

Navigating the Changes to College Admissions Testing

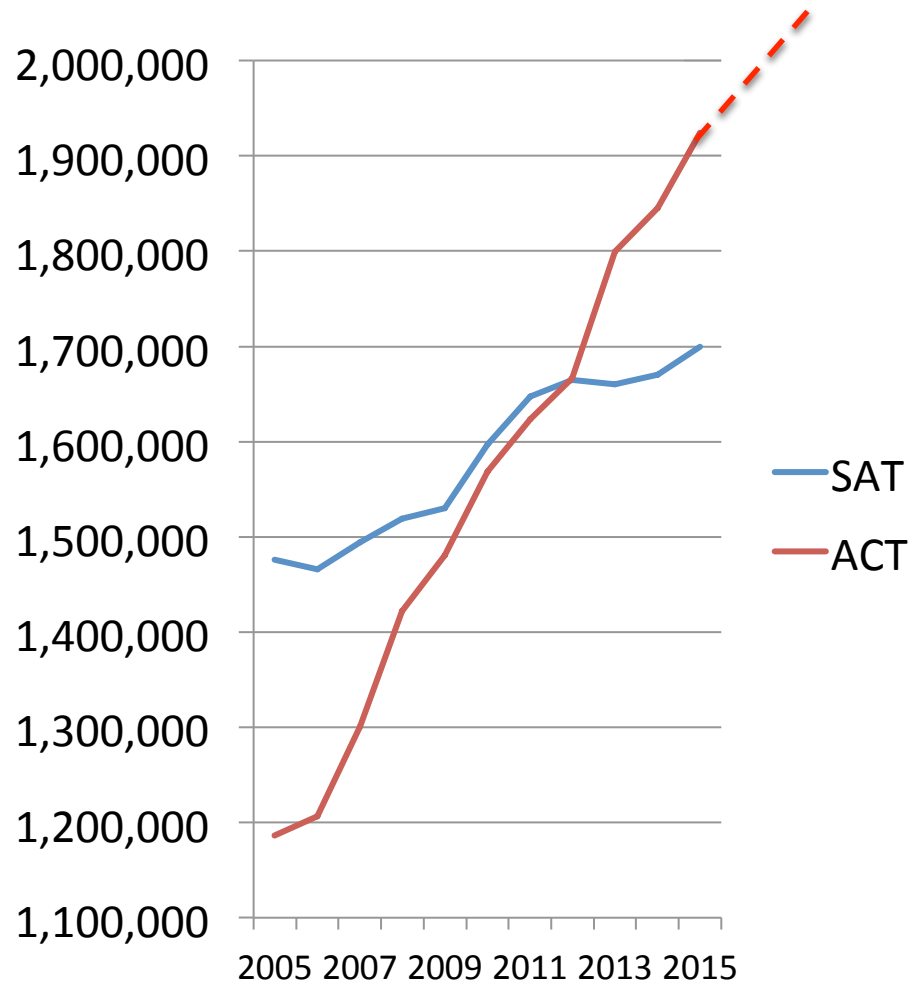
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The ACT is dominant

	SAT	ACT	Gap
2005	1,475,623	1,186,251	289,372
2006	1,465,744	1,206,455	259,289
2007	1,494,531	1,300,599	193,932
2008	1,518,859	1,421,941	96,918
2009	1,530,128	1,480,469	49,659
2010	1,597,329	1,568,835	28,494
2011	1,647,123	1,623,112	24,011
2012	1,664,479	1,666,209	-1,730
2013	1,660,047	1,799,243	-139,196
2014	1,670,000	1,845,787	-175,787
2015	1,700,000	1,924,436	-224,436



Why has the ACT dominated?

