

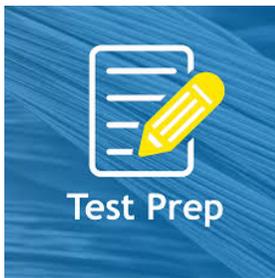
NEW SAT VS ACT

WHICH IS BETTER FOR YOU?

On April 10th, all juniors in the State of Illinois will take a state-funded SAT with the optional essay. All colleges and universities will accept this SAT for college admissions purposes. Some juniors choose to take a second standardized test with the hope of improving their test score. If you choose to retest, should you take a second SAT or an ACT? Which is better for you?

The ACT and SAT are similar. Both tests are achievement tests. Both cover many of the same topics. Some students even score comparably on the tests. But there are differences and you can use the distinctions highlighted below to choose the best test for you:

	SAT	ACT
College Acceptance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Colleges accept the SAT with the optional essay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Colleges accept the ACT with the optional writing section
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exam length is similar, 3 hours without the essay. 154 questions means more time per problem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exam length is similar, 2 hours and 55 minutes without writing. 215 questions means less time per problem.
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 contemporary, historical and scientific passages Analysis of graphs included More vocabulary (17%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 contemporary reading passages Minimal vocabulary (8%)
Writing/Language or ACT English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45% grammar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 51% grammar
Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13 questions have you fill in an answer – no possibility of guessing. There are questions with no calculator allowed. There are more word problems required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All multiple choice questions. There is no guessing penalty. A calculator can be used for all questions.
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Science section 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Science questions test critical thinking skills not science knowledge
Optional Essay/Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50 minutes The new SAT essay asks you to evaluate an argument someone else has written. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45 minutes The ACT Writing Test asks you to write your own argument and support it.



How to prepare for the ACT or SAT?

- 1) Both the ACT and SAT are achievement tests, testing what you have learned in class. The best way to prepare for tests is doing well in your current academic classes.
- 2) Some students choose to test a second time. Research shows that on average students do better the second time on a test. Remember that students on Free and Reduced Lunch or a school fee waiver can take 2 ACT or SAT tests for free.
- 3) If you would like to take a test prep class to prepare for a test, there are excellent test preparation programs offered at JHHS. See the Assessment Center website for further information:
<http://jhhs.d214.org/students/assessment/>
- 4) There is free test preparation available for self-motivated students:
 - a. Nearly 40% of all SAT test takers use the free SAT Practice on Kahn Academy. Studying here for 20 hours is associated with an average score gain of 115 points:
<https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/sat>
 - b. The ACT Academy is a free online learning and test prep program: <http://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/test-preparation/act-academy.html>.