

What Kind of Test Is the Redesigned SAT[®]?

Encouraging Practice. Demonstrating Achievement.

The SAT[®] students take today is very different from the one most admissions and enrollment leaders took previously. The assessment was completely redesigned in 2016 so that it would serve as an achievement test, not an aptitude test. The distinction may sound subtle, but the difference is important, especially for the students today who prepare for this assessment.

As an achievement test, the SAT helps students demonstrate the knowledge and skills they've learned in high school. The SAT is based on the core reading, writing, and math skills most commonly required in first-year college courses. By focusing on fewer and more essential skills, the redesigned SAT helps admissions professionals determine if applicants are ready to tackle challenging, college-level coursework.

Specifically, the SAT now requires students to:

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

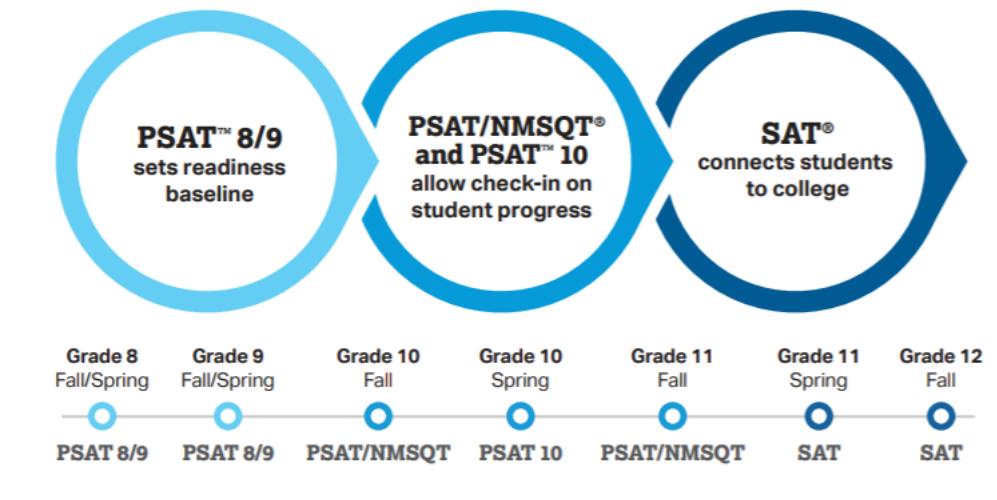
Key Takeaways:

- The redesigned SAT was launched in 2016 so that it would serve as an achievement test, not an aptitude test.
- An achievement test allows students to demonstrate the knowledge and skills they have learned in high school in core academic areas such as reading, writing, and mathematics.
- The redesigned SAT is part of an integrated Suite of Assessments that includes the PSAT 8/9, the PSAT 10, and the PSAT/NMSQT.
- Unlike an aptitude test, students taking the SAT can improve their scores by completing rigorous high school courses and practicing the skills they've learned in those courses.
- The SAT was also developed to eliminate unequal access to test preparation and practice. Official SAT Practice on Khan Academy[®] is free for all students and the best way to prepare for the SAT.
- Research indicates that sustained practice with Khan Academy resources delivers significant score gains from one test administration to the next for students from all socioeconomic backgrounds.

- Reveal an understanding of relevant words in context and how word choice helps shape meaning and tone.¹

The SAT Suite of Assessments

The SAT is part of the SAT Suite of Assessments. This suite includes the PSAT™ 8/9, the PSAT™ 10, and the PSAT/NMSQT®. Each of these assessments are aligned to the scope and the level of work encountered in high school classrooms. In addition, these tests are aligned with one another *and* with the redesigned SAT—providing detailed information to students, their families, and their teachers about students’ progress in getting ready for college.²



The Importance of Practice

Unlike an aptitude test, students taking the SAT can *improve* their scores by completing rigorous high school courses and practicing the skills they’ve learned in those courses. Sustained effort and practice on core reading, writing, and math topics are at the heart of the SAT.

