

Seton Guidance Newsletter

November 2017

The SAT vs. the ACT

How are they similar and how are they different?

—by Mrs. Kristin Forman

One of the most common questions asked by students regarding college admissions is the difference between the SAT and ACT tests. Many parents may remember the SAT from their own high school experience, but the ACT has become a viable option for today's high school college-bound students. Both tests will assess the same academic skills; the difference lies in their method of assessment. In addition, all colleges nationwide now accept SAT or ACT test scores.

The SAT and the ACT will assess how well your student performs in writing and language, reading comprehension, math, and science. The method of testing writing and language is the same for both tests; students read short passages and make grammar and style related corrections. In reading, both tests require your student to read a passage and answer reading comprehension and inference questions. Both

tests will have a variety of passages, although this is where the SAT and the ACT begin to differ. Both tests have fiction and non-fiction passages, however, the SAT will have reading passages that are science-based, history-based, and one selection that is a paired passage reading. The ACT will not have a paired passage reading; instead, ACT passages are classified as social science, humanities, or natural science passages.

The ACT is unique in that it also offers a section that is exclusively science-based, while the SAT does not. Many students are ambivalent when approaching the science section, but I have found that if a student is a proficient reader they can usually score well on this passage. The science section consists of passages that include charts, graphs, lab reports, and science related readings. Students are asked to make



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SAT NATIONAL TEST SCHEDULE 2017

December 2, 2017

March 10, 2018

Register at least one month
prior at

www.collegeboard.org

ACT NATIONAL TEST SCHEDULE 2017

December 9, 2017

February 10, 2018


Register at least one month
prior at www.act.org

observations, hypotheses, and evaluations based upon the provided information. A general knowledge of scientific method, charts, graphs, and laboratory procedures is useful when approaching this section. These topics are covered in most middle school math and science courses. Many of my students are successful on this section of the ACT and find it is a great way to boost their overall composite score.

The math section also presents an area where the SAT and the ACT differ. While both tests state that the material assessed covers pre-algebra through algebra 2, I have found the SAT math section to be consistently more of a challenge than the ACT math section. In addition, the SAT has a portion of the math section that does not allow the use of any form of calculator. While some students are not bothered by this restriction, many students suffer from test anxiety when confronted with this section of the test simply because they do not have a calculator at their disposal. The SAT does have an additional math section where calculator use is allowed. In contrast, the ACT allows calculator use for the entire math section of their test.

Finally, the most conspicuous difference between the SAT and the ACT is the amount of time you are given to complete each section of the test. The SAT generally allows more time per section when

compared to the ACT, therefore, students who are slower test takers may feel more comfortable taking the SAT simply because of the time allowed. The ACT is a very fast-paced test and students who are able to move through tests quickly will probably find that they are more comfortable with this type of testing layout. The best way to determine which test is best for your student is to review the practice materials for each test and then complete some sections under timed conditions.

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This can be done at home with a simple stopwatch; many students are able to determine which test they feel they can be most successful with from this exercise. It is also a good idea to formally take both tests when they are offered each month. Was your student able to complete each section on time? Was a section too challenging in terms of content? Then, once you receive your test scores, you will have most of the information you need to help you make a test selection.

While facing these tests can be intimidating, extensive practice really helps alleviate test anxiety. Also keep in mind that

many colleges are joining the "score optional" movement, allowing students to apply to a school without any SAT/ACT test scores. The list of "score optional" universities grows each year, so be sure to visit your selected colleges in person or online to inquire about their admission requirements. ♦

Classic Learning Test (CLT)

The CLT is an alternative college entrance exam which evaluates students' reading, writing, and math skills while also requiring analysis of selections from classic works. Exam dates are Feb. 3 and May 19, 2018. To register and for a list of colleges that accept the CLT for college admission, visit www.cltexam.com/.



National Practice Test Weekend

SAT or ACT?

WHEN: Sat., November 18

Or Sun., November 19

WHERE: Live Online

Which test should you take? Find out during National Practice Test Weekend. Free, Live Online combo test allows you to try sections from the SAT and ACT to see which is a better fit for you. Free to attend, but space is limited. Visit https://www.kaptest.com/college-prep/free/nationalpracticetestweek-end?utm_medium=Email&utm_source=SFMC&utm_campaign=20171111+-+PC+-+NPTW+Event+-+EVNT+-+C+-+SO+JR+SR+PR+BL&et rid=86631557.

Internet Safety Tips for Students

Internet use is a topic that is of high interest to many students. It's their life. Even if students are not online very much during the school day, many begin connecting, sharing, viewing, etc. as soon as they get home. Here are 10 tips to help students stay smart and safe online!

