applicant's class must have graduated from high school. There are no exceptions to the requirement that a freshman have either a HS diploma or a GED.
- College Preparatory Curriculum (CPC) - Required GPA **2.0** or higher
- Technology/Career-Preparatory Curriculum (TC) - Required GPA **2.2** or higher
- Immunization Record: MMR1, MMR2, Varicella, Tetanus Diphtheria and (Hepatitis B - If you are 18 years of age or younger)

PLEASE NOTE: Atlanta Metropolitan State College no longer requires SAT or ACT scores as criteria for admission. Applicants may submit SAT verbal scores of 430 and SAT math scores of 400; or ACT English score of 17 and ACT Math score of 17 or better to be exempt from taking the COMPASS Placement Exam.

FIRST-TIME FRESHMAN SELECTION PROCESS

Academic criteria :

- secondary school report very important
- class rank considered
- recommendations considered
- standardized test scores very important
- essay considered

Nonacademic criteria :

- interview not considered
- extracurricular activities considered
- particular talent/ability considered
- character/personal qualities not considered
- alumni/ae relationship not considered
- geographical residence not considered
- state residency not considered
- religious affiliation/commitment not considered
- minority affiliation not considered
- volunteer work not considered
- work experience not considered

Admissions is need blind :	yes
Average secondary school GPA :	3.01
Percent of freshmen who submitted GPA :	81%
Percent of freshmen who submitted class rank :	55
Average SAT:	488 critical reading, 471 Math
Average ACT :	21 English, 20 Math, 20 composite
Combined ACT middle 50% range :	18 - 22
Test taken by majority of applicants :	SAT I
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted SAT scores :	65%
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted ACT score :	35%



FIRST-TIME FRESHMAN SELECTION PROCESS

Academic criteria :

- secondary school report very important
- class rank considered
- recommendations not considered
- standardized test scores very important
- essay not considered

Nonacademic criteria :

- interview not considered
- extracurricular activities not considered
- particular talent/ability not considered
- character/personal qualities not considered
- alumni/ae relationship not considered
- geographical residence not considered
- state residency not considered
- religious affiliation/commitment not considered
- minority affiliation not considered
- volunteer work not considered
- work experience not considered

Admissions is need blind :	yes
Average secondary school GPA :	3.27
Percent of freshmen who submitted GPA :	99%
Percent of freshmen who submitted class rank :	46
Average SAT:	557 critical reading, 556 Math, 1113 combined
Combined SAT I middle 50% range:	1040 - 1170
Average ACT :	23 English, 23 Math, 24 composite
Combined ACT middle 50% range :	22 - 25
Test taken by majority of applicants :	SAT I
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted SAT scores :	70%
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted ACT score :	53%

FIRST-TIME FRESHMAN SELECTION PROCESS

Academic criteria :

- secondary school report very important
- class rank not considered
- recommendations not considered
- standardized test scores very important
- essay not considered

Nonacademic criteria :

- interview not considered
- extracurricular activities not considered
- particular talent/ability not considered
- character/personal qualities not considered
- alumni/ae relationship not considered
- geographical residence not considered
- state residency not considered
- religious affiliation/commitment not considered
- minority affiliation not considered
- volunteer work not considered
- work experience not considered

Admissions is need blind :	yes
Average secondary school GPA :	3.22
Percent of freshmen who submitted GPA :	98%
Percent of freshmen who submitted class rank :	63
Average SAT:	540 critical reading, 530 Math, 1580 combined
Average ACT :	22 English, 22 Math, 22 composite
Combined ACT middle 50% range :	21 - 24
Test taken by majority of applicants :	SAT I
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted SAT scores :	63%
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted ACT score :	35%



FIRST-TIME FRESHMAN SELECTION PROCESS

Academic criteria :

- secondary school report very important
- class rank important
- recommendations considered
- standardized test scores very important
- essay important

Nonacademic criteria :

- interview considered
- extracurricular activities considered
- particular talent/ability considered
- character/personal qualities considered
- alumni/ae relationship important
- geographical residence considered
- state residency considered
- religious affiliation/commitment considered
- minority affiliation considered
- volunteer work considered
- work experience considered

Percent of freshmen who submitted GPA :	61%
Combined ACT middle 50% range :	16 - 18
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted SAT scores :	47%
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted ACT score :	53%

FIRST-TIME FRESHMAN SELECTION PROCESS

Academic criteria :

- secondary school report very important
- class rank not considered
- recommendations not considered
- standardized test scores very important
- essay not considered

