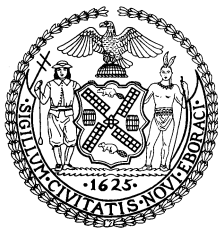


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The City of New York
Manhattan Community Board 8

Youth, Education and Libraries Committee
67th Street Branch Library NY Public Library
328 East 67th Street, Community Room
December 12, 2016, 6:30 PM

Minutes

Community Board Members (Present): Debbie Teitelbaum, Hattie Quarnstrom-Figueroa, Sophia James, Sara Soloman, Betsy Tiffany (Public Member)

Presentation by Kristina Semos of Ivy Lounge Test Prep: Demystifying the SAT and the ACT

Comparing the Two Tests:

A. How the ACT and the SAT evaluate Grammar

1. ACT – “English Section” – 1st Section
 - a. 1 section with 75 Q’s in 45 min
 - b. 5 passages with 15 Q’s per passage
 - c. 9 min per passage
2. SAT – “Writing & Language Test” – 2nd Section
 - a. 1 section with 44 Q’s in 35 min
 - b. 4 passages with 11 Q’s per passage
 - c. 8:45 min per passage
 - d. Graphs or charts on 1+ passage(s)
3. Basically, same grammar and rhetorical skills are tested.

B. How the ACT and the SAT evaluate Reading Comprehension

1. ACT – “Reading Section” – 3rd Section
 - a. 40 Q’s in 35 min
 - b. 4 passages with 10 Q’s each (Fiction, Soc Sci, Humanities, Natural Sci)
 - c. 8:45 min per passage
 - d. One passage is a PAIRED DOUBLE Passage
2. SAT – “Evidence-Based Reading Test” – 1st Section
 - a. 52 Q’s in 65 min
 - b. 5 passages with 10-11 Q’s each (Fiction, 2 History/Social Studies, 2 Science)
 - c. 13 min per passage!!
 - d. 1 Paired Double Passage
 - e. 2 passages will have charts or graphs in them
 - f. “Evidence” questions

C. How the ACT and the SAT evaluate Math

1. ACT – “Math Section” – 3rd Section
 - a. 1 Section, all multiple choice
 - b. 60 Q’s in 60 min
 - c. Geometry: 24% of test
2. SAT – “Math Test” – 3rd & 4th Sections
 - a. Section #3 – NO CALCULATOR
 - i. 25 min
 - ii. 15 multiple choice
 - iii. 5 grid-in (self-produced)
 - b. Section #4 – Calculator OK
 - i. 55 min
 - ii. 30 multiple choice
 - iii. 8 grid-in (self-produced)
 - c. Total 58 Q’s in 80 min
 - d. Geometry < 10 % (considered “Additional Topic”)

D. How the ACT and the SAT evaluate Science

1. ACT – Science Section – 4th Section
 - a. 40 Q’s in 35 min
 - b. Typically 6 passages, sometimes 7.
 - c. STILL a time crunch at 5:50 min per passage.
2. SAT – NO Science Section
 - a. Instead, charts, graphs and tables are included in:
 - i. 1 Writing and Language passage
 - ii. 2 Reading passages
 - iii. in several math questions
 - b. Students given a “Science subscore” of up to 40 pts based on how well they answered questions with Science content, across the sections of the test.
 - c. There’s also a “History subscore” of up to 40 pts.

E. How the ACT and the SAT evaluate Writing Skills: The Essay

1. ACT
 - a. 40 min
 - b. Issue and 3 perspectives.
 - c. Analyze 3 perspectives, come up with your own, and relate them back to the given 3 perspectives.
 - d. UPDATE: scored on a 2-12-pt scale (scored separately)
2. SAT
 - a. 50 min
 - b. Read a passage and analyze the features the author uses to make his or her argument.
 - c. Scored on a 2-12 pt scale (scored separately)

F. How the ACT and the SAT evaluate Vocab

1. BOTH – vocab is tested indirectly with specific “Vocab In Context” questions in the Reading sections.
2. Still helpful to review vocab for increased reading comprehension and essay writing ability.

G. Scoring on the tests

1. ACT:

- a. Each Section 1-36
- b. Composite Score averaged to create 1-36
- c. Essay scored separately; not required for every college.
- d. No Guessing Penalty!