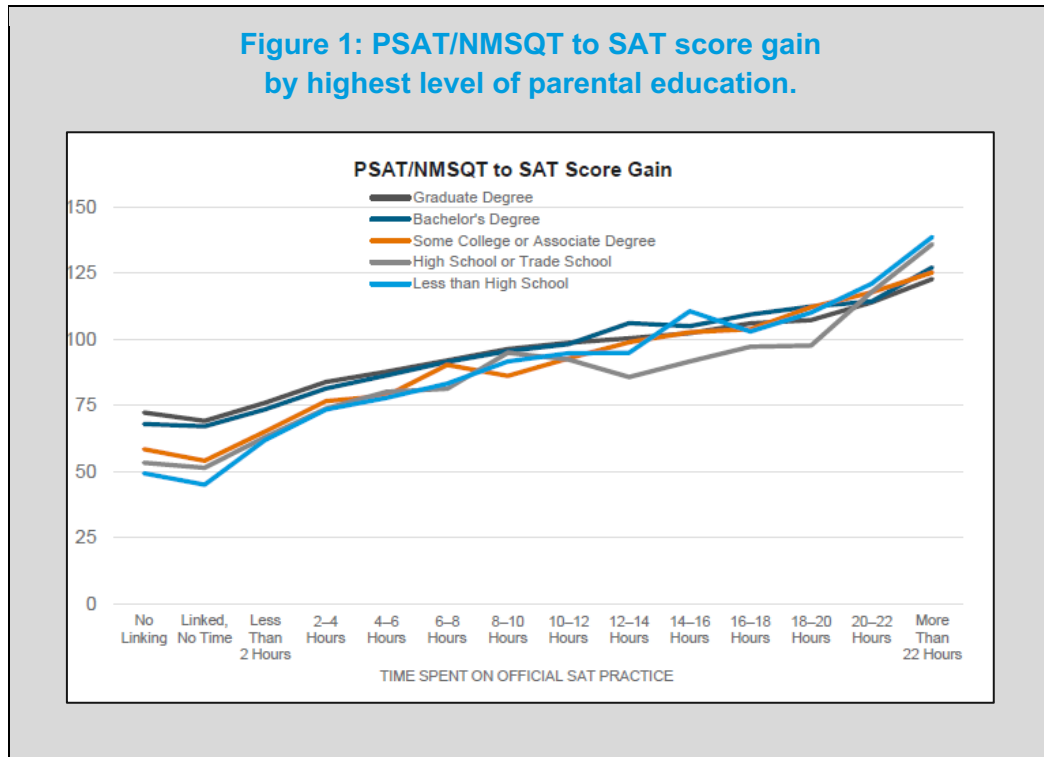
The SAT was developed to eliminate unequal access to test preparation and practice. Official SAT Practice on Khan Academy® is free for all students and the best way to prepare for the SAT. College Board created it in partnership with Khan Academy to give students a personalized practice plan. When they link their College Board and Khan Academy accounts, students can focus on the skills they need to work on most.

- Video lessons that explain questions step by step
- Thousands of practice questions with instant feedback
- Strategies for studying and test taking
- Full-length practice tests

Learn more at satpractice.org/k12.

² © 2019 College Board. PSAT/NMSQT is a registered trademark of College Board and National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

Since June 2015, students from every socioeconomic group have used those resources and have practiced at nearly equal rates. Not surprisingly, more practice is associated with greater score gains and these increases are similar across race, ethnicity, and parental education. Figure 1, for example, presents score gains for students by highest level of parental education.



As an achievement test, the redesigned SAT is sensitive to the instruction students receive in high school and reinforces fundamental academic behaviors, such as sustained practice, that help students achieve their educational goals.

1 Complete specifications for the redesigned SAT can be found here: <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/pdf/sat-suite-of-assessments-overview-brochure.pdf>

2 More information about the SAT Suite of Assessments can be found at <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/pdf/sat-suite-of-assessments-overview-brochure.pdf>