Nonacademic criteria :

- interview not considered
- extracurricular activities not considered
- particular talent/ability not considered
- character/personal qualities not considered
- alumni/ae relationship not considered
- geographical residence not considered
- state residency not considered
- religious affiliation/commitment not considered
- minority affiliation not considered
- volunteer work not considered
- work experience not considered

Admissions is need blind :	yes
Average secondary school GPA :	2.74
Percent of freshmen who submitted GPA :	99%
Average SAT :	429 critical reading, 420 Math
Average ACT :	18 composite
Combined ACT middle 50% range :	16 - 19
Test taken by majority of applicants :	SAT I
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted SAT scores :	70%
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted ACT score :	57%



FIRST-TIME FRESHMAN SELECTION PROCESS

Academic criteria :

- secondary school report very important
- class rank not considered
- recommendations not considered
- standardized test scores important
- essay not considered

Nonacademic criteria :

- interview considered
- extracurricular activities considered
- particular talent/ability considered
- character/personal qualities not considered
- alumni/ae relationship not considered
- geographical residence considered
- state residency not considered
- religious affiliation/commitment not considered
- minority affiliation not considered
- volunteer work not considered
- work experience not considered

Admissions is need blind :	yes
Average secondary school GPA :	3.15
Percent of freshmen who submitted GPA :	100%
Percent of freshmen who submitted class rank :	23
Average SAT:	499 critical reading, 490 Math
Average ACT :	20 English, 20 Math, 20 composite
Combined ACT middle 50% range :	17 - 23
Test taken by majority of applicants :	SAT I
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted SAT scores :	69%
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted ACT score :	44%

FIRST-TIME FRESHMAN SELECTION PROCESS

Academic criteria :

- secondary school report very important
- class rank not considered
- recommendations considered
- standardized test scores very important
- essay not considered

Nonacademic criteria :

- interview not considered
- extracurricular activities considered
- particular talent/ability considered
- character/personal qualities considered
- alumni/ae relationship not considered
- geographical residence not considered
- state residency not considered
- religious affiliation/commitment not considered
- minority affiliation not considered
- volunteer work not considered
- work experience not considered

Admissions is need blind :	no
Percent of freshmen who submitted GPA :	100%
Percent of student body in each high school class rank :	Top tenth: 0% Top quarter: 0% Top half: 0% Bottom half: 0% Bottom quarter: 0%
Average SAT:	460 critical reading, 449 Math, 909 combined
Combined SAT I middle 50% range:	840 - 970
Average ACT :	18 English, 18 Math, 18 composite
Combined ACT middle 50% range :	17 - 19
Test taken by majority of applicants :	SAT I
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted SAT scores :	80%
Percent of accepted applicants who submitted ACT score :	47%

Other State Universities



- Albany State University
- Armstrong State University
- Clayton State University
- Columbus State University
- Fort Valley State University*
- Georgia College and State University
- Georgia Southwestern State University
- Savannah State University
- Southern Polytechnic State University
- University of North Georgia

Other State Colleges



- Abraham Baldwin Agriculture College
- Atlanta Metropolitan College
- Bainbridge College
- College of Coastal Georgia
- Dalton State College
- Darton State College
- Georgia Southern University
- Kennesaw State University
- Valdosta State University
- East Georgia College
- Georgia Gwinnett College
- Georgia Highlands College
- Georgia Perimeter College
- Gordon State College
- Middle Georgia College
- South Georgia College
- Georgia Military College
- University of West Georgia

Private Colleges



- Agnes School College
- Berry College
- Brenau University
- Brewton-Parker College
- Clark Atlanta University
- Emory University
 - Oxford
- LaGrange College
- Life University
- Mercer University
- Morehouse College
- Oglethorpe University
- Paine College
- Point University
- Reinhardt University
- SCAD
- Shorter University
- Spellman College
- Wesleyan College
- Young Harris College

ACT or SAT?





- Examine sample tests
- Compare your PSAT and your pre ACT (PLAN) scores
- Choose the test that's best for **YOU**
- Become the **EXPERT** at that test
 - Know the section order
 - Know the length of each section
 - Know the types of questions for that section
 - Use online and prep books to learn the test
 - Take the same test at least twice








SAT




CollegeBoard

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Show Colleges You're Ready

Register for the March SAT by February 9 to avoid a late fee.