2. SAT:

- a. Combined Grammar + Reading = 200-800 (“Evidence-Based Reading and Writing”);
Combined Math Sections = 200-800
- b. Sections added for a Total Score of 400-1600
- c. Essay scored separately; not required for every college.
- d. No Guessing Penalty!

III. Major Pros and Cons of each test

A. ACT

1. PROs:

- a. We have history! Tons of practice tests
- b. We know what ACT scores each college wants.
- c. You might be exempt from taking SAT II Subject Tests.
- d. Score Choice
- e. Questions are generally straightforward.

2. CONs:

- a. TIMING – this is a SPEED TEST. Many students REALLY struggle, especially with the Reading and Science sections.
- b. Your score is averaged. It’s harder to move up a point—you actually need to get 4 more points test-wide.
- c. Fewer schools Super Score for the ACT.

B. SAT

1. PROs:

- a. TIMING is incredibly more forgiving!!!
 - i. Grammar: 8:45 min for 11 Q’s instead of 9 min for 15 Q’s!
 - ii. Reading: 13 min per passage vs. 8:45 min per passage!!!
 - iii. No Science section!
- b. Fewer Geometry questions (if Geometry is your weak point)
- c. Your score is added. If you improve 100 points on the Math, you get to keep it And MANY more schools Super Score.
- d. Score Choice

2. CONs:

- a. We have limited history with this test
 - i. Only 6 College-Board-approved practice tests right now.
 - ii. We only have predicted “Median 50%” range is for each college, so it’s hard to know what target score to work toward.
- b. No-Calculator Math section (if that’s your weak point)
- c. Reading passages tend to be more sophisticated / harder.

IV. Putting it all together: How do you actually choose?

A. Top Priorities and Deal Breakers:

1. Extended Time
2. Required Subject Tests for your college list
3. National Merit Scholarship Program

B. Take a Practice Test of Each.

1. Test Allergy?
2. Timing struggles?
3. Awful at Geometry? Would prefer No-Calc arithmetic?
4. Compare scores! We have concordance charts now.

C. If tests are pretty much equal, go with the ACT.

1. More practice tests available for prepping.
2. More reliable stats on what range colleges want.
3. You may luck out and be exempt from Subject Tests once you figure out your college list.

V. I Found my Test! Now what? (Creating Your Testing Timeline)

A. ACT test dates:

2017: Feb 11*, Apr 8, June 10, Sep 9, Oct 28, Dec 9

B. SAT test dates:

2017: Jan 21, Mar 11*, May 6, June 3, Aug 26*, Oct 7*, Nov 4*, Dec 2*

C. Timing your first attempt:

Spring of Junior Year (Feb* or Apr for ACT; Mar or May for SAT)

D. How many attempts?

2-3 is normal these days. (1 or 2 in Spring, last attempt in the Fall)

E. When should you take Subject Tests (if you need to)?

In May or June, when you're already studying for your finals, AP exams, and Regents. Sophomore and/or Junior years.

VI. Resources

A. FREE E-course and helpful advice - www.IvyLoungeTestPrep.com

B. Official ACT website - www.ACTstudent.org

C. Official SAT website - www.CollegeBoard.org

D. Researching Colleges:

1. College stats and requirements: www.CollegeBoard.org
2. Book: "Fiske Guide to Colleges"

E. DIY ACT Prep:

1. "The Real ACT Prep Guide" – official practice tests from the company
2. Barron's ACT, Erica Meltzer's ACT English, McGraw Hill's 50 Math Skills

F. DIY SAT Prep:

1. www.KhanAcademy.org - Free practice questions
2. Barron's SAT, Erica Meltzer's SAT Grammar, Kaplan's Math Workbook

G. National Merit Scholar info – <http://www.nationalmerit.org/nmsp.php>

H. List of test-optional schools – <http://www.fairtest.org/university/optional>

Meeting adjourned at 8:20pm

PLEASE NOTE: Please check **CB8M.COM website**. Go to Committees on menu bar and scroll down to Youth & Education. Click on that and scroll down:

- Community Updates
- Minutes from prior meetings, if you were unable to attend a meeting.

Hattie Quarnstrom-Figueroa and Debbie Teitelbaum, Co-Chairs