

# SAT ESSENTIALS

## **Getting to know the SAT**

### **What is the SAT and what is its purpose?**

- The SAT is a standardized test that measures your abilities in math, reading and writing.
- The SAT levels the playing field. Because all high schools are not equal in terms of course offerings, curriculum, grading scale colleges use the SAT as a scale by which to compare all students equally.

### **How important is the SAT in terms of the colleges I apply to?**

- The SAT is the second most important factor in a college's decision to accept you next to GPA.

### **When and where is the test given?**

- The test is offered 8 times a year in Aug, Oct, Nov, Dec, January, March, May, June.
- The test is usually given in *select* high schools.

### **How do I register for the test?**

- To register, go to [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)

### **What is the format of the test?**

- There are 4 sections: 1 reading, 1 writing and 2 math (one allows a calculator and one does not).
- There is also an optional essay section that comes at the end.

### **How is the test scored?**

- **Math** – graded on a scale ranging from 200-800
- **Reading and Writing** – graded on a scale ranging from 200-800
- **Essay** is a separately scored essentially on a scale out of 12

### **What score should I seek?**

- It depends on the college. For any school, you can simply google “(school name) + SAT score”
- The 50<sup>th</sup> percentile score on the SAT is roughly 1000 (or 500 per subject area)
- The 80<sup>th</sup> percentile score on the SAT is roughly 1200 (or 600 per subject area)
- The 90<sup>th</sup> percentile score on the SAT is roughly 1300 (or 650 per subject area)

### **What is super-scoring?**

- Most colleges use this. If you take the test multiple times, colleges will mix and match the best 3 subject areas – math, critical reading and writing – from each of the tests taken.

# Math Strategy

## Getting to know the SAT Math Section

The SAT math falls into Sections \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_ of the test:

- Section 3 (No calculator – 20 min) contains \_\_\_\_ multiple choice and \_\_\_\_ grid-in questions
- Section 4 (Calculator – 55 min) contains \_\_\_\_ multiple choice and \_\_\_\_ grid-in questions

How does the difficulty level work?

- The difficulty level on a given math section has *two “peaks”*.

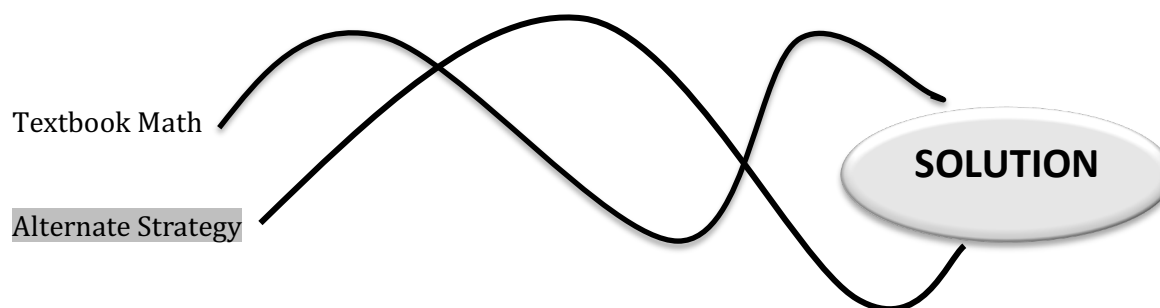
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Section 3	11	12	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	16	17	18	19	<b>20</b>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Section 4	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	21	22	23	24	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
	31	32	33	34	35	36	<b>37</b>	<b>38</b>		

What are the concept areas and about how much will I see each concept?

- Algebra (About 30 questions)
  - Solving/Manipulating Equations(8)
  - Functions (8)
  - Building Equations (6)
  - Systems of Linear Equations (4)
  - Inequalities (2)
  - FOILing/Factoring (2)
  - Dividing Polynomials (1)
  - Complex numbers (1)
- Statistics (About 14 questions)
  - Rates/Ratios/Proportions (6)
  - Interpreting data (3)
  - Percents (2)
  - Mean/Median/Mode/Range (2)
  - Probability (1)
- Geometry (About 11 questions)
  - Linear Graphs (4)
  - Non-Linear Graphs (3)
  - Trigonometry (2)
  - Triangles (1)
  - Circles (1)
  - Lines and Angles (1)
  - Solid Geometry (1)
  - Polygons (0-1)
- Arithmetic
  - Combining Like Terms (1)
  - Exponents (1)
  - Roots (0-1)
  - Absolute Value (0-1)

## Maximizing your math score

**Concept 1** – Know that there are \_\_\_\_ possible paths to many SAT math solutions:



Your alternate strategies come in three main forms on the SAT:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Concept 2** – Navigate the test in a way that maximizes score

- The easiest questions on the math are worth \_\_\_\_ point(s), and the hardest are worth \_\_\_\_ points(s)
- Because of this, you'll rack up points most efficiently using a 2-lap journey
  - In lap 1 - \_\_\_\_\_
  - In lap 2 - \_\_\_\_\_

**Concept 3** – The plus/minus system

- When you skip a question in lap 1
  - Use a \_\_\_\_ sign if it's something you may be able to tackle
  - Use a \_\_\_\_ sign if it's something you feel completely lost on

**Concept 4** – Grid-in questions first?

- The grid-ins are stressful when time is short so it suits some to knock these out first. Give it a try!



## Strategy 1: Choose numbers

**Choosing numbers** means replacing an *abstract idea* with a *concrete number*



### Abstract

- “The integer  $x$  ...”
- “An even number ...”
- “A negative integer  $n$  ...”
- “The cost of a television ...”
- “Jeff’s hourly wage ...”

### Concrete

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Choosing numbers is a possibility in any situation with an \_\_\_\_\_

Consider two important issues when you choose numbers:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Warm up examples:

1. A number  $r$  is increased by 5 and the result is multiplied by 5. This result is decreased by 5. Finally, that result is divided by 5. In terms of  $r$ , what is the final result?

- (A)  $r - 5$   
 (B)  $r - 1$   
 (C)  $r$   
 (D)  $r + 4$   
 (E)  $5(r + 5)$

Choose an  $r$ :

So the ‘final result’ =

2. If  $\frac{4a}{b} = 2$ , what is the value of  $\frac{8b}{a}$

- (A) 4  
 (B) 8  
 (C) 16  
 (D) 32

Choose a:    Choose b:

So  $\frac{8b}{a} =$

## Strategy 1: Choose numbers (Algebraic Expressions)

**Choosing numbers** is an excellent strategy in the high level algebra questions ...

3. If  $x > 2$ , which of the following is equivalent to

$$\frac{\frac{1}{x+4} + \frac{1}{x-2}}{?}$$

(A)  $x^2 + 2x - 8$

(B)  $2x + 2$

(C)  $\frac{2x+2}{x^2 + 2x - 8}$

(D)  $\frac{x^2 + 2x - 8}{2x+2}$

4. The expression  $\frac{9x-5}{x+2}$  is equivalent to which of the following?

(A)  $\frac{9-5}{2}$

(B)  $9 - \frac{5}{x+2}$

(C)  $9 - \frac{5}{2}$

(D)  $9 - \frac{23}{x+2}$

5. If  $x - 2y = 10$ , what is the value of  $\frac{2^{2y+12}}{2^x}$

(A)  $2^2$

(B)  $2^{10}$

(C)  $2^{12}$

(D)  $2^{22}$

$$y^3 - 7y^2 + 3y - 21$$

6. Which of the following is equivalent to the expression shown above?

(A)  $(y - 7)(y + 3)$

(B)  $(y - 7)(y^2 + 3)$

(C)  $3y(y - 7)$

(D)  $3y^2(y - 7)$



# Strategy 1: Choose numbers

(Functions)

Reveal qualities of a function by **choosing numbers** for the \_\_\_\_\_

$$N = 15h + 1350$$

7. The growth rate of bacteria in a petri dish is modeled by the function above. The number of bacteria cells  $N$  is expressed in terms of  $h$ , the number of hours since the start of the experiment. Based on the model, what is the estimated increase in number of bacteria cells each hour?

- (A) 15  
(B) 90  
(C) 1350  
(D) 1365

$h = 1$  leads to  $N =$  \_\_\_\_\_

$h =$  \_\_\_\_\_ leads to  $N =$  \_\_\_\_\_

8. Which of the following equations has a graph in the  $xy$ -plane for which  $y$  is always less than or equal to  $-1$ ?

- (A)  $y = (x - 1)^2$   
(B)  $y = -1 - |x|$   
(C)  $y = |x - 1|$   
(D)  $y = x - x^2$

9. The cost of using the internet is a \$5 flat fee, plus \$0.10 for every minute of use. Which of the following represents the cost,  $c$ , in dollars, for  $h$  hours of internet use?

- (A)  $c = 5 + 0.10\left(\frac{h}{60}\right)$   
(B)  $c = 5 + 0.10(60h)$   
(C)  $c = 5 + \frac{60h}{0.10}$   
(D)  $c = 5 + \frac{0.10}{60h}$

10. A particular fund has an average monthly interest rate of 2.5%. If the initial amount deposited in the fund is \$200, which of the following functions ( $f$ ) models the balance of the account, in dollars,  $t$  years after the initial deposit is made?

- (A)  $f(t) = 200(1.025)^{\frac{t}{12}}$   
(B)  $f(t) = 200(1.025)^{12t}$   
(C)  $f(t) = 200(1.25)^{\frac{t}{12}}$   
(D)  $f(t) = 200(1.25)^{12t}$

# Strategy 1: Choose numbers

(Word Problems)

When **choosing numbers** for word problems, you'll apply a three-step method.

- 11.** Samantha purchased a bed at a store that gave a 15% discount off the original price  $x$ . She then had to pay a 8% sales tax on the discounted price. If the total amount she paid at the register was  $p$  dollars, which of the following represents  $p$  in terms of the original price  $x$ .

- (A)  $.162x$
- (B)  $.93x$
- (C)  $.918x$
- (D)  $1.07x$

Choose an  $x$ : \_\_\_\_\_

Attain a target: \_\_\_\_\_

← Find a match.

- 12.** Valerie and her husband each order a meal at a restaurant. Valerie's meal costs  $n$  dollars, and her husband's meal costs 4 dollars more than her meal. Assuming no sales tax, if Valerie pays the bill containing both meals, as well as a 25% tip for the server, which of the following expressions represents the total amount paid in dollars?

- (A)  $.25n + 1$
- (B)  $1.25n + 1$
- (C)  $1.25n + 5$
- (D)  $2.5n + 5$

- 13.** If  $m$  is the average of  $y$  and 20, and  $n$  is the average of  $3y$  and 40, what is the average of  $m$  and  $n$  in terms of  $y$ ?

- (A)  $.5y + 7.5$
- (B)  $y + 15$
- (C)  $2y + 30$
- (D)  $4y + 60$

- 14.** In a certain town,  $g$  gallons of fuel are needed to power a station for  $h$  hours. If  $h = g + 2.5$ , then how much longer is the station powered (in hours) with each additional gallon of fuel?

- (A) 0
- (B) 1
- (C) 2
- (D) 2.5

## Strategy 1: Choose numbers (Inequalities)

In inequalities, the \_\_\_\_\_ may guide your decision of how to choose numbers.