[Register Now](#)

 Send Score Reports to Colleges

 Get Tips on When You Should Take the SAT

 Practice for the SAT Using Your PSAT/NMSQT Scores

[youtube.com/watch?v=b-GHvA6Ehnc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b-GHvA6Ehnc)

What the SAT Tests



8 Key Components

1. Relevant Words in Context
2. Command of Evidence
3. Essay Analyzing a Source
4. Focus on Math that Matters Most
5. Problems Grounded in Real-World Contexts
6. Analysis in Science and in History/Social Science
7. Founding Documents & Great Global Conversations
8. No Penalty for Wrong Answers

SAT



- 1600 point scale
- No Guessing penalty
- Calculator and non-calculator math sections
- There is no longer an essay portion
- Command of Evidence is emphasized
- Text-heavy; reading-centric
- Source Material; non-fiction emphasis

Test Details



- Two sections: Reading & Writing, mathematics (no essay)
- Length: 3 hours, 45 minutes (including three breaks)
- Score range: 200–800 per section, 400–1600 overall
- Question types:
 - **Critical Reading** — Sentence Completions, Reading Passages
 - **Mathematics** — Algebra, Geometry, Statistics, and Probability

How is the SAT scored?



1600 SAT

Started March 2016

2 Section Scores (200-800)

- Evidence-Based Reading & Writing
- Math

3 Test Scores (10-40)

- Reading
- Writing & Language
- Math

2 Cross-Test Scores (10-40)

- Analysis in Science
- Analysis in History/Social Science

7 Subscores (1-15)

- Relevant Words in Context
- Command of Evidence
- Expression of Ideas
- Standard English Conventions
- Heart of Algebra
- Passport to Advanced Mathematics
- Problem Solving and Data Analysis

Oh! One more thing...



Behold the
mighty...

You may mix and
match!

**TOTAL
SCORE**



Math Example

Contains both Calculator and Non-Calculator sections

Focuses more heavily on Algebra and Data Analysis, with some attention to Trigonometry

Involves real world applications of concepts, including a progression of problems building off of a given scenario

Thematic Features of the New SAT

An international bank issues its Traveler credit cards worldwide. When a customer makes a purchase using a Traveler card in a currency different from the customer's home currency, the bank converts the purchase price at the daily foreign exchange rate and then charges a 4% fee on the converted cost.

Sara lives in the United States, but is on vacation in India. She used her Traveler card for a purchase that cost 602 rupees (Indian currency). The bank posted a charge of \$9.88 to her account that included the 4% fee.

PART 1

What foreign exchange rate, in Indian rupees per one U.S. dollar, did the bank use for Sara's charge? Round your answer to the nearest whole number.

PART 2

A bank in India sells a prepaid credit card worth 7,500 rupees. Sara can buy the prepaid card using dollars at the daily exchange rate with no fee, but she will lose any money left unspent on the prepaid card. What is the least number of the 7,500 rupees on the prepaid card Sara must spend for the prepaid card to be cheaper than charging all her purchases on the Traveler card? Round your answer to the nearest whole number of rupees.



Vocabulary Example

Focuses on Tier 2 words

Exploits words with multiple meanings

Challenges students to derive meaning from the context in which words are used

Thematic Features of the New SAT

“The nature of impeachment: a narrowly channeled exception to the separation of powers maxim. The Federal Convention of 1787 said that.”

3. As used in line 37, “channeled” most nearly means

- A) worn.
- B) sent.
- C) constrained.
- D) siphoned.

Text & Data Example

[Permeates all sections of the test](#)

[Requires students to analyze and extrapolate from data represented graphically in multiple contexts](#)

[Asks students to identify and correct inconsistencies between data and text](#)

Thematic Features of the New SAT

The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics forecasts steady job growth in this field, ⁶projecting that 16 percent of new jobs in all occupations will be related to urban and regional planning.



6. Which choice completes the sentence with accurate data based on the graph?
- A) NO CHANGE
 - B) warning, however, that job growth in urban and regional planning will slow to 14 percent by 2020.
 - C) predicting that employment of urban and regional planners will increase 16 percent between 2010 and 2020.
 - D) indicating that 14 to 18 percent of urban and regional planning positions will remain unfilled.



Citing Evidence Example

Spans all sections of the test, including Math

Requires students to support their answer choices

Challenges students to explain how an author uses evidence to craft an argument

Thematic Features of the New SAT

4. In lines 49-54 (“Prosecutions ... sense”), what is the most likely reason Jordan draws a distinction between two types of “parties”?