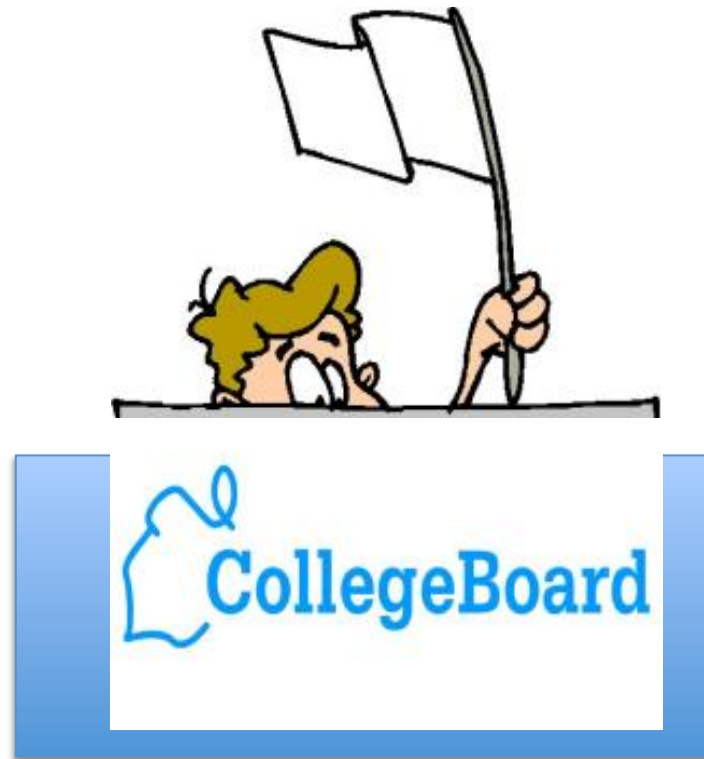
- Successful marketing
- Focus on achievement versus aptitude
- Superior Common Core alignment
- Securing statewide contracts
- Perception of the ACT as a multi-purpose test, used to measure school performance

ACT dominated by securing state-wide contracts

- 2001: *Illinois and Colorado
- 2007: Kentucky, *Michigan and Wyoming
- 2009: North Dakota and Tennessee
- 2012: North Carolina
- 2013: Hawaii, Louisiana and Montana
- 2014: Alabama and Utah
- 2015: Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada and Wisconsin.

*2015 Illinois shifted ACT funding towards the PARCC Common Core assessment; Michigan flipped to the SAT.

To battle shrinking market share,
College Board committed to major
changes to its assessments



C.B. hired a Common Core Standards writer to run the shop and hired away top talent from the ACT, Inc.

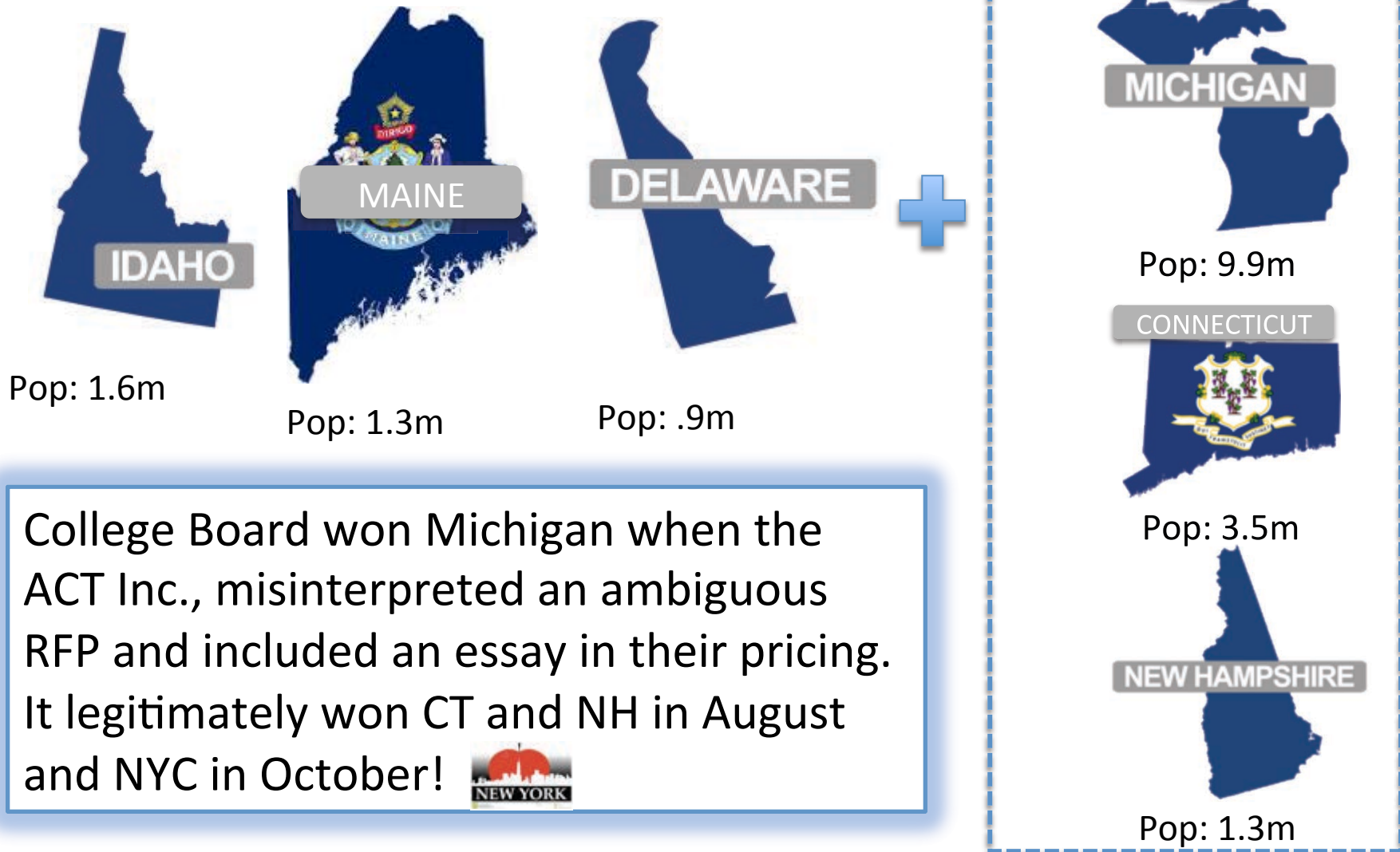
- 2013, College Board opened an office **3** miles from ACT HQ in Iowa City
- SAT began using its \$70m annual “profits” to poach dozens of top ACT execs and developers