15. The initial cost of a Smithmade air conditioner is \$550, and the monthly cost to run this air conditioner is \$20 per month. The initial cost of a Jackson air conditioner is \$715, and the monthly cost to run this air conditioner is \$15 per month. For what number of months,  $x$ , will the total cost of owning a Smithmade air conditioner be greater than or equal to owning the cost of a Jackson air conditioner
- (A)  $x \geq 253$   
 (B)  $x \geq 36$   
 (C)  $x \geq 33$   
 (D)  $x \geq 4$
16. At 1pm, there were 12,000 gallons of water in a swimming pool with a capacity of 40,000 gallons. Starting at 1pm, a hose fills this pool at a rate of 4000 gallons of water per hour. If  $x$  represents the time (in hours) after 1pm, which of the following inequalities describes the set of hours where the pool is at or above capacity?
- (A)  $12,000 + 4,000x \leq 40,000$   
 (B)  $40,000 \leq 4,000x$   
 (C)  $40,000 - 4,000 \leq x$   
 (D)  $28,000 \leq 4,000x$
17. A certain scale attains the *measured weight* of an object,  $x$ , in pounds, where  $x > 10$ . This *actual weight*,  $y$ , in pounds, of the object may differ from the measured weight by as much as 0.7 pounds. Which of the following represents the relationship between the measured weight and the actual weight of a particular object?
- (A)  $y > x - 0.7$   
 (B)  $y > x + 0.7$   
 (C)  $y < x - 0.7$   
 (D)  $-0.7 < y - x < 0.7$
18. Let  $a$  and  $b$  be numbers such that  $a < b < -1$ . Which of the following **must** be true?
- I.  $|a^3| > |b^3|$   
 II.  $a^3 > a(b - 2)^2$   
 III.  $a^3 > a^2b$
- (A) I only  
 (B) I and II only  
 (C) I and III only  
 (D) I, II and III

## Strategy 1: Choose numbers

(Geometry)

For a geometric problem, you may **choose numbers** for \_\_\_\_\_

- 19.** The formula for the volume of a right circular cone is  $\frac{1}{3}\pi r^2 h$ . Given that cone A has a radius one third that of cone B and height three times that of cone B, find the ratio of the volume of cone A to the volume of cone B.

(A) 1 : 1  
(B) 1 : 3  
(C) 1 : 9  
(D) 1 : 27

- 20.** A rectangle was altered by increasing its length by 20% and decreasing its width by 10%. Which of the following represents the percent increase in the area of the rectangle?

(A) 8%  
(B) 10%  
(C) 12%  
(D) 20%

- 21.** The volume of rectangular prism A is 80 cubic inches. What is the volume in cubic inches of a rectangular prism that has one quarter the length, one half the width and twice the height of rectangular prism A?

(A) 20  
(B) 40  
(C) 60  
(D) 80

There's a tough constraint here. You have to choose numbers for dimensions of prism A such that  $(\text{length})(\text{width})(\text{height}) = 80$ .

Try it:

$$\underline{\hspace{1cm}} \times \underline{\hspace{1cm}} \times \underline{\hspace{1cm}} = 80$$

- 22.** The area of one face of a cube is  $3b^2$  where  $b$  is a positive constant. Which of the following gives the volume of the cube in terms of  $b$ ?

(A)  $3\sqrt{3}(b^3)$   
(B)  $9b^4$   
(C)  $27b^2$   
(D)  $27b^6$

# Strategy 1: Choose numbers

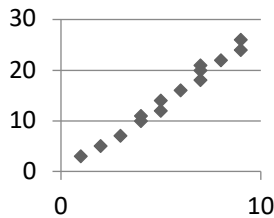
(Plots)

Plots are mainly just a visual representation of functions.

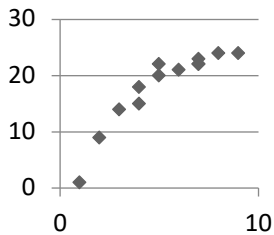
As you did for functions before, choose numbers for

23. Which of the following scatterplots shows a relationship that is appropriately modeled with the equation  $y = a\sqrt[n]{x}$  where  $a > 1$  and  $n > 1$  (Calculator ok)

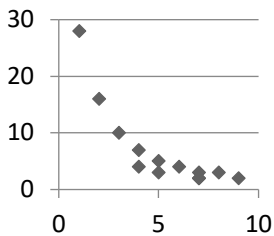
(A)



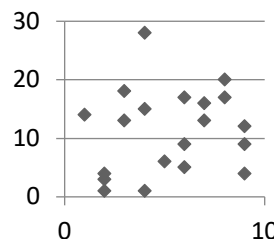
(B)



(C)

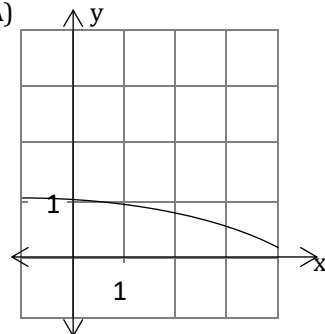


(D)

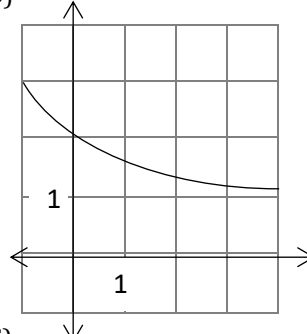


24. Which of the following is the graph of  $f(x) = 2^{-x} + 1.1$  in the  $xy$ -plane? (Non-calculator)

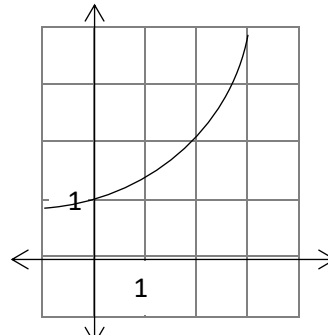
(A)



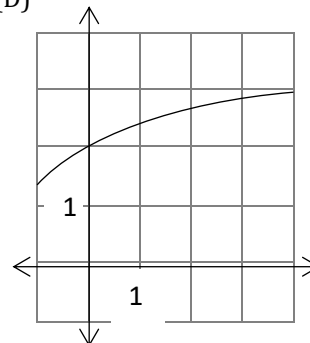
(B)



(C)



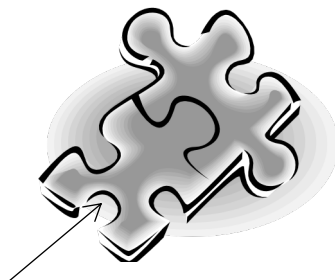
(D)



## Strategy 2: Work Backwards

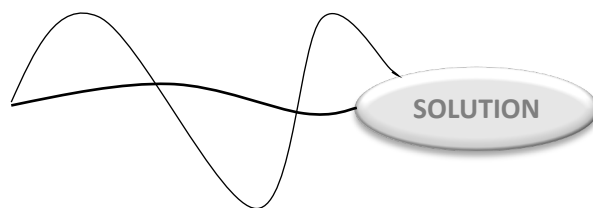
**Working backwards** simply means plugging in the answer choices to determine which one “fits”.

This strategy is a possibility when you see \_\_\_\_\_



**Warm up examples - Decide which is the quicker path:**

- Textbook math (just solving algebraically)
- An alternate strategy (**working backwards**)



25. If  $2x + 6 = 8$ , what is the value of  $x$ ?

- (A) 1
- (B) 2
- (C) 3
- (D) 4

26. If  $\frac{x+2}{x-2} + \frac{x+1}{x-3} = 8$ , what is the value of  $x$ ?

- (A) 1
- (B) 2
- (C) 3
- (D) 4

**Numeric answer choices don't always lead to a 'Work Backwards' opportunity.**

- In which question below is the test-writer **blocking** the option to **work backwards**? (#27 or #28)

$$\begin{aligned} 5x - 7y &= -27 \\ y^2 &= 2x^2 + 18 \end{aligned}$$

27. What is the solution set to the system of equations above?

- (A) (-3, 6)
- (B) (3, 6)
- (C) (-6, -3)
- (D) (-6, 3)

$$\begin{aligned} 2x + y &= 6 \\ y^2 &= (x + 3)^2 \end{aligned}$$

28. Given the system of equations above, what is the value of  $x + y$ ?

- (A) 1
- (B) 4
- (C) 5
- (D) 17

## Strategy 2: Work Backwards (1-Equation/1 Solution Cases)

Difficult to isolate the variable? **Working backwards** – just \_\_\_\_\_

29. For what value of  $y$  is  $|\sqrt{y} - 9| - 1$  equal to 1?

- (A) 7
- (B) 9
- (C) 49
- (D) 81

30. In the equation  $(mx - 15)^4 = 81$ , where  $m$  is a constant **and  $x = 3$  is one solution** to the equation, what is a possible value of  $m$ ?

- (A) 4
- (B) 6
- (C) 8
- (D) 9

Any time they tell you some solution,  
always \_\_\_\_\_

$$\sqrt{2k^6 - 28} - x = 0$$

31. If  $k > 0$  and  $x = 10$  in the equation above, what is the value of  $k$ ?

- (A) 0
- (B) 1
- (C) 2
- (D) 4

32. Which of the following is a value of  $x$  for which the expression  $\frac{\sqrt[3]{31}}{x^2 - 5x - 104}$  is undefined?

- (A) -13
- (B) 0
- (C) 8
- (D) 13

**Tip:** Don't always start with (A). Why not start by testing the choice that's \_\_\_\_\_.

33. The expression  $\frac{1}{4}x^2 - 5$  can be rewritten as  $\frac{1}{4}(x - k)(x + k)$  where  $k$  is a positive constant. What is the value of  $k$ ?

- (A) 2
- (B) 5
- (C)  $\sqrt{5}$
- (D)  $2\sqrt{5}$

$$9x^3 + 21x^2 + 16x + 4 = (mx + 2)(mx + 2)(x + 1)$$

34. In the equation above,  $m$  is a constant. Which of the following could be the value of  $m$ ?

- (A) -9
- (B) -3
- (C) 3
- (D) 9

Remember – test the easiest ones first!

## Strategy 2: Work Backwards

(Multiple Solution Cases)

In more complex systems, **working backwards** means \_\_\_\_\_

$$\begin{aligned} 3x + 5y &= 4 \\ 2y - x &= -16 \end{aligned}$$

35. What is the solution  $(x,y)$  to the system of equations above?

- (A)  $(-4, 8)$
- (B)  $(4, -8)$
- (C)  $(6, 2)$
- (D)  $(8, -4)$

$$\begin{aligned} x - y &> 1 \\ 3y &\leq x - 2 \end{aligned}$$

36. Which of the following ordered pairs  $(x,y)$  satisfies the system of inequalities above?

- (A)  $(-2, -2)$
- (B)  $(0, 1)$
- (C)  $(2, 0)$
- (D)  $(4, 2)$

37. What are the solutions to the quadratic equation  $24x^2 + 108x - 60 = 0$ ?

- (A)  $x = \frac{1}{2}$  and  $x = 5$
- (B)  $x = -\frac{1}{2}$  and  $x = -5$
- (C)  $x = 2$  and  $x = -5$
- (D)  $x = 2$  and  $x = 5$

$$\sqrt{2x - 2} = x - 1$$

38. What is the solution set of the equation above?

- (A)  $\{-1, -3\}$
- (B)  $\{0, 1\}$
- (C)  $\{1, 3\}$
- (D)  $\{-1, 0, 3\}$

$$5 = ax^2 + b$$

39. In the equation above,  $a$  and  $b$  are constants. For which of the following values of  $a$  and  $b$  does the equation have exactly two imaginary solutions?

- (A)  $a = -1, b = 6$
- (B)  $a = 6, b = 1$
- (C)  $a = 1, b = 6$
- (D)  $a = -6, b = 6$



## Strategy 2: Work Backwards

(Word Problems)

In a word problem, you'll try out one of the choices and run it through the scenario presented.

- If it's the wrong answer, \_\_\_\_\_
- If it's the right answer, \_\_\_\_\_

**40.** Amanda has \$120 more than Pedro. If their funds combine for \$1300, how much money does Pedro have?

- (A) \$470
- (B) \$530      ← Try starting with \$530:
- (C) \$590
- (D) \$710

**41.** The sum of three positive numbers is 720. One of the numbers,  $x$ , is twice the sum of the other two. What is the value of  $x$ ?

- (A) 120
- (B) 240
- (C) 360
- (D) 480

**42.** Over the first 3 exams of the semester, Julianna had an average test score of 80. What is the lowest score she can receive for the 4<sup>th</sup> exam and still have an average of at least 75?