A) *To counter the suggestion that impeachment is or should be about partisan politics*

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

A) Lines 13-17 (“It...office”)

B) Lines 20-24 (“The division...astute”)

C) Lines 55-58 (“The drawing...misdemeanors”)

D) Lines 65-68 (“Congress...transportation”)



Grammar Example

Requires students to revise extended prose to more accurately express an author's intent

Addresses a wider range of punctuation

Tests frequently confused words such as allusion/illusion

Thematic Features of the New SAT

During his career, Kingman exhibited his work ⁷ internationally. He garnered much acclaim. In 1936, a critic described one of Kingman's solo exhibits as "twenty of the freshest, most satisfying water colors that have been seen hereabouts in many a day."

7. Which choice most effectively combines the sentences at the underlined portion?

- A) internationally, and Kingman also garnered
- B) internationally; from exhibiting, he garnered
- C) internationally but garnered
- D) internationally, garnering



Essay Example

Is based on a common prompt

Measures students' ability to explain how an author crafts an argument

Rates students on strength of analysis and coherence of writing

Thematic Features of the New SAT


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

- evidence, such as facts or examples, to support claims.
 - reasoning to develop ideas and 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 will appear here]

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.



Should you take the Subject Area Tests?

Very similar to
AP exams

- **No more
subject area
tests (AP
exams only)**

Similar length, different rhythm and pace



ACT



SAT



The **ACT**[®]

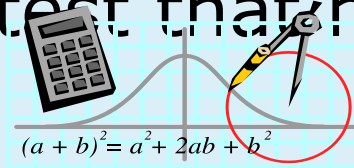


TEST PREPARATION
ELHS HIGH SCHOOL
COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

What is the ACT?

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- The ACT is a nationally administered, standardized paper-and-pencil test that helps colleges evaluate candidates.
- Standardized meaning the same test is given in the same conditions across the country.
- Thus a “fair” comparison is made with peers across the United States.



Scoring

32

- The scores range from 1 to 36 in each section
- The composite score is calculated by averaging the four sections
- Super scoring is now allowed
- Answer all questions

About the ACT

33

- The ACT has four sections:
 1. English
 2. Math
 3. Reading
 4. Science
- The ACT plus test includes a Writing test



ACT English Test

34

Content/Skills	Number of Items
Usage/Mechanics	40
Punctuation	10
Grammar and Usage	12
Sentence Structure	18
Rhetorical Skills	35
Strategy	12
Organization	11
Style	12
Total	75

Top 10 Strategies for the ACT English Test

35

1. **Skim** an English **passage** before starting work on the questions.
2. On questions that ask you to judge a passage, lean toward selecting a choice that favors it.
3. Choose answers that match the level of formality of the entire passage.
4. The best way to write something is the shortest correct way of writing it.
5. If you speak a "nonstandard" dialect, be extra careful with questions that focus on idioms.
6. Watch for subject-verb and noun-pronoun agreement.
7. Make sure parenthetical phrases begin and end with the same punctuation mark.
8. Look out for sentence fragments and run-on sentences.
9. Make sure that nouns and pronouns are modified by adjectives, and that verbs and adjectives are modified by adverbs.
10. Learn the difference between *it's* and *its*.

ACT Mathematics Test

36

Content/Skills	Number of Items
Pre-Algebra	14
Elementary Algebra	10
Intermediate Algebra	9
Coordinate Geometry	9
Plane Geometry	14
Trigonometry	4
Total	60

Top 3 Strategies for the ACT Math Test

37

1. **Understand:** Focus on the question stem and think to yourself, "What kind of question is this? **What am I looking for?** What information am I given?"
2. **Analyze:** Don't start crunching numbers until you've given the problem a little thought. Look for patterns and shortcuts. Ask yourself, "What's a quick and reliable way to find the correct answer?"
3. **Select:** Once you get an answer—or once you get stuck—check the answer choices. If your answer is listed, fill in the bubble and move on. If it's not clear, narrow down the choices as best as you can by a **process of elimination** and then guess.

ACT Reading: Finding the Low Hanging Fruit



Structure:

- 40 questions in 35 minutes
- 4 passages: Fiction, Social Science, Humanities, Natural Science
- 10 questions per passage

Pacing Concerns:

- Average of 8 minutes per passage
- Difficulty level of questions within passages is random
- 3rd & 4th passages tend to be more difficult than 1st & 2nd
- Questions only contain line references about 50% of the time

Top 8 Strategies for the ACT Reading Test

39

1. Read actively, with an eye toward where the author is going.
2. Don't get bogged down in the specific details of the passage.
3. Don't let the answer choices direct your thinking.
4. Always refer to the passage before choosing an answer.
5. Build a mental road map for all nonfiction passages - an outline of the major points covered.
6. Don't try to construct a mental road map for the Prose Fiction passage. Instead, pay attention to the story and the characters.
7. When given a specific line reference, always read a few sentences before and after the cited lines, to get a sense of the context.
8. Answer the easy questions for each passage first. Skip the tough ones and come back to them later.