Common Core + ACT = revised SAT!

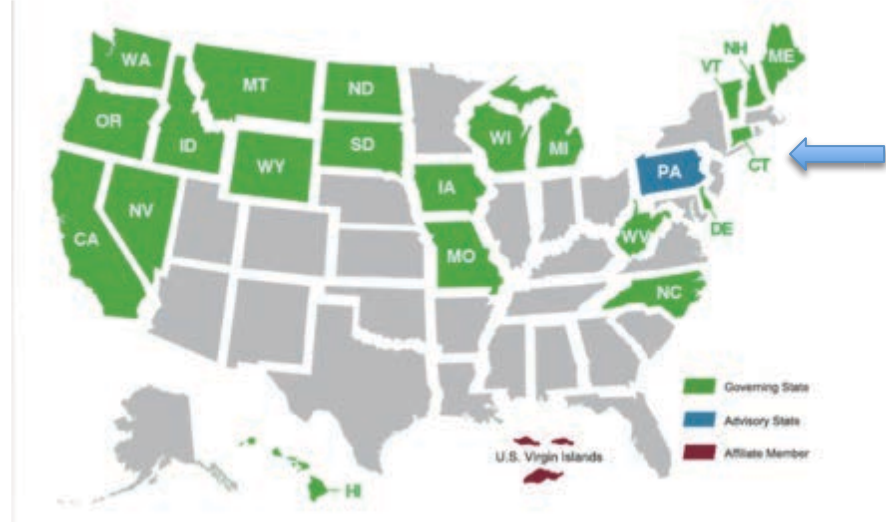
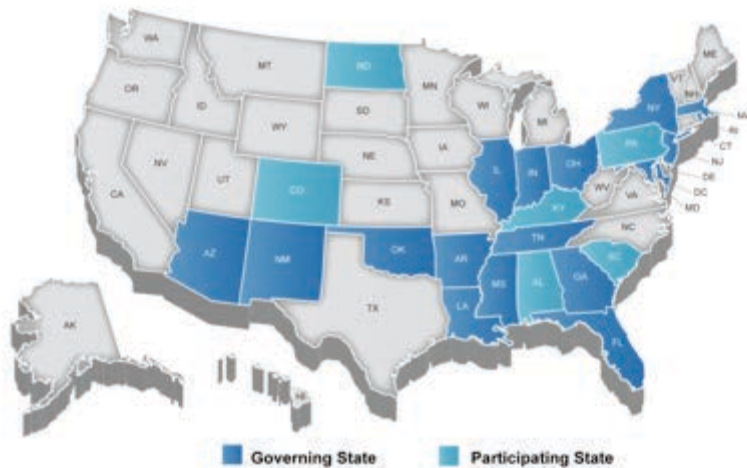


With the revised SAT announced, the College Board could finally compete

First Big Wins in Years!