- (A) 55      Can you *choose numbers* for this piece?
- (B) 60
- (C) 65
- (D) 70

**43.** At a restaurant, the total amount Anne paid was \$94.40 after an 18% tip was added. What was the amount of her food bill before the 18% tip was added?

- (A) \$77.41
- (B) \$80.00
- (C) \$93.28
- (D) \$93.58

## Strategy 2: Work Backwards

(Word Problems)

$$p = mv$$

44. The momentum ( $p$ ) of an object depends upon the mass ( $m$ ) of the object and its velocity ( $v$ ), where mass is measured in kilograms, and velocity is measured in meters per second. The formula above shows the relationship between  $p$ ,  $m$ , and  $v$ . If the momentum of an object is 400 kg-m/s, and it's velocity is greater than 60 m/s, what is the greatest integer value the object's mass can be in kilograms?

(A) 4  
(B) 5  
(C) 6  
(D) 7

45. A certain restaurant sells only burgers and colas. Each burger sells for \$4 and each cola sells for \$1. If Madison purchased a total of 9 items from the restaurant for a price of \$27, how many burgers did she purchase?

(A) 4  
(B) 5  
(C) 6  
(D) 7

46. On a certain stretch of road, there are 21 cars that hold a total of 58 people. Some of these 58 cars contain exactly 2 people and all of the rest contain exactly 4 people. How many of the cars on this stretch of road contain exactly 2 people?

(A) 4  
(B) 6  
(C) 8  
(D) 13

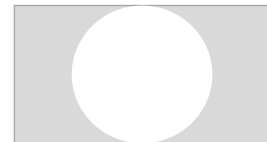
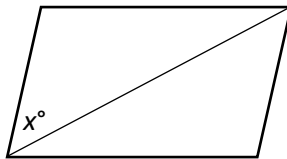
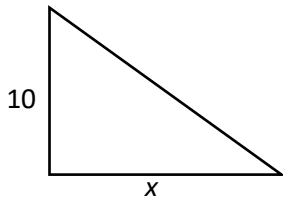
## Strategy 3: Eyeballing

**Eyeballing** means visually estimating a geometric quantity such as a length, area or angle.

You have an eyeballing opportunity anytime you see \_\_\_\_\_



Warm up: **Eyeball** the value of  $x$  in the three cases below:



Let the circle have area  $27.3\text{in}^2$   
and the shaded region have area  $x\text{in}^2$

If the test-writer wants to block your chance to **eyeball**, you'll see a circumstance like the one below:

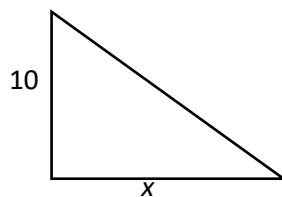
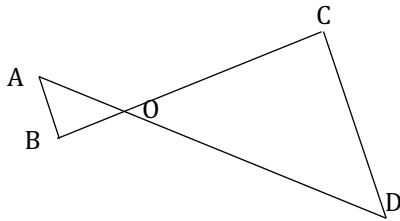


Figure not drawn to scale

# Strategy 3: Eyeballing

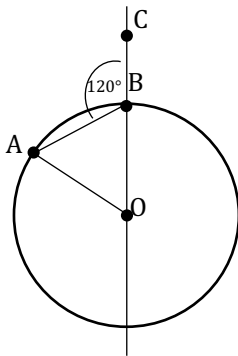
(Figuring length)

If you are eyeballing the length of a line segment, you can \_\_\_\_\_



47. In the figure above, line segments AD and CB intersect at point O. Line segments AB and CD are parallel. The lengths of AO, BO, CO and CD are 15 in, 12 in, 36 in, and 33 in respectively. What is the length of segment AB in inches?

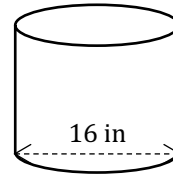
(A) 8  
(B) 10  
(C) 11  
(D) 12



48. Point O is the center of the circle above and points A and B lie on the circle. Point B also lies on the line OC. If the circumference of the circle above is 210 inches, and  $\angle CBA$  is  $120^\circ$ , what is the length of arc AB in inches? (Grid in your answer)

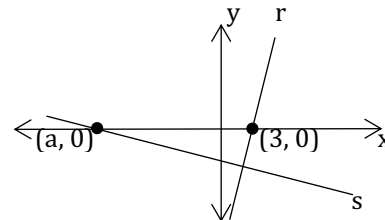
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**Tip:** You can eyeball a grid-in. Many geometry answers work out to easy round figures.



49. The cylindrical container shown above has a volume of  $768\pi$  cubic inches. What is the height of the container in inches?

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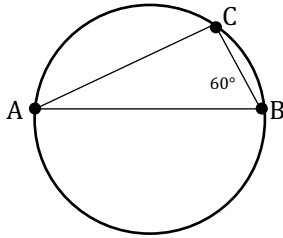


50. In the figure above, line r is perpendicular to line s. If line r has equation  $y = 3x - 9$ , and line s has equation  $y = mx - 4$ . What is the value of a?

(A) -3  
(B) -6  
(C) -10  
(D) -12

# Strategy 3: Eyeballing

(Areas and Angles)

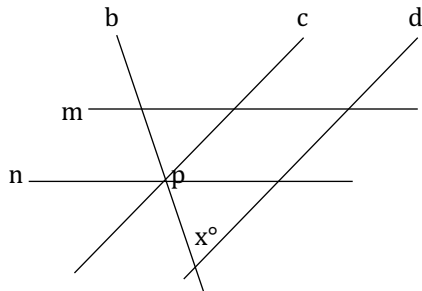


51. In the figure above, points A, B and C lie on the circle and make up a triangle such that side AB is the diameter of the circle. If the area of triangle ABC is  $18\sqrt{3}$ , what is the **area** of the circle?

(A)  $30\pi$   
(B)  $36\pi$   
(C)  $72\pi$   
(D)  $144\pi$

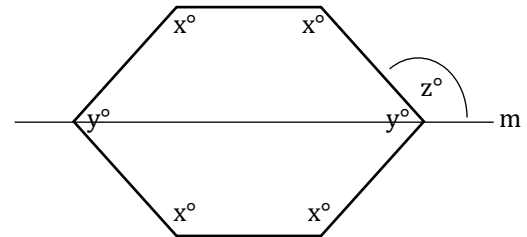
You know the triangle's area. About how many triangles will fit in the circle? Can sketching it out help?

Estimate angles by sketching a  $90^\circ$  angle 'on top' of the angle you are estimating.



52. In the figure above, lines m and n are parallel and lines c and d are parallel. Lines b, c, and n intersect at point p. If line b bisects  $\angle cpn$ , find the value of x.

(A) 64  
(B) 69  
(C) 74  
(D) 79



53. In the hexagon above, line m bisects both angles labeled y. If  $x = 2y - 70$ , what is the value of z?

(A)  $100^\circ$   
(B)  $130^\circ$   
(C)  $140^\circ$   
(D)  $160^\circ$



# Reading 1: The Five Wrong Answer Types

## **Inside the SAT Reading Section**

### **What is the structure of the reading section?**

- 5 passages – 1 literature passage, 2 history/social studies passages and 2 science passages
- 10-11 questions per passage
- The final passage will be a *paired passage*

### **How does the pacing break down?**

- You have 65 minutes to complete the section – that's **13** minutes per passage
- If you take 4 minutes to read a passage, that leaves almost 1 minute per question

### **What skill-set is being tested?**

- Reading Comprehension
- Researching ability
- Vocabulary
- Data Analysis

### **How does the difficulty level work?**

- The difficulty level of the passages does not increase as you go through the section
- The difficulty level of the questions comes in no specific order.



# Critical Reading Passages

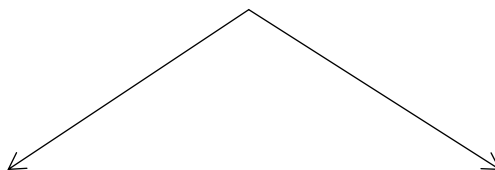
## Finding the wrong answer

- Our first goal is to make you an expert on finding the *wrong answers* on SAT passage questions.
- The test writer actually has a repetitive formula for writing wrong answers.
  - Every wrong answer can be lumped into one of five types
  - Knowing the wrong answer types means being able to avoid them!

### - The Test-Maker's 5 Wrong Answer Types:

- (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- (4) \_\_\_\_\_
- (5) \_\_\_\_\_

- Given this new information, you now have two valid routes for answering passage questions,



**Traditional route:** Predict a reasonable answer, and select the answer closest to that prediction:

The question in lines 4-5 is based on which of the following assumptions?

- (A) Direct observation is the only reliable method of conducting sleep research
- (B) People will yawn most frequently in the moments before they fall asleep.
- (C) **There is a direct correlation between yawning and sleepiness.**
- (D) Yawning is a behavior over which individuals exert little conscious control.
- (E) Conducting sleep research is a time-consuming process.

**Elimination Route:** Eliminate the wrong answers and select what remains:

The question in lines 4-5 is based on which of the following assumptions?

- (A) Direct observation is the only reliable method of conducting sleep research
- (B) People will yawn most frequently in the moments before they fall asleep.
- (C) **There is a direct correlation between yawning and sleepiness.**
- (D) Yawning is a behavior over which individuals exert little conscious control.
- (E) Conducting sleep research is a time-consuming process.

- The best test-takers keep both routes in mind and even use them in combination.

# Critical Reading Passages

## Wrong Answer Types

### NOT IN PASSAGE

- This is the wrong answer that brings up **info never mentioned** in the passage.
- Here, the test writer is luring students who will pick a choice simply because it is factually or logically true even if it is not covered in the passage.
- This is the most common type of wrong answer.

### OPPOSITE

- This is a choice precisely **opposite the author's information, intention, or tone**
- It only takes changing one word (*is to isn't, will to won't*) to create an OPPOSITE so the test-writer created this wrong answer type to snare students who are simply moving too fast

**EXERCISE:** Read the passage and slash ideas in the answer choices that are 'OUT OF PASSAGE' or 'OPPOSITE'.

5 The Hope Diamond is a large, 45.52-carat (9.10 g), deep-blue diamond, now housed in the Smithsonian Natural History Museum in Washington, D.C. It is blue to the naked eye because of trace amounts of boron within its crystal structure, and exhibits red phosphorescence after exposure to ultraviolet light. It is classified as a Type IIb diamond, and is notorious for supposedly being cursed. It has a long recorded history, with few gaps, in which it changed hands

10 numerous times on its way from India to France to Britain and to the United States. It has been described as the "most famous diamond in the world".

**These passages and questions in this lesson do not represent what you will see on the test. These were specifically designed as a tool to help teach this lesson efficiently.**

1. The primary purpose of the passage is to
  - (A) compare the characteristics of one particular jewel to those of similar specimens
  - (B) challenge the validity of a set of facts regarding a famous gem
  - (C) discuss a mystery that holds the interest of scientists throughout the world
  - (D) defend one possible theory of a geological phenomenon
  - (E) provide a brief description of a gemstone's physical characteristics and history
2. Based on the information in the passage, the author would most likely agree with which of the following?
  - (A) Mining the Hope Diamond was an extremely time consuming task.
  - (B) It is not well-understood why the Hope Diamond maintains its deep-blue color
  - (C) The curse of the Hope Diamond is one of the oldest geological legends.
  - (D) The history of the Hope Diamond has been well documented.
  - (E) There are many gemstones that maintain a fame equal to or greater than that of the hope diamond.

# Critical Reading Passages

## Wrong Answer Types

### WRONG PART

- This choice brings up info that *is consistent with the passage but inconsistent with the question*.
- WRONG PARTs were designed to get students who forget the question. Don't just select a choice because it contains passage info – make sure it pertains to the question!