- 1. COMMUNICATE:** Talk to your parents about what you are doing online and let them know when you are going on the internet. Always ask a trusted adult if you are unsure of anything when you are online. Help keep yourself in check!
- 2. CHECK LAWS:** Check before using images or work from others online as they may be protected by copyright. Also, understand that there are many sites that require users to be at least 13+ before registering for an account (Facebook, Snapchat, YouTube, Instagram, etc.).
- 3. PRIVACY:** Keep your personal information private to include your full name, address, phone number, passwords, and even your plans. Don't publish this information or provide it in response to questions in emails or chat rooms, etc.
- 4. FRIENDS:** Don't add people as online friends unless you know them in real life or have parent permission. Never arrange to meet an online friend without talking to a parent. Remember that you can't trust everything online friends tell you.
- 5. REPUTATION:** Protect your digital footprint and don't publish anything online that you wouldn't want all your friends, family, teachers and future employers or college admission representatives to see. Don't jeopardize future employment or even college opportunities!
- 6. UNPLUG:** Life is all about balance. It's not good for our health and wellbeing to be online all the time. Balance screen time with green time. Get outdoors, move and interact face-to-face.
- 7. QUESTION:** Remember that you can't believe everything you read or see online. When you come across information, question who wrote the message and why it was created.
- 8. PASSWORDS AND USERNAMES:** Choose sensible names for usernames or email addresses, and think before using your real name. Protect your accounts with strong passphrases and don't share them with others.
- 9. CYBERBULLYING:** Know what cyberbullying is and tell someone if you think it's happening to you or others. Cyberbullying is when someone picks on you, annoys, embarrasses, or threatens you repeatedly using technology, such as the internet or a phone.
- 10. MANNERS:** Be polite and respectful online just as you would be in real life. Treat others the way you'd like to be treated!

BONUS TIP! Pray for the intercession of St. Isidore of Seville, the Patron Saint of the Internet, to help you stay smart and safe online!

<http://primarytech.global2.vic.edu.au/2017/11/01/teaching-digital-citizenship-10-internet-safety-tips-for-students/>

Got your ASVAB Account?

Seton juniors took the ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) test in September and have received their test scores. If you have not already done so, visit asvabprogram.com to set up an account to find strengths and interests based on your test scores. This is a great tool to help discover possible future, career options!



Upcoming College Visits at Seton during Lunch

University of Mary, ND, will be visiting Thursday, Nov. 16.

Benedictine College, KS, will be visiting Tuesday, Nov. 21.

Please take a moment during your lunch to stop by and visit with the representatives.

Transcript Request Deadline

Attention seniors! All requests for transcripts that need to be sent while on Christmas break (this includes the January 1st deadline) must be received by Mrs. McIntyre by **December 18, 2017**. Please submit request to tmcintyre@setonschool.net.



Seton School Military Open House

**John Paul II Center
November 20, 2017
12:00 until 1:30 p.m.
(5th & 6th period lunch)**

All students and parents are invited to participate. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn about ROTC Scholarships, the Service Academies, summer leadership programs, and other opportunities to serve in our Armed Forces on active duty or in the National Guard/Reserve.

Essay Contests

National WWII Museum 2017 High School Student Essay Contest

For essay topic and requirements, visit <https://www.nationalww2museum.org/students-teachers/school-programs/essay-contest>. First Prize \$1000. Deadline is December 29, 2017.

Free Speech Essay Contest

For essay topic and requirements, visit <https://www.thefire.org/student-network/essay-contest/>. First prize \$10,000. Deadline is December 31, 2017.

NRA Civil Rights Defense Fund Essay Contest

For essay topic and requirements, visit <http://www.nradefensefund.org/contests-scholarships.aspx>. First prize \$1000. Deadline December 31, 2017.

2018 Summer Residential Governor's School

Open to current high achieving and academically curious 10th and 11th grade students, Governor's School offers intensive educational experiences in academic programs such as Agriculture; Humanities; Math, Science and Technology; Medicine and Health Sciences; Engineering (NASA/NIA and Virginia Institute of Marine Science Mentorships) as well as Foreign Language Academies. Application, essay writing and teacher recommendations are required. If interested, please email Mrs. Montavon (emontavon@setonschool.net) no later than Monday, November 20.



Thank you to all who attended the College Workshop for juniors and their parents in October. We had over 50 attendees who came out to listen to speakers from Christendom College, George Mason University, and Wells Fargo. Parents, all juniors received information packets from the college workshop. These packets contain great resources to keep handy for many college related questions.