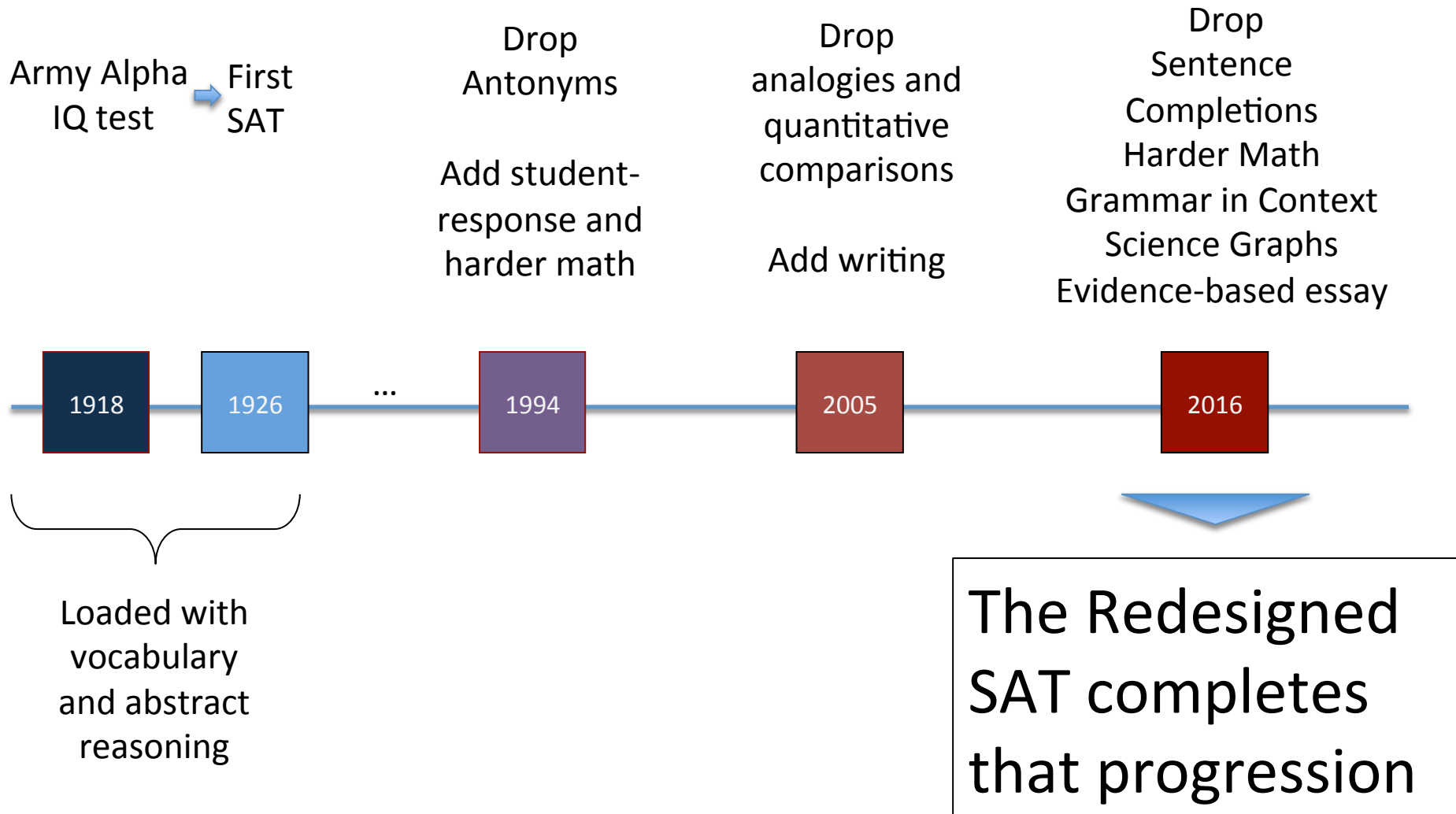


A note on the CT and NH decisions



The SAT replacing the SBAC (Smarter Balance Test) as the NCLB Common Core achievement test is a major win for the College Board! We may see more of this with Obama's demand for fewer tests in our schools.