### EXTREME

- EXTREMES contain wording that is **too strong**.
- EXTREMES contain words that are too emotional: *attack, condemn, criticize, bemoan, mock, laud*
- EXTREMES contain words that are too absolute: *all, none, everyone, no one, always, never*
- The test writer loves this trap because EXTREMES are often fully correct except for one tiny word.

**EXERCISE:** Read the passage and slash ideas in the answer choices that fall into **any** of the previous wrong answer types

Game of Thrones is a popular American epic fantasy television drama series. Filmed in a Belfast studio and on location elsewhere in Northern Ireland, Malta, Croatia, Iceland, and Morocco, it premiered on HBO in the United States on April 17, 2011. The series, set on the fictional continents of Westeros and Essos at the end of a decade-long summer, interweaves several plot lines. The first follows the members of several noble houses in a civil war for the Iron Throne of the Seven Kingdoms; the second covers the rising threat of the impending winter and the mythical creatures of the North; the third chronicles the attempts of the exiled last scion of the realm's deposed dynasty to reclaim the throne. Through its morally ambiguous characters, the series explores the issues of social hierarchy, religion, corruption, civil war and crime.

3. Lines 8 - 14 ("The first follows . . . reclaim the throne") serve to

- (A) describe the role of mythical creatures within the show's storyline
- (B) criticize a particular genre of television series
- (C) discuss three candidates for how one plot line would unfold
- (D) cite the locations in which Game of Thrones is typically filmed
- (E) provide a brief insight into the major story structure of Game of Thrones

4. Based on the information in the passage, the author would most likely agree with which of the following?

- (A) Game of Thrones is the most admired show among America's television audience.
- (B) Game of Thrones examines only serious social issues appropriate for adult audiences.
- (C) It is difficult to tell whether the intentions of certain characters in the program are honorable or evil.
- (D) Game of Thrones is filmed in many different locations in order to maintain viewer interest.
- (E) Game of Thrones has a simplistic storyline relative to other current television shows.

## Critical Reading Passages

### Wrong Answer Types

### TWISTED FACT

- TWISTED FACTS take two facts from the passage and merge them incorrectly
- TWISTED FACTS were designed to snag students who know the details but lost the bigger picture.

**EXERCISE:** Read the passage and slash ideas in the answer choices that fall into **any** of the previous wrong answer types

5 The house at 213 Myrtle Street wore an  
enchantment that could obscure it when it so desired.  
This was a handy skill, particularly when salesmen  
roved the streets or teenagers skulked about after  
dark, eggs in hand. Now there was a realtor at the  
gate. The smell of dozens of strange, foreign houses  
clung to her clothes. The house ached in its  
abandonment. Mrs. Leech was gone. A stranger had  
to lock the door behind Mrs. Leech when she last left  
10 the house, still asleep as she was rolled along on a  
strange wheeled bed. They shared a comfortable  
existence together, woman and house. Mrs. Leech  
had been a mere slip of a girl when her family moved  
into 213 Myrtle, the place still ripe with fresh paint and  
15 cut lumber. Her parents left, then her husband but  
Mrs. Leech stayed. Her bones creaked along with the  
settling of the pipes at night. The house did not want a  
new owner.

5. Which choice best describes what happened in the passage?
- (A) A house that is given human qualities becomes enchanted as a result of the departure of its owner.
- (B) A realtor is attempting to sell a magical house that is saddened by the sudden departure of the large family that lived there
- (C) A house with unusual powers and perception is left feeling lonely after the long history of its owner comes to a melancholy end.
- (D) A house located at 213 Myrtle Street recalls its former owner who left due to the actions of a local realtor.
- (E) An enchanted house was once occupied by a character named Mrs. Leech who deals with her sadness at having to move away to another home.
6. In lines 3-4, the author discusses the “salesman and teenagers” to indicate
- (A) a major reason why Mrs. Leech decided not to live at 213 Myrtle any longer
- (B) examples of people who are trying to avoid 213 Myrtle
- (C) two types of people who were never able to see 213 Myrtle as a result of its enchantment
- (D) situations when the house might obscure itself in order to create a more comfortable existence
- (E) how certain undesirable people would not notice 213 Myrtle unless Mrs. Leech allowed them to

**Final Takeaway – The test writer can make a choice wrong with just one little word. To avoid the traps, have razor sharp focus. Look for the ONE WRONG WORD.**

# Reading 2: The 7 Question Types

## The 7 Reading Question Types

Recall that the previous lesson focused on the test writer's **WRONG ANSWER TYPES**:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Today's lesson moves to the test writer's **QUESTION TYPES**, which can be lumped into three families

1. Whole Passage
  2. Specific Information
  3. Language In Context
- \_\_\_\_\_

4. Author Purpose
  5. Making Inferences
- \_\_\_\_\_

6. Evidence
  7. Reading Data
- \_\_\_\_\_

## The 7 Reading Question Types

- **Whole Passage** – “The primary purpose of the passage is to”

- The KEY ADVICE: \_\_\_\_\_

- **Specific Information** – “Lines 24-29, the author asserts that”

- The KEY ADVICE: \_\_\_\_\_

**EXERCISE:** Identify each of the question types below and approach them as directed. At the same time, identify wrong answer types!

5 Evolving from older bat-and-ball games, an early form of baseball was being played in England by the mid-18th century. This game was brought by immigrants to North America, where the modern version developed. By the late

10 19th century, baseball was widely recognized as the national sport of the United States. Baseball is now popular in the Americas, the Caribbean, East Asia and Europe. In the United States and Canada, Major League Baseball teams are divided into the National League and American League, each with three divisions: East, West, and Central. The top level of play is similarly split in Japan between the Central League and Pacific Leagues and in Cuba between the West League and East League.

1. The primary purpose of the passage is to
  - (A) outline the division of professional baseball organizations into different leagues
  - (B) explain how immigrants brought baseball to North America
  - (C) provide an overview of baseball's development and current state throughout the world
  - (D) describe how baseball was played prior to the 18<sup>th</sup> century
  - (E) show how baseball has attained its popularity in the Americas, Europe and Asia
2. Lines 7 – 10 (“In the United States and.....East, West and Central”) begin a comparison between
  - (A) The organization of leagues in the United States and that of Canada
  - (B) Two different sets of rules by which baseball is played
  - (C) The size of the divisions in the American League and that of the National League
  - (D) The structure of major league baseball in the U.S. and Canada verses that of all other countries
  - (E) The makeup of a set of leagues in one region of the world and those of two other regions of the world

## The 7 Critical Reading Question Types

- **Language In Context** – *“In context, the word ‘direct’ most nearly means”*

- The KEY ADVICE: \_\_\_\_\_

**EXERCISE:** Answer each language in context question below as just directed.

5 More than a few difficult years followed when Mr. and Mrs. Goldberg decided to split up. But they muddled through as best they could. They knew it was necessary to conduct themselves amicably, because it would indeed be detrimental to the kids if they were in a constant state of fighting. They had hired a mediator to deal with their financial affairs. The protracted negotiation wasn't a party for either side. First, all of the money had to be dealt with –

10 the bank accounts, retirement funds and sale of the house. Then there was an endless amount of personal property to divvy up. Of course the most drawn out matter was figuring out custody of the children.

3. In context, the word “amicably” in line 4 most closely means
  - (A) lovingly
  - (B) as long-time friends
  - (C) without hostility
  - (D) pugnaciously
  - (E) without romance
4. In context, “protracted” in line 7 most closely means
  - (A) precise
  - (B) complicated
  - (C) torturous
  - (D) time-consuming
  - (E) inciting



## The 7 Critical Reading Question Types

- **Author's Purpose** – *"The mention of Sarah and Maeve in paragraph 4 serves to"*
  - The KEY ADVICE: \_\_\_\_\_
- **Making Inferences** – *"Based on the statements in lines 43 -49, the author would most likely agree with"*
  - The KEY ADVICE: \_\_\_\_\_

**EXERCISE:** Identify each of the question types below and approach them as directed. At the same time, identify wrong answer types!

- During the late nineteenth century in the United States, many people thought it was improper for a woman to be a professional artist. Alice Barber Stephens got around this prejudice: she succeeded as a book and magazine illustrator but stayed out of the public eye by creating art and conducting business from home. She sold engravings to national magazines and illustrated the books of many novelists, including Louisa May Alcott and Nathaniel Hawthorne. As a young woman, Stephens studied at the Pennsylvania School of the Fine Arts, a member of the first class to admit women. She petitioned for nude drawing classes for women, later instituting such a class at an art school for women. She also founded an organization that fought prejudice against women artists.
5. In lines 1-6 ("During . . . home"), the author suggests which of the following?
    - (A) In late nineteenth-century America, established artists were exclusively male.
    - (B) It was harder for women artists to work alone than in the studio of an established artist.
    - (C) It was easier for artists to sell work to magazines than to art dealers.
    - (D) Stephens found a way to pursue her professional goals and maintain social respectability.
    - (E) Stephens demonstrated little regard for the opinions of mainstream society.
  6. The author includes the sentence in lines 9-11 ("As a young . . . to admit women") in order to
    - (A) illustrate one of many ways in which the Pennsylvania School of the Fine Arts broke gender boundaries.
    - (B) defend the belief that men and women should have equal access to all college programs.
    - (C) provide an example of how Stephens engaged in pursuits that brought women closer to the forefront of professional art.
    - (D) note the influence in Stephens' life most instrumental in her push for gender equality in arts.
    - (E) show how Stephens was able to bring the first nude drawing classes for women to a major college.

## The 7 Critical Reading Question Types

- **Evidence** – “The evidence for the previous question is found in lines”

- The KEY ADVICE: \_\_\_\_\_

- **Data/Charts** – “Data in the graph indicate that”

- The KEY ADVICE: \_\_\_\_\_

**EXERCISE:** Identify each of the question types below and approach them as directed. At the same time, identify wrong answer types!

5 During the late nineteenth century in the United States, many people thought it was improper for a woman to be a professional artist. Alice Barber Stephens got around this prejudice: she succeeded as a book and magazine illustrator by creating art and conducting business with publishers and authors from home. She sold engravings to national magazines and illustrated the books of many novelists, including Louisa May Alcott and Nathaniel Hawthorne. As a young woman, Stephens studied at the Pennsylvania School of the Fine Arts, a member of the first class to admit women. She petitioned for nude drawing classes for women, later instituting such a class at an art school for women. She also founded an organization that fought prejudice against women artists.

7. The passage suggests that an important characteristic of Stephens’ education was that

- (A) it paved the way for her to abolish all forms of prejudice in the arts.
- (B) she attended the same university as a number of other famous artists.
- (C) the school she attended was one of the first dedicated solely to fine arts.
- (D) she was accepted to a school that just recently reformed policies relating to gender discrimination.
- (E) she attended a school that she later worked for as a teacher

8. The evidence for the previous question can be found in lines

- (A) 4 – 7 (“Alice Barber . . . from home”)
- (B) 7 – 9 (“She sold . . . Nathaniel Hawthorne”)
- (C) 9 – 12 (“As a young . . . admit women”)
- (D) 14 – 15 (“She also . . . women artists”)

## The 7 Critical Reading Question Types

- Let's summarize. Here are the first 7 reading passage question types:
  - (1) **Whole Passage** – ask *what* the author stated as a whole
  - (2) **Specific Information** – ask *what* the author stated at a particular point
  - (3) **Language In Context** – ask *what* a single word means *in context*
  - (4) **Author's Purpose** – ask *why* the author stated something
  - (5) **Making Inferences** – ask you to *draw a conclusion* from what was said
  - (6) **Evidence** – ask where the evidence is for a previous question
  - (7) **Data** – ask you to collect information from a chart
  
- **EXERCISE:** Success starts with knowing your *terrain*. Can you identify each question type below?
  - *The primary purpose of the passage is to*
  - *Which of the following is stated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph?*
  - *The information in lines 45-53 serves to*
  - *The author discusses the “historical issue” (line 50) in order to*
  - *Based on the author’s “thoughts of the outsiders” (line 20), the author most likely agrees that*
  - *In line 58, “fueling” most nearly means*
  - *Which of the following states what happened in the passage?*
  - *The author of passage 1 would most likely regard lines 81-83 (“With . . . them”) as evidence of*
  - *It can be inferred that the author considers “misunderstood creations” to have been*
  - *The evidence for the previous question can be found in lines*
  - *Both authors would most likely agree that*
  - *The question in lines 4-5 is based on which of the following assumptions*
  - *Which of the following, if true, would most directly disprove what “Artists first thought” (line 2)?*

## How to *actively* read the passages

- **Read *actively*, not passively:**
  - Pretend each paragraph is its own 'mini' passage
  - Make it your goal to note the *main idea* of each paragraph as you proceed
- **But taking notes eats up valuable time – why should we do it?**
  - Take notes so that when you hit the questions, you can use them to target needed info more quickly.
  - Take notes to prevent you from turning into a zombie
- **Don't get hung up on the details.**
  - See below that main ideas fall near the beginning of each paragraph.
  - In the intro and conclusion, main ideas could also fall in the last sentences.
  - The rest of the paragraph is details – read them but don't obsess.