ACT Science: Data Analysis



Structure

- 40 questions in 35 minutes
- 6-7 passages: Data Representation, Research Summary, Conflicting Hypotheses
- 5-7 questions per passage
- Contains little to no Science content; focuses on methodology and data analysis

Pacing Concerns

- Average of 5-6 minutes per passage, to both read and answer
- Difficulty ascends from passage to passage and on questions within passages
- Some passages will likely be harder than others, thus requiring more time
- Questions almost always refer to specific components of the passage

Top 8 Strategies for the ACT Science Test

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1. Read through the instructions carefully, to orient yourself.
2. **Don't worry about details on your initial read-through.**
3. Always refer to the passage and the question-stem before selecting an answer.
4. In order to read most graphs and tables, you have to do four things: determine what's being represented, **determine what the axes represent**, take note of units of measurement, and look for trends in the data.
5. When reading data, you should be on the lookout for the three characteristic patterns or trends: extremes (maximums and minimums), critical points (or points of change), and direct or inverse variation (or proportionality).
6. If time is a problem, focus on the questions that require analyzing data from just a single table or graph.
7. Don't waste time trying to figure out which scientist is "right." Just worry about understanding their different viewpoints.
8. **Don't panic** if you don't understand both scientists' positions. Many questions will hinge on just one of the arguments.

How to Prepare



- The best way for students to prepare for the college entrance exams is by taking challenging courses and by **reading** and writing as much as possible.
- ACT and SAT Prep Booklets available in guidance office (limited quantities)
- www.number2.com; www.March2Success.com
- www.highfivescholarships.com

How to prepare (cont.)



- **Test Day Simulator: an interactive sneak peek inside an SAT administration**
(sat.collegeboard.org/register/sat-test-day-simulator)
- **Answers imagined: a creative exploration of answers to SAT practice questions**
(sat.collegeboard.org/practice/answers-imagined)
- **Kahn Academy**

Testing Best Practices



1. Do not take an official exam as “practice” test.
 - Very few students are happy with their first efforts.
 - Poor scores may end up on students’ applications.
2. Select the test carefully.
 - Choose the test that is right for you.
 - There is no need to take both exams.
3. Select the test dates carefully.
 - Students should have a game plan for testing.
 - SAT & ACT scores are valid for 5 years.

Testing Best Practices



4. Prepare diligently.

- Set a time frame (approximately 2 months) and a study schedule (2-3 sessions per week).
- Use test prep materials whenever possible. (For SAT get a book that was recently published.)
- Take full-length practice tests under testing conditions as a part of practice.

5. Take the selected exam at least twice.

- The second exam will be a security blanket on the student's first test.
- Students will remember the strategies they learned during preparation and can build upon them between test dates.
- If students are diligent, they can be done with testing as quickly as possible.

Tips for Test Day

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- **Answer the easy questions first**, then go back and answer the more difficult ones if you have time remaining on that test.
- On difficult questions, **eliminate** as many **incorrect answers** as you can, then make an educated guess among those remaining.
- **Encourage yourself** with each correct answer.
- **Answer every question**. Your scores on the multiple-choice tests are based on the number of questions you answer correctly. **There is no penalty for guessing**.
- If you complete a test before time is called, **recheck your work** on that test.
- Mark your answers properly. Erase any unwanted mark completely and cleanly without smudging.

Testing Timelines



Test at the conclusion of junior year!

Test a little earlier for dual enrollment.

Test again at the beginning of senior year.

Take the same Test twice or more.

Registration



- SAT – collegeboard.com
- ACT – actstudent.org
- Create an account
- Set aside an hour to answer all questions
- Choose *four - six* colleges to receive your scores – there is a fee to add schools later

Payment



- The fee for ACT is \$60 and the SAT is \$55
- Free or reduced lunch?
 - Four waivers over a lifetime for ACT
 - Two waivers over a lifetime for SAT
 - Send free/reduced lunch verification to your school counselor, requesting a waiver
 - Waiver issued within 48 hours

It's Q&A Time!