SAT had been moving gradually away from aptitude towards achievement



The New SAT appears to be a better test than the current SAT or ACT

- We believe it will be a better predictor of college readiness than the current SAT or ACT, but we'll need to wait several years for the data to prove that hypothesis
- The New SAT will raise the bar for students, emphasize rigorous standards, and critical thinking
- In time, colleges may even come to prefer this test: Yale and U. Rochester have stated they prefer the revised SAT to the current SAT

However, the new SAT is harder than either the current SAT or the ACT

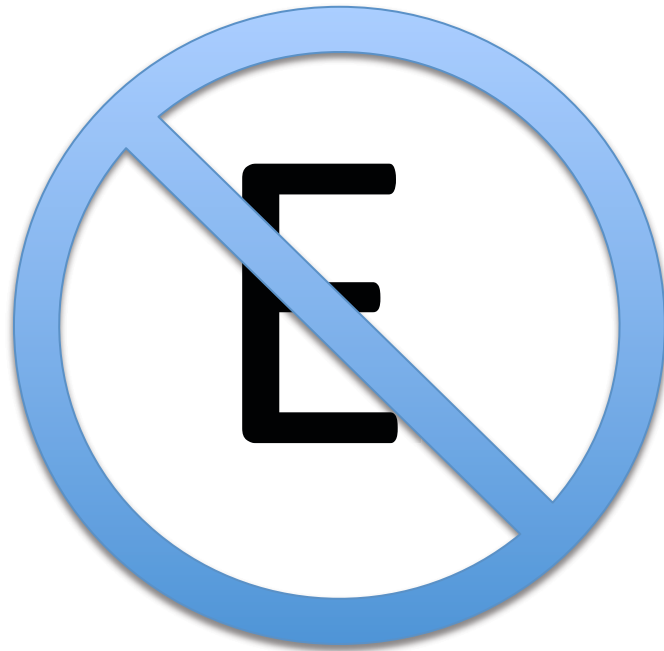


This alone will push many students towards the ACT. In the short term, the CB will lose share.

A few basics about the new SAT



The SAT nixed the guessing penalty and the 5th answer choice

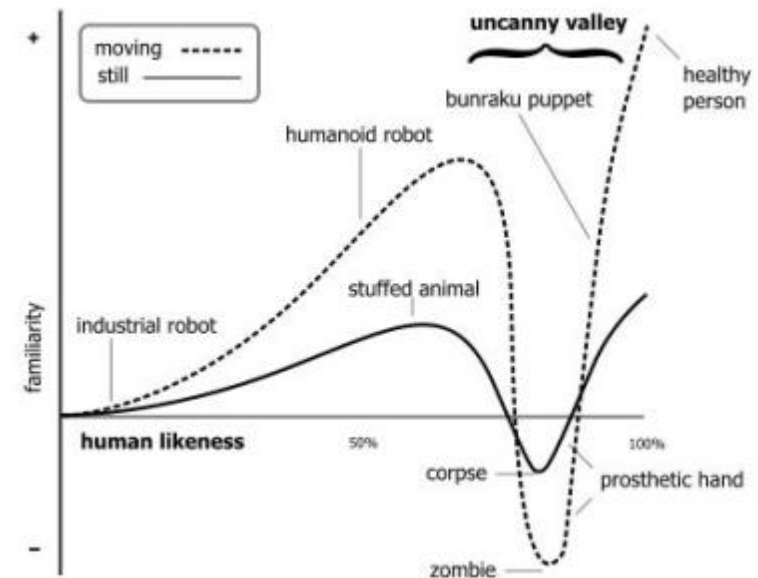


So students will never again have to worry about that pesky quarter point for a wrong answer, and will have fewer options to consider.

And added some Science



The new SAT incorporates tables, charts, and graphs. SAT takers will need to find correlations, plot points, and manipulate data as on the ACT.