*Main idea – Main idea – Main idea – Main idea – Main idea – Main idea.* Blah blah blah blah blah blah blah Blah Blah blah blah blah blah Blah Blah blah blah blah blah Blah Blah Blah Blah blah blah blah blah Blah. *Main idea – Main idea – Main idea – Main idea – Main idea – Main idea.*

[illegible]

Main idea – Main idea – Main idea – Main idea –  
Main idea – Main idea. Main idea – Main idea – Main idea –  
Main idea – Main idea – Main idea. Blah blah blah blah  
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blah blah blah blah blah. Blah blah blah blah blah.  
Blah blah blah.

Main idea – Main idea – Main idea – Main idea –  
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*Main idea – Main idea – Main idea – Main idea –  
Main idea – Main idea.* Blah blah blah blah blah blah  
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blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah  
blah blah blah blah. *Main idea – Main idea – Main idea –  
Main idea – Main idea – Main idea. Main idea – Main idea –  
Main idea – Main idea – Main idea – Main idea.*

\*Exception to this rule – Fiction Passages

- **How do I deal with the paired passage?**
  - (1) Read passage 1 – then immediately answer passage 1 questions**
  - (2) Read passage 2 – then immediately answer passage 2 questions**
  - (3) Answer the *compare/contrast* questions last**

# The Overall Method

Bringing it all together

- *Read actively* – note the main idea of each paragraph
  
- Determine the question type and attack appropriately
  - **Whole Passage**      Let your answer encompass *the whole*, not just a piece
  - **Specific Information**      Be ready to expand your search *around* the cited lines
  - **Language in Context**      Look for the *link* in the surrounding context

} Content Based

  
- **Author's Purpose**      Consider the *entire paragraph* involved
- **Making Inferences**      The answer is a small jump *outside the passage*

} Logic Based

  
- **Locating Evidence**      Locate these right away – they can help with the previous!
- **Reading Data**      Confirm the right answer, as well as the 3 wrong answers

} Other

- Be prepared to use *two paths* when answering the question

**Traditional route:** Visualize the right answer, and find a match in the choices

**Elimination Route:** Eliminate your way to the answer by knowing the *wrong answer types*

- **Not in Passage** - never discussed
- **Opposite** – opposite the info or tone
- **Wrong Part** – from the wrong spot
- **Extreme** – too strong/too absolute
- **Twisted Fact** – incorrect merging of facts



# Writing 1

## Standard English Conventions

## Grammar Terminology Reference Page

- **Subject:** The subject of a sentence is the main focus to which the action, description, or discussion is directed.  
**Alexis** wrote the book.
- **Object:** The object of a sentence is the recipient of that action, description, etc.  
Alexis wrote the **book**.
- **Noun:** a person place thing or idea.  
Sharon, Paris, car, happiness
- **Pronoun:** a smaller word that takes the place of the noun.  
Clunky: **Sheila** found the book distasteful because **Sheila** thought it was too long for **Sheila's** liking.  
Better: Sheila found the book distasteful because **she** thought it was too long for **her** liking.
- **Antecedent:** The noun that is replaced by the pronoun is called the antecedent of the pronoun.  
**Jeffrey** needs to fix his **car** because it is not running well.
- **Verb:** describes the action of the subject or a state of being.  
Example: run, swim, think, write, eat, love, is, were
- **Modifiers** – words or phrases that describe the subject  
**Adjectives:** describe nouns  
the **quick** runner, my **thoughtful** brother, the **easy** test  
**Adverbs:** describe verbs, adjectives or other adverbs  
**quickly** running; my **extremely** thoughtful brother; completing the test **extremely easily**
- **Prepositions:** the great connectors of words  
to, across, around, of, for, past, about, from, through, over, into, toward  
They competed **against** each other. They competed **with** each other. They competed **for** the prize.
- **Conjunctions and Disjunctions:** connect phrases and clauses  
FANBOYS: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so.  
New York City is beautiful **but** too EXPENSIVE to stay long.  
New York City is beautiful **and** easy to get around.
- **Clause:** a group of words that form part of the sentence. There are independent clauses and dependent clauses.  
An independent clause is a whole sentence or part of a sentence that contains a subject, a verb, and completes a particular thought. A dependent clause is a part of the sentence that leans on the independent clause in order to make the sentence complete. Independent clauses can stand on their own two feet; dependent clauses lean on the independent clause in the sentence.
- **Phrase:** a group of words that use prepositions and do not contain themselves subjects and verbs in the group.  
We often think of phrases as sections of the sentence to help modify or extend the subject or to help form the connection between the verb and the object. Remember: the object of the sentence is the part that is taking the action.



## **Inside the SAT Writing and Language Section**

### **What is the structure of the Writing and Language Section?**

- 4 passages (400-450 words each) – 1 career related, 1 humanities, 1 social studies, 1, science
- 11 questions per passage

### **How does the pacing break down?**

- You have 35 minutes to complete the section – that's just about **9** minutes per passage
- You can also see it as about 45 seconds per question.

### **What skill-set is being tested?**

- English Grammar
- Reading Comprehension
- Vocabulary
- Data Analysis

### **What types of questions are asked?**

- The writing section has two main question types
  - Standard English Conventions (Grammar)
  - Expression of Ideas (Reading Comp)

### **How does the difficulty level work?**

- The difficulty level of the passages does not increase as you go through the section
- The difficulty level of the questions comes in no specific order.

## Inside the SAT Writing and Language Section

Today's focus is the grammar piece:

- The writing section has two main question types

**Standard English Conventions (Grammar)**

Expression of Ideas (Reading Comp)

What major grammar/usage issues are tested?

- Punctuation – commas, colons, semicolons and apostrophes
- Verb tense
- Verb Subject Agreement
- Noun-pronoun Agreement
- Ambiguous pronouns
- Modifiers
- Transitions
  
- Run-ons
- Fragments
- Conciseness
- Redundancy
- Idioms
- Homophones

**Some minor extras that could show up:**

- dashes
- parallelism

## General Strategy for Usage Questions

**STRATEGY ONE:** Eliminate strategically by \_\_\_\_\_

- Chicago is a large, bustling city, but it's residents still maintain a calm and pleasant attitude.

(A) No Change

(B) large bustling city, but it's

(C) large, bustling city but its

(D) large, bustling city, but its

← Three issues are in play. Don't start with the first; start with the easiest!

**STRATEGY TWO:** Cut to \_\_\_\_\_

- A valuable member of upper management, Thomas Jackson, who started with the company in 2005 along with several other key players, were able to lead the team to their sales goals.

Now **cut to the core** – the excess is meant to distract

~~A valuable member of upper management, Thomas Jackson, who started with the company in 2005 along with several other key players,~~ **were** able to lead the team to their sales goals.

**STRATEGY THREE:** Take your selected choice and \_\_\_\_\_

- "was one of the most famous directors," ← Here's a phrase that sounds fine on its own.

Now **plug it in** context, and notice how it does not actually work

"Jason McDonald, \_\_\_\_\_ came to our town."

**STRATEGY FOUR:** Eliminate \_\_\_\_\_

- Although Jackson was not the first member of his class to become published, his accomplishment turned out to be the most significant.

(A) No Change

(B) published; his accomplishment

(C) published. His accomplishment

(D) published his accomplishment

← If (B) were right, then (C) would have to be right too.

Since we can't have 2 right answers, they must both be wrong.



# Punctuation

High Difficulty

Number of Questions/Test: 4

There are four main punctuation issues to tackle

- **Commas**
- Colons
- Semicolons
- Apostrophes

**RULE:** Commas split two separate ideas in a sentence or split off a 'side note' from the main track

- *Jason usually works twelve hours per day, **but he doesn't put in a lot of effort.***
- *Although Jason usually works twelve hours per day, **he doesn't put in a lot of effort.***
- *Jason, **the founder of the Rexford Company,** usually works twelve hours per day.*

**TRY IT YOURSELF:** Where do the commas need to go below?

- Blue Jay Mountain which can be seen off to your left is never climbed in the dead of winter.
- Blue Jay Mountain is the toughest peak in this range and it is never climbed in the dead of winter.
- Blue Jay Mountain often obscured by clouds is certainly climbable but should be scaled with caution.

1. The man to thank for our favorite blockbuster last summer, movie director, Samuel Feinsburg has already won countless awards.
- (A) No change  
(B) summer, movie director, Samuel Feinsburg,  
(C) summer movie director Samuel Feinsburg,  
(D) summer, movie director Samuel Feinsburg,

2. Amelia finally felt somewhat renewed from her long night of sleep, but her cold, annoyingly holding on still gave her congestion.
- (A) No change  
(B) sleep but her cold, annoyingly holding on, still  
(C) sleep, but her cold, annoyingly holding on, still  
(D) sleep, but her cold, annoyingly holding on still

3. The mountain path, horribly covered in overgrowth, might someday be restored to its former glory but not in the coming season.
- (A) No change  
(B) former, glory but not  
(C) former, glory, but not  
(D) former glory, but not

# Punctuation

Medium Difficulty

Number of Questions/Test: 1

There are four main punctuation issues to tackle

- Commas
- **Colons**
- Semicolons
- Apostrophes

**RULE:** A colon can **introduce a list** or **detail an idea**. A colon is only placed after an *independent clause*.

- *There are three states trying to pass Amendment 103: New York, Arizona, and Delaware.*
- *Property taxes in Linsford are high: most home-owners pay over \$10,000 per year.*

**TRY IT YOURSELF:** Place the colon where it needs to go.

- *The new Model M sports car is fast it is clocked going over 200mph on some race tracks.*
- *The topics you'll need to understand come from three sciences microbiology, chemistry, and anatomy*
- *On her safari, which was treacherous at times, she witnessed the fastest land animal known the cheetah.*

4. Phillip had not campaigned enough in the rural areas of the state, so he would likely not get the backing he needed from farmers.

- (A) No change
- (B) state: so he
- (C) state so he
- (D) state: therefore he

6. The storm, with its high winds and damaging flood waters, wreaked havoc on the town, nearly every structure was significantly affected.

- (A) No change
- (B) town, nearly, every
- (C) town: nearly every
- (D) town: nearly each and every single

5. In the winter of 1911, the Forks River had become impassable due to a formidable barrier; the precarious ice jams.

- (A) No change
- (B) barrier: that being
- (C) barrier:
- (D) barrier; and this was

# Punctuation

Low Difficulty

Number of Questions/Test: 0-1

There are four main punctuation issues to tackle

- Commas
- Colons
- **Semicolons**
- Apostrophes

**RULE:** Semicolons are basically periods. They separate two independent clauses.

- *There are three states trying to pass Amendment 103; New York is one of them.*
- *There are three states trying to pass Amendment 103; however, New York is not one of them.*

**TRY IT YOURSELF:** Place the semicolon where it needs to go.

- *Emily is an amazing athlete she also carries a very high GPA.*
- *Emily is an amazing athlete on the other hand, her grades are not up to par.*

7. The trouble with our employees is not the most important issue, instead, we need to discuss a more effective and efficient management strategy.

- (A) No change
- (B) issue instead we
- (C) issue; instead, we
- (D) issue: instead, we,

8. Despite the fact that this past year has been strong – even remarkable – for the overseas branch of our business; we have seen little or no growth here at the home base.

- (A) No change
- (B) business, we
- (C) business we
- (D) business, but we

# Punctuation

Low Difficulty

Number of Questions/Test: 1

There are four main punctuation issues to tackle

- Commas
- Colons
- Semi-colons
- **Apostrophes**

**RULE:** Apostrophes establish possession. Apostrophes are placed differently for singular vs. plural items

- *My **brother's** swim meet will take place tomorrow.* (Referring to one brother)
- *My **brothers'** swim meet will take place tomorrow.* (Referring to multiple brothers)

**TRY IT YOURSELF:** Place the apostrophes where it needs to go – there are two spots to fill.

- *Marys two boys, Jackson and Eric, started college and moved to a nearby apartment. Her sons new residence would need some work, but was charming enough.*

9. The house was large, with four generously sized bedrooms. Every one of the bedrooms closets which were walk-ins, would offer plenty of room for clothing.

- (A) No Change
- (B) bedroom's closets, which were walk-ins,
- (C) bedrooms' closets which were walk-ins,
- (D) bedrooms' closets, which were walk-ins,

11. Georgia escaped the worst of the infestation; on the other hand, many of Alabama's farms crops saw mass devastation.

- (A) No Change
- (B) Alabamas farm's crops
- (C) Alabama's farm's crops
- (D) Alabama's farms' crops

10. The crew wanted to know three main things about the factory: its size, the year it was built, and the amount of repairs it would need to meet code.

- (A) No Change
- (B) factory; it's size, the year it was built,
- (C) factory: it's size, the year it was built,
- (D) factory: its size, the year it was built



# Verb Tense Errors

Low Difficulty

Number of Questions/Test: 1

**RULE:** Surrounding context determines tense.

**THE ADDED CHALLENGE:** It's a matter of reading comprehension. You may need quite a lot of surrounding context for this particular

- If you **are** interested in broadcasting, you've probably considered a number of exciting jobs in this field, including reporting or anchoring for a local news station. There certainly **existed** a number of schools in your area that may help make this career path a reality for you.

12. If you are interested in astronomy, you might want to find a way to pursue it on a regular basis. There were several clubs in your area that can help you explore this passion.

(A) No change  
(B) are  
(C) has been  
(D) once was

14. The incoming class at Bridgeford Law School certainly looked promising. But some students do not perform under pressure as well as others did, and may even fail out.

(A) No change  
(B) do  
(C) have  
(D) will

13. In 1972, to reduce pollution in the Great Lakes, limits having been set by the United States and Canada on the amount of phosphorus that could be discharged into Lakes Erie and Ontario.

(A) No change  
(B) had been set  
(C) were set  
(D) set

15. The girls accomplished the tasks they set out to do for the day. Most importantly, they mailed the letter that contained Sue's job application to the Minsford Company.

(A) No change  
(B) have mailed  
(C) will mail  
(D) were mailing

Extra Tip: Don't overthink it. The right answer is usually the most obvious on verb tense.

# Verb-Subject Agreement Medium Difficulty Number of Questions/Test: 2

**RULE:** A verb must agree with its subject *in number*.

- *Jason, the founder, usually **works** twelve hours per day.*
- *Jason and Steve, the co-founders, usually **work** twelve hours per day.*

**THE ADDED CHALLENGE:** The test writer will *create space between subject and verb*:

- **EXAMPLE:** *The magic show, which the large population of Ericstown had been highly anticipating for the last several weeks, **were** full of predictable tricks.*

**TRY IT YOURSELF** – find the error: *The vast array of assignments assigned to the already overloaded students appear to be enough work to last until the end of the year.*

16. The harmful effects of smoking on the vascular system is increasingly well documented.

- (A) No change
- (B) is increasing documented
- (C) are increasingly well documented
- (D) are increasing in better documentation

18. Workers hoping to take a prolonged leave of absence has often been disappointed when they find that they will be docked pay.

- (A) No change
- (B) being often disappointed
- (C) have often been disappointed
- (D) often disappointed

17. The grooved and barbed spears of the box jellyfish, each trailed by a poison thread, is released when the animal is threatened.

- (A) No Change
- (B) is releasing
- (C) has been released
- (D) are released

19. Jefferson's novel, written in his late thirties when his mind was most focused on childhood memories, depict a sense of longing for the past.

- (A) No Change
- (B) depicting
- (C) depicts
- (D) have depicted

# Noun-Pronoun Agreement Medium Difficulty Number of Questions: 2

Recall what pronouns are: *it, he, she, they, them, their, etc.*

**RULE:** A pronoun must agree with its subject in number

- *Jason and Steve, the co-founders, often find **they** work twelve hours per day.*  
Noun
Pronoun
- *Smithfield Shoe Store will be opening up **their** new location next month.*  
Noun
Pronoun

**THE ADDED CHALLENGE:** The test-maker will *create space between noun and pronoun*:

- **EXAMPLE:** *The **equipment** Aaron needs for the climbing trip, most of which is scattered throughout his basement and garage shelves, will be difficult to locate if **they** are found at all.*
- **FIND THE ERROR:** *The notion that the universe is expanding will, of course, always be difficult to prove because they can't be backed with any visual evidence.*
- **FIND THE ERROR:** *Since we can remember, the maple and birch have grown tall and in great numbers throughout the farm. It has always provided adequate shade for much of our livestock.*

20. Snow can certainly pose a hazard to drivers, but sleet and freezing rain are the main culprits in winter accidents because it creates the slickest road conditions.
- (A) No Change  
 (B) creating  
 (C) they create  
 (D) it will create

22. Before boarding, a passenger must purchase his or her tickets in the main concourse of the bus terminal, rather than on the bus.
- (A) No Change  
 (B) their  
 (C) one's  
 (D) there

21. Hershey, Pennsylvania was originally known as Derry Church, but its name was changed to honor one of their most famous residents.
- (A) No Change  
 (B) its  
 (C) it's  
 (D) our

23. John's statement regarding the dangers of illegal gun purchases are powerful because of their overwhelming candidness.
- (A) No Change  
 (B) is powerful because of their  
 (C) are powerful because of they're  
 (D) is powerful because of its

# Ambiguous Pronouns

Medium Difficulty

Number of Questions: 1

**RULE:** A pronoun must clearly connect to one and only one noun

- *Jason told Steve that the workload is too oppressive and that **he** should consider cutting his hours.*

*Unclear - Does the pronoun "he" refer to Jason or Steve?*

- *Smithfield Shoe Store will be opening up soon but **they** can't say exactly what day.*

*The pronoun 'they' doesn't really connect to anyone.*

**THE ADDED CHALLENGE:** The test-maker will make this a multi-sentence issue.

- **EXAMPLE:** *The multi-national bank was in financial crisis, lacking ability to lend out badly needed funds to the sinking Generex Corporation. No one knew if **it** would make it out of this mess anytime soon.*
- **FIND AMBIGUOUS PRONOUN:** *Sheryl met Elizabeth at the coffee shop early in the morning. Their task was to figure out the right time to begin work on her roof.*

24. The firemen did their best to rescue all the workers before any serious injuries set in. Just about everyone came out fine, but one of them did endure serious burns.
- (A) No Change  
(B) of these  
(C) did  
(D) of the firemen did

25. Jane keeps reminding Erin of the project that she needs to complete before tomorrow's end.
- (A) No Change  
(B) she needed  
(C) Erin needs  
(D) Erin is needing to

# Modifiers

High Difficulty

Number of Questions/Test: 2

A **modifier** is basically a descriptive phrase that wants to be next to the subject it describes

- *Considered the best candidate in the running by far, Josephine would almost certainly win the election.*
- Modifier
- Subject

**RULE:** A modifier must come *next to* the subject it modifies.

- NO: **Beeping and swerving**, the accident was narrowly avoided by **Max**.  

Modifier
Subject
- YES: **Beeping and swerving**, **Max** was able to narrowly avoid the traffic accident.  

Modifier
Subject

**TRY IT YOURSELF:** Rewrite the scratched out version.

- Overwhelmed with too many classes, ~~the grades Sarah earned were less than desirable.~~
- Overwhelmed with too many classes, \_\_\_\_\_

**26.** Traveling through Yosemite, the scenery of waterfalls and granite peaks, which we photographed, was beautiful.

- (A) No change
- (B) the waterfalls and granite peaks were the beautiful scenery we photographed
- (C) we photographed the beautiful scenery of waterfalls and granite peaks
- (D) what we photographed was the beautiful scenery of waterfalls and granite peaks

**27.** Dressed in a crisp, clean uniform, it reflected the efficient manner of the tour guide as she distributed maps for a walking tour of central Canberra.

- (A) No change
- (B) Dressed in a crisp, clean uniform, the efficient manner of the tour guide was reflected
- (C) Dressed in a crisp, clean uniform that reflected the efficient manner of the tour guide
- (D) The crisp, clean uniform of the tour guide reflected her efficient manner

**28.** Though now one of the most famous abstract artists, critics once ridiculed Jackson Pollock for his technique of splattering paint on canvases.

- (A) No change
- (B) critics once were ridiculing Jackson Pollock
- (C) Jackson Pollock once ridiculed by critics
- (D) Jackson Pollock was once ridiculed by critics

**29.** If asked to name a musical group with broad and lasting appeal, the Beatles would be the choice for many, no matter what kinds of music are actually preferred.

- (A) No change
- (B) the Beatles will be chosen by many people, no matter what kinds of music they actually prefer
- (C) the choice for many people, whatever kinds of music they actually prefer, would be the Beatles.
- (D) many people, no matter what kinds of music they actually prefer, would choose the Beatles

**30.** Lacking good instruction, my mistakes in creating a graph to illustrate historical trends were numerous.

- (A) No change
- (B) I made numerous mistakes in creating a graph to illustrate historical trends
- (C) there were numerous mistakes in the graph I created to illustrate historical trends
- (D) I created a graph to illustrate historical trends with numerous mistakes

# Transitions

High Difficulty

Number of Questions/Test: 3

**Transitions** link one idea to the next:

- Xavier is probably has the most natural talent on our team. **On the other hand**, he never comes to practice.

CONTRAST	SIMILARITY	CONTINUATION	SHOWING EXAMPLE	EMPHASIS
On the other hand On the contrary However In contrast	Likewise Similarly	In addition Furthermore Similarly Moreover	For instance For example	In fact As a matter of fact Indeed Certainly
	RESTATEMENT	CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER	CAUSE AND EFFECT	
	In other words To clarify	Previously Meanwhile Subsequently Finally	Consequently As a result Therefore Thus	

**THE ADDED CHALLENGE:** It's a matter of reading comprehension – you need to clearly understand the information prior to and after the transition.

**TRY IT YOURSELF:** One of the transitions below is incorrect. Which is it and can you fix it?

- The Bengal tiger has amazingly sharp claws that can tear through flesh, and sharp fangs that can puncture even the toughest of bone. **Consequently**, it is one of nature's most deadly predators.
- The martial arts master prepared his students with the most rigorous training program ever developed in the western hemisphere. **Consequently**, his students were not ready for the bitter competition at the tournament.

**31.** The famous battle depicted in the film *Braveheart* took place in northern England. On the other hand, many people assume it was filmed in the Scottish highlands.