The new SAT incorporates science items throughout both the verbal and the math sections and asks students to understand complex passages and jargon more than the ACT.

Reduced its emphasis on vocabulary,
but did not eliminate it entirely

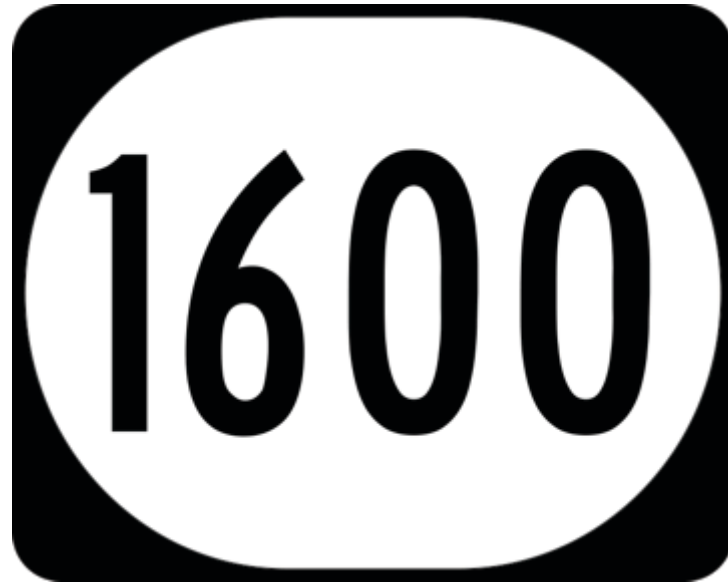
How Important is Vocabulary?		
Test	% questions that test vocab	Source of Questions
Old SAT	36% of Reading questions	19 SC's + 5 VIC (All Reading)
New SAT	12.5% of Reading/ Writing	9 VIC in Reading 3 VIC in Writing
ACT	8% of Reading 3% of English	3 VIC in Reading 2 VIC in English

Vocabulary remains important on the SAT, but students do not need to drill vocabulary for this new test

Which standards is the College Board using to assess vocabulary?

Section	College Board Standard	Examples
Reading	Measure students' understanding of words and phrases that are neither highly obscure nor specific to any field of study , whose specific meaning and purpose are derived in large part through the context in which they are used.	bearing, flat, expert, directly, form, ambivalent, channel
Writing	Recognize and correct confusion between commonly confused words (e.g., affect and effect)	fair/fare, site/sight/cite, their/they're/there
	Choose between similar words with different connotations Decide which word or phrase expresses an idea most clearly	"devour" / "dispatch" / "overindulge on" / "dispose of"
	Recognize and correct cases of nonstandard expression (when words and phrases are used in a way not typical to standard written English)	"law troubles" vs. "legal issues" "sharing advice" vs. "giving wisdom"

The SAT also returned to the 1600
scale



Lumping Reading and Writing into a single section,
though some colleges may pay more attention to
particular subscores (i.e., Reading over Writing)

Combining Reading and Writing scores
makes sense on the new SAT

Reading skills and comprehension more closely
inform writing performance on the new SAT

Writing



Reading Comprehension

Writing is completely in context

Embracing the Common Core standards, like the ACT, the SAT is placing all of its writing items in the context of paragraphs

He wasn't always so resistant to flying, although he has always been afraid of it. As to the former, when he was eleven years old, my parents took him on a trip to Disneyland. He got on the plane without incident, but as soon as he heard the engines start up he covered his ears with his hands and kept them there for the duration of the three-hour flight. On the way home, he did precisely the same thing. 5 15

4.