- (A) No change
- (B) As a result,
- (C) Subsequently,
- (D) Moreover

**32.** One can make the case that Canada should not be referred to as our northern neighbor. Meanwhile, more than half of the states extend farther north than Canada's southernmost point.

- (A) No change
- (B) In fact,
- (C) As a result
- (D) Furthermore

**33.** Some people are convinced that dowsing, a method of finding underground water with a y-shaped stick, is

effective. Others, as a result, condemn the procedure as mere superstition.

- (A) No change
- (B) for example
- (C) therefore
- (D) however

**34.** One might think that many museums would house the Roman war chariots that are so familiar to us. On the contrary, these are very rare artifacts because by the sixth century B.C. they were no longer used in battle.

- (A) No change
- (B) Thus,
- (C) Likewise,
- (D) In sum,

# Writing 1 Summary Sheet

**Commas** – separate ‘side notes’ from the ‘main track’ and are used to split ideas in transitions

- The new policy, **which was passed last week**, will apply to all levels of the department.
- The new baseball stadium was funded well, **but** the staff was ill-equipped to run it properly.

**Colons** – to introduce lists or ideas

- The job requires three main items: **your references, your resume, and your cover letter.**
- Neptune is very distant planet: **its orbit lies roughly 4.5 billion miles from the sun.**

**Semicolons** – separate two related but independent clauses

- The journey will be a difficult one; few people have the strength to complete it.

**Apostrophes**

- All of the **neighbors’** yards are very well manicured. (Apostrophe indicates **multiple neighbors**)
- Our next door **neighbor’s** dog won’t stop barking! (Apostrophe indicates **one neighbor**)

**Verb Tense** - Know the surrounding context!

- Allison loved everything about the new house. She finally had her meeting with the sellers and ownership was transferred. The process ~~is~~ long but well worth it.  
was

**Subject-Verb Agreement**

- The crowd of teenagers, causing upheaval throughout the halls, ~~are~~ <sup>is</sup> now the biggest problem.

**Noun-Pronoun Agreement**

- Noun-Pronoun: Colorado, a prime destination for many climbers, is renowned for ~~their~~ <sup>its</sup> challenging peaks.

**Ambiguous Pronouns** – pronouns with no clear subject

- The congressmen discussed the new bill with the media. Afterwards, ~~they~~ <sup>the congressmen</sup> returned to the White House.

**Modification** – the item modified must be next to its modifier

- Well overdue for an oil-change, ~~a mechanic needs to give attention to Jeff’s car soon.~~ <sup>Jeff’s car needs attention from a mechanic soon.</sup>
- The merchant showed the diamond ring ~~to the tourist with amazing sparkle.~~ <sup>with amazing sparkle to the tourist.</sup>

**Transitions**

- On the other hand  
The candidate knew about foreign policy. ~~As a result~~, he was not well-versed in economic matters.
- <sup>in fact</sup>  
It’s will be an incredibly hot day. The temperature, ~~however~~, may exceed 100 degrees.





# Writing 2

Finishing Standard English  
Conventions

And

Expression of Ideas

## Inside the SAT Writing and Language Section

We still need to finish up the grammar piece:

- The writing section has two main question types

Standard English Conventions (Grammar)

Expression of Ideas (Reading Comp)

What grammar issues are tested?

- ~~Punctuation — commas, colons, semicolons and apostrophes~~
- ~~Verb tense~~
- ~~Verb Subject Agreement~~
- ~~Noun-pronoun Agreement~~
- ~~Ambiguous pronouns~~
- ~~Modifiers~~
- ~~Transitions~~

- **Run-ons**
- **Fragments**
- **Conciseness**
- **Redundancy**
- **Idioms**
- **Homophones**

What other minor issues *might* show up?

- dashes
- parallelism

# Run-On Sentences

Medium Difficulty

Number of Questions/Test: 2

A sentence with two *independent clauses* is a run-on. Basically, it sounds like 2 sentences jammed into one.

- Jeff plays baseball every year, he is the captain of his team. (Run on)  
Independent clause                      Independent clause

**RULE:** A run-on can be fixed in three main ways →

- Jeff plays baseball every year; he is the captain of his team. (Use punctuation.)
- Jeff plays baseball every year, and he is the captain of his team. (Use a conjunction.)
- As the captain of his team, Jeff plays baseball every year. (Make one clause *dependent*.)  
Dependent clause                      Independent clause

**TRY IT YOURSELF:** Fix the run-on below

- The rain outside is coming down in sheets, the downpour won't last long.

35. The board of directors has been up all night long, they need to come up with a plan to cut the corporation's expenses.  
 (A) No change  
 (B) long, the directors  
 (C) long, because they  
 (D) in

37. The biohazard crew took every possible precaution in handling the bacteria, they thought it was deadly, but it turned out to be innocuous.  
 (A) No change  
 (B) which they thought was deadly, but  
 (C) it was thought to be deadly, but  
 (D) and this they thought being deadly, but

36. The historians now turned their attention to studying the Incan Empire, it was the strongest civilization in pre-Columbian America.  
 (A) No change  
 (B) they were  
 (C) it being  
 (D) DELETE the underlined portion

38. The guidebook was the hikers' most valuable possession, pointing out the right path through the woods, it also served as entertaining reading material along the way.  
 (A) No change  
 (B) but it also served  
 (C) and they served  
 (D) while serving

**Tip:** Run-ons always occur at a comma.

# Fragments

High Difficulty

Number of Questions/Test: 2

The opposite of a run-on, a **fragment** is a sentence that cuts off short.

- The car, which is out back. (A fragment leaves you waiting for more...)  
Dependent clause

**RULE:** A fragment can be fixed in two main ways →

- The car, which is out back, **needs repair.** (Add a final thought.)
- The car is out back. (Remove a word to create an independent clause.)

**THE ADDED CHALLENGE:** A sentence can be super-long and still be a fragment!

- The car, which is one of the first in its class not only to run solely on electricity but also to reach sixty miles per hour in less than four seconds.

39. The new restaurant on fifth street, which has disappointed many people with its lack of organization and poor management.
- (A) No change
  - (B) which have disappointed
  - (C) disappointing
  - (D) has disappointed

41. Samantha, finding a way to win gold in all three areas of the competition, a feat which no one expected her to accomplish.
- (A) No change
  - (B) Samantha having found
  - (C) Samantha found
  - (D) Since Samantha found

40. The old church and nunnery at the edge of Hartsburg, first constructed as part of a project to revitalize a deteriorating neighborhood.
- (A) No change
  - (B) Hartsburg, which were first constructed
  - (C) Hartsburg was first constructed
  - (D) Hartsburg were first constructed

# Conciseness

Medium Difficulty

Number of Questions/Test: 2

**RULE:** Given two grammatically correct choices, the **most concise** one wins.

The SAT tests this matter in two ways:

(1) Reducing sentences

- **In consideration of these unusual circumstances**, we can make an exception for you.
- **Considering these unusual circumstances**, we can make an exception for you. ← Shorter = better

(2) Combining sentences

- **The lion is a voracious eater. It consumes** dozens of pounds of meat in one sitting.
- **The lion is a voracious eater, consuming** dozens of pounds of meat in one sitting. ← Shorter = better

42. In order to test the effectiveness of a new drug, doctors need a sample set. Speaking in a more specific way, doctors need a small segment of the population who are willing to take part in a medical trial.
- (A) No change  
(B) To be more specific,  
(C) More specifically,  
(D) More specific,

43. Investment bankers may earn a lot of money but don't necessarily have the most desirable profession. They work up to twelve hours per day in high-stress situations.

Which of the following most effectively combines the sentences at the underlined portion?

- (A) profession, and they work  
(B) profession, as they must work  
(C) profession, working  
(D) profession, in that they work

44. The judge wanted definite proof of the lawyers' accusations, and stated firmly that he would not allow their speculations.
- (A) No change  
(B) them to speculate  
(C) speculating on the matter  
(D) speculation

45. Climbers must learn the technical aspects of scaling rock faces as well as build muscular endurance. They must master the proper use of a variety of ropes and harnesses.

Which of the following most effectively combines the sentences above?

- (A) Mastering the proper use of various ropes and harnesses, climbers must build muscular endurance as well as learn the technical aspects of scaling rock faces.
- (B) Climbers, who must learn the technical aspects of scaling rock faces and build muscular endurance, must master the proper use of various ropes and harnesses.
- (C) Along with building muscular endurance, climbers must learn the technical aspects of scaling rock faces, which includes mastering the use of various ropes and harnesses.
- (D) Climbers must master the use of various ropes and harnesses to learn the technical aspects of scaling rock faces and building muscular endurance.

**Hint for the above:**

Combining sentences often relies on *modification*.

# Redundancy

Medium Difficulty

Number of Questions/Test: 2

**RULE:** An idea is **redundant** when it unnecessarily repeats a previous thought.

The company holds an **annual** Christmas party for its employees **every year**.

**TRY IT YOURSELF:** Can you find the redundancies below?

- The reason you can't go outside is because of the rain.
- Even though they were not due until Tuesday, he decided to return the books back to the library.
- The initial step in the process is to first heat the water to the proper temperature.

46. Although the doctors were confident that the surgery would cure the cancer once and for all, but the patient was consumed with worry.
- (A) No change  
(B) even so  
(C) however  
(D) DELETE the underlined portion

48. Jane's unsuspecting uncle was unaware and didn't realize the fact that dozens of his friends were waiting behind closed doors to sing Happy Birthday.
- (A) No change  
(B) unsuspecting uncle was unaware of the fact  
(C) uncle was unaware of the fact  
(D) uncle was unsuspecting, not knowing

47. The flammable liquids, which were prone to catching fire, should be removed from the shelves and put in a safer place.
- (A) No change  
(B) liquids, prone to catching fire, should  
(C) liquids are prone to catching fire and should  
(D) liquids should

49. The environmentalists' main goal was to save this now rare species of tree. These trees have lived on the island for the last several millennia.
- (A) No change  
(B) of tree, these being trees that have  
(C) of tree, and such trees have  
(D) of tree, which has

**Tip:** The "DELETE the underlined portion" option is a common feature of redundancy questions.

# Idioms

High Difficulty

Number of Questions/Test: 1

An **prepositional idiom** is a phrase that requires a specific preposition (to, for, in, with, by, etc)

- Susan has an incredible **ability to learn** language (Idiomatically correct)
- Susan has an incredible **ability for learning** language (Idiomatically incorrect)

**RULE:** There is no rule! Unfortunately, you just have to know the right preposition for the circumstance, but here are some common ones tested:

- Amanda is capable \_\_\_\_\_ learning language.
- Brett is forbidden \_\_\_\_\_ go out.
- Carly refused offers \_\_\_\_\_ assistance.
- Daniel is immune \_\_\_\_\_ the awful disease.
- Erika is preoccupied \_\_\_\_\_ this show.

50. A gutter system is extremely important for any house because it serves as a means for channeling water away from the foundation.

- (A) No change
- (B) serves as a means to channel
- (C) serves to be a means for channeling
- (D) serves in being a means to channel

52. SETI Institute, a non-for-profit organization in search of extraterrestrial life, was founded in 1984.

- (A) No change
- (B) in search for
- (C) for searching of
- (D) in search to find

51. Aside from monitoring bank employees, cameras can be used in the catching of footage of possible intruders after hours.

- (A) No change
- (B) in catching
- (C) as catching
- (D) to catch

53. The band of criminals, recently apprehended in Georgia, is cooperating with police in hopes of reducing the impending prison sentence.

- (A) No change
- (B) in hopes to reduce
- (C) in hoping to reduce
- (D) in hopes at reducing

## **Homophones**

**Medium Difficulty**

**Number of Questions/Test: 1**

**Homophones** are words that are pronounced the same but carry two different meanings.

- Calvin will be able to pay the **fare**.
- Calvin loves the rides are the **fair**.

**RULE:** No rule can help here. You just have to memorize your vocab, but here's the SAT's favorites:

- Put your clothes over **there**. / This is **their** car.
- Jack went to the car and changed **its** tires. / **It's** the best thing out there.

## **Your own vocab list**

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Vocabulary-related issues like idioms and homophones are tough to study for. The best you can do is use the space below to keep a list of the tough words you come across.

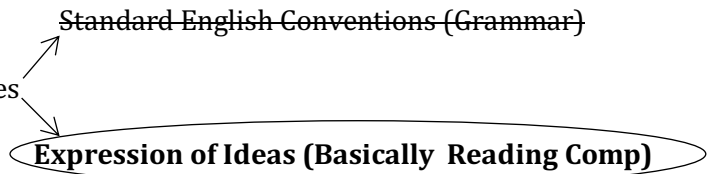


# Expression of Ideas

# Inside the SAT Writing and Language Section

Now onto Expression of Ideas . . .

- The writing section has two main question types



What grammar issues are tested?

- ~~Punctuation~~ — commas, colons, semicolons and apostrophes
- ~~Verb tense~~
- ~~Verb Subject Agreement~~
- ~~Noun-pronoun Agreement~~
- ~~Ambiguous pronouns~~
- ~~Modifiers~~
- ~~Transitions~~
- **Run-ons**
- **Fragments**
- **Conciseness**
- **Redundancy**
- **Idioms**
- **Homophones**

## **Expression of Ideas Questions**

**“Expression of Ideas” questions have FOUR main types:**

**Type 1 – Inserting a statement**

- “Which of the following, if inserted, would provide the most relevant detail?”

**Type 2 – Deleting a sentence**

- “Should the author delete the following sentence? (yes/no)”

**Type 3 – Logical placement of a sentence**

- “To make the paragraph most logical, sentence 4 should be placed . . .”

**Type 4 – Reading Data**

- “Which choice most accurately represents the information in the graph?”

### **The KEY ADVICE for all Expression of Ideas Questions:**

- You must treat all of these questions like **“speed bumps”**. Getting these right means committing \_\_\_\_\_ the amount of time that you are used to spending on the quicker grammar questions.

# Inserting Statements Medium Difficulty Number of Questions/Test: 7

These questions ask you about inserting *new information* into the passage.

## The KEY ADVICE:

- Identify the \_\_\_\_\_ for the insert.

**TRY IT YOURSELF:** In each question sample below, find the **exact reason** for the insert and underline it.

- Which choice provides the most logical introduction to the sentence?
- Which choice most effectively concludes the paragraph with a restatement of the main claim?
- Which choice best supports the statement made in the previous sentence?
- Which choice effectively links the first paragraph to the ideas that follow?

Modified passage excerpt from p. 578 in text book:

Studies have shown that **1** students are happier when they are supported in an environment that affords them adequate amounts of natural light. New buildings may be designed with these studies in mind, but many older buildings were not, resulting in spaces that often depend primarily on artificial lighting. While employers may balk at the expense of reconfiguring such buildings to increase the amount of natural light, the investment has been shown to be well worth it in the long run. Companies that have already spent money on such remodeling have **2** seen strong upward trends in overall efficiency in the following years.

For one thing, lack of exposure to natural light has a significant impact on employees' health. A study conducted in 2013 by Northwestern University in Chicago showed that inadequate natural light could result in **3** a significant drop in overall employee work output. Like any other health problems, these ailments can increase employee absenteeism, which, in turn, is costly for employers. **4** Employees who feel less than 100 percent and are sleep deprived are also less prone to work at their maximal productivity.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>1.</b> Which choice provides the most appropriate introduction to the passage?</p> <p>(A) No change</p> <p>(B) people are more comfortable when they converse in</p> <p>(C) financial entities are more organized</p> <p>(D) employees are more productive when they work</p>  | <p><b>3.</b> Which choice best supports the statement made in the previous sentence?</p> <p>(A) No change</p> <p>(B) eye strain, headaches, fatigue and depression.</p> <p>(C) greater incidence of lay-offs and firings.</p> <p>(D) a change in sleeping and eating habits.</p>   |
| <p><b>2.</b> Which choice most effectively concludes the paragraph by supporting the main claim.</p> <p>(A) No change</p> <p>(B) been able to pay off these large costs slowly over time.</p> <p>(C) watched other companies forgo this great opportunity.</p> <p>(D) seen a heightened sense of happiness and well-being in their employees</p> | <p><b>4.</b> At this point, the writer is considering adding the following sentence. Should the writer do this?</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;"><i>Employers already incur an abundance of financial obligations such as payroll, rent, and insurance.</i></p> <p>(A) Yes, because it explains the nature of what employers have to afford to stay in business.</p> <p>(B) Yes, because it provides supporting details to the main claim of the paragraph.</p> <p>(C) No, because it distracts from the focus of the paragraph with a loosely related detail.</p> <p>(D) No, because it contradicts the main point of the paragraph.</p> |

YES/NO insert questions ask whether a given insert is appropriate.  
First decide which side you are on - YES or NO.

## Deleting Statements Medium Difficulty Number of Questions/Test: 1

These questions ask you to consider **deleting** a statement from the passage.

**The KEY ADVICE:** The two most common reasons you *would delete* a statement are because it is:

- Irrelevant - \_\_\_\_\_
- Redundant - \_\_\_\_\_

Modified passage excerpt from p. 578 in text book:

Studies have shown that employers are more productive when they are work in an environment that affords them adequate amounts of natural light. New buildings may be designed with these studies in mind, but many older buildings were not, resulting in spaces that often depend primarily on artificial lighting. While employers may balk at the expense of reconfiguring such buildings to increase the amount of natural light, the investment has been shown to be well worth it in the long run. Companies that have already spent money on such remodeling have seen strong upward trends in overall efficiency in the following years. **5** Therefore such an endeavor will show its value over time.

For one thing, lack of exposure to natural light has a significant impact on employees' health. A study conducted in 2013 by Northwestern University in Chicago showed that inadequate natural light could result in eye strain, headaches, fatigue and depression. **6** Like any other health problems, these ailments can increase employee absenteeism, which, in turn, is costly for employers. Employees who feel less than 100 percent and are sleep deprived are also less prone to work at their maximal productivity.

Remember, the main reasons for deletion are *irrelevance* and *redundancy*.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>5.</b> The writer is considering deleting the underlined sentence. Should the writer do this?</p> <p>(A) No, because it provides a new detail that supports the main topic of the paragraph.</p> <p>(B) No, because it continues the explanation of how natural lighting will make workers more productive.</p> <p>(C) Yes, because it blurs the paragraph's main focus with an irrelevant detail.</p> <p>(D) Yes, because it repeats information that has been provided earlier in the paragraph.</p> | <p><b>6.</b> The writer is considering deleting the underlined sentence. Should the writer do this?</p> <p>(A) No, because it explains the connection between employee health problems and employer costs.</p> <p>(B) No, because it provides a reason why employees should be concerned about their health.</p> <p>(C) Yes, because it repeats information that has been provided earlier in the paragraph.</p> <p>(D) Yes, because it contradicts the main argument of the paragraph.</p> |
|--|---|

## Logical Placement

**Highest Difficulty****Number of Questions/Test: 2**

These questions ask where it is most logical to place a sentence in the passage

Of all questions on the writing section, these are by far the most \_\_\_\_\_

**The KEY ADVICE:** Have a logical system - - -

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Modified passage excerpt from p. 578 in text book:

[1] Studies have shown that employees are more productive when they work in an environment that affords them adequate amounts of natural light. [2] New buildings may be designed with these studies in mind, but many older buildings were not, resulting in spaces that often depend primarily on artificial lighting. [3] While employers may balk at the expense of reconfiguring such buildings to increase the amount of natural light, the investment has been shown to be well worth it in the long run – for both employees and employers. [4] Companies that have already spent money on such remodeling have seen great leaps in overall efficiency almost immediately.

**7.** The writer wants to add the following sentence to the paragraph.

*The employees, feeling more energetic, are likely to accomplish much more in a work day, and the employers will earn more money having a productive staff.*

The best placement for the sentence is immediately

- (A) after sentence 1
- (B) after sentence 2
- (C) after sentence 3
- (D) after sentence 4

**EXTRA TIP:** Consider the advantages of skipping logical placement questions and saving for last:

1. You stay on pace and in the zone not dealing with these worst of ‘speed bumps’
2. You can really dedicate the proper time and focus to these knowing that all else is done.

## Reading Data

**Low Difficulty****Number of Questions/Test: 1-2**

These questions involve reading data from fairly simple charts.

**The KEY ADVICE:**

- Just be thorough – prove to yourself not just that one is right **but also** that \_\_\_\_\_

# Writing 2 Summary Sheet

## Standard English Conventions

### Fragments – incomplete sentences

- The bald eagle, one of the most impressive birds. (Wrong - incomplete)
- The bald eagle is one of the most impressive birds. (Correct)

### Run-ons – “overfull sentences”

- The church renovation will help the town immensely, it will be expensive. (Wrong – run-on)
- The church renovation will help the town immensely, but it will be expensive. (Correct)
- The church renovation will help the town immensely; however it will be expensive. (Correct)
- Although the church renovation will help the town immensely, it will be expensive. (Correct)

### Conciseness

- The charity helps many local communities. This organization is engaged in providing food for the homeless. (**Wordy**)
- The charity helps many local communities, providing food for the homeless. (**Simple and direct = correct**)

### Redundancy

- The company annually distributes more than one million fliers ~~each year~~.
- The furniture store saw that their stain guard is a flammable chemical, ~~which is able to catch fire~~, and thus is dangerous.

### Idioms – use of the proper preposition

- John is capable ~~to run~~ of running.
- John has an ability ~~for learning~~ to learn language.
- John is preoccupied ~~on~~ with video games.

### Homophones

- The applicant didn't know ~~wear~~ where the job interview would be held.

## Expression of Ideas

- Inserting statements – determine the exact reason for the insert
- Deleting statements – delete if *irrelevant* or *redundant*
- Logical placement – eliminate the impossible/plug the remaining in and reread
- Reading Data – be thorough by confirming that 3 choices are truly wrong





# Optional Essay

## Optional SAT Essay Portion

### The basic task

- 50 minutes
- Read an article that contains a **thesis** and several **supporting arguments**
- Summarize that article by showing how the article persuades the reader of some point/course of action

### Major grading points:

- Two graders judge your essay on a scale from 1-4 in three categories
  - o Reading – your ability to capture the author’s **thesis** and *all* **supporting arguments**
  - o Analysis – your ability to capture the author’s **evidence** and **persuasive elements**
  - o Writing – the quality of your written language (grammar, spelling, etc)

### The method:

1. Map the article
  - underline the **thesis** and **supporting arguments**
  - circle the **evidence** and **persuasive elements**
2. Create a well-organized essay
  - Paragraph 1 (Intro)
    - o Overview the topic area
    - o Clearly state the **thesis**
  - Paragraph 2
    - o Clearly state **supporting argument one**
    - o Develop by stating 1-2 pieces of evidence backing up the argument
  - Paragraph 3
    - o Clearly state **supporting argument two**
    - o Develop by stating 1-2 pieces of evidence backing up the argument

... and so until all arguments are covered

  - 2<sup>nd</sup> to last paragraph
    - o State the stylistic and persuasive elements used by the author
  - Last paragraph (Conclusion)
    - o Restate the **thesis**
    - o Snappy close

One simple way to deal with this is to discuss a few ways in which the essay persuades us by appealing to our logical/practical side and a few ways in which the essay persuades us by appealing to our emotional/thoughtful side.

### Minor Grading Points:

- Did you quote the article at least once?
- Did you note connections/relationships *between* arguments?
- Did you vary your sentence structures/lengths?
- Did you transition well from paragraph to paragraph?