Choices

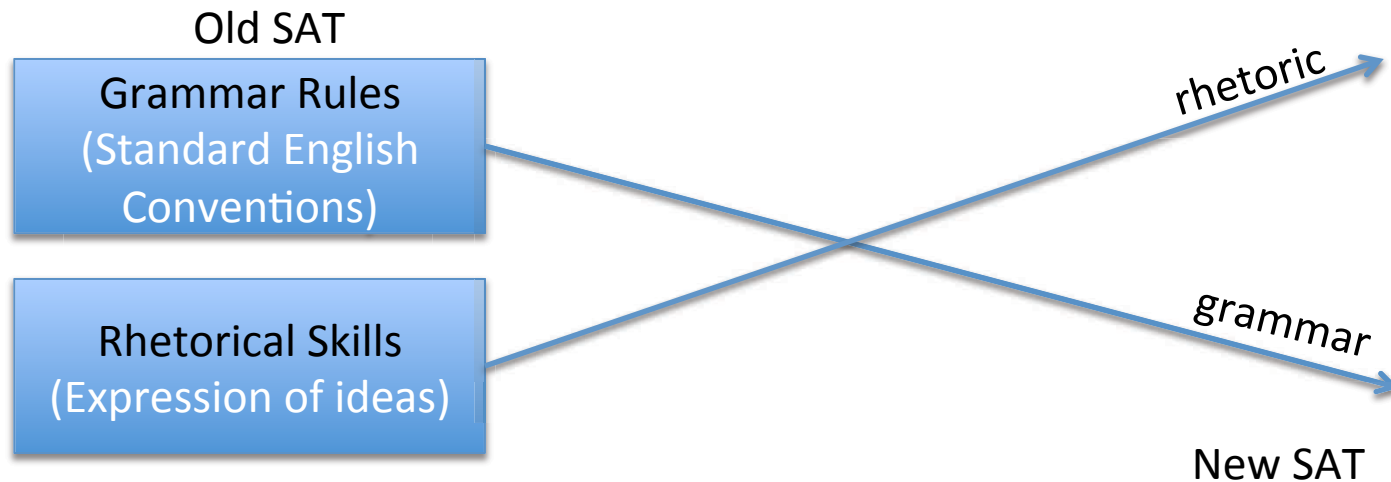
- ☐ A NO CHANGE
- ☐ B owing to the fact that he heard
- ☐ C because of his hearing
- ☐ D since he will have heard

Where the current SAT has a mere 6 of 49 items in a paragraph form, the new SAT has every item in a long paragraph form

A few high level observations about the new Writing test

- Increased passage complexity (and significant fluctuations in complexity)
- Passages are more relevant to students
- Increased focus on rhetorical skills
- Requirement for students to understand the passage holistically (a departure from ACT, where students can do most tasks in isolation)
- Vocabulary shows up in a bigger way on this section.

Rhetorical skills now trump grammar



	Old SAT	New SAT	ACT
Standard English Conventions	80%	45%	51%
Expression of Ideas/ Rhetorical Skills	20%	55%*	49%*

Far more tasks focus on subtle transitions, introductions, or supporting examples, mirroring the ACT

Textual complexity of SAT Writing trumps that of ACT English

Writing Passage Complexity		
Test	Average Words/Sentence	Avg. Grade Level*
New SAT Test 2	22	13
New SAT Test 3	23	13
PFACT 2014-2015	17	9
PFACT 2009-2010	18	10

SAT Passages (roughly 10th-11th grade reading level) are 2-3 grade levels tougher than ACT English, more relevant to student experience and more academic.

*Flesch–Kincaid readability assessment, endorsed by CCSSl:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flesch%E2%80%93Kincaid_readability_tests

<http://www.readabilityformulas.com/free-readability-formula-tests.php>

SAT Writing places a greater focus on reading comprehension

4

Which choice best connects the sentence with the previous paragraph?

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) All three sections of the mural were on display
- C) The community turned out in large numbers
- D) Siqueiros was informed of people's reactions

10

Which choice most effectively sets up the information that follows?

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) being cleaned and restored.
- C) at risk of destruction.
- D) awaiting its moment of appreciation.

11

At this point, the writer is considering adding the following sentence.

When it was painted in 1932, Siqueiros's mural was considered offensive, but now it is acclaimed.

Should the writer make this addition here?

- A) Yes, because it provides historical context for the changes discussed in the passage.
- B) Yes, because it provides a useful reminder of how people once viewed Siqueiros's work.
- C) No, because it unnecessarily repeats information from earlier in the passage.
- D) No, because it makes a claim about Siqueiros's work that is not supported by the passage.

Reading



New SAT Reading borrows heavily from the ACT

- Like the ACT, the SAT Reading section consists of long passages from the domains of Science, Literature, and Humanities/Social Studies.
- SAT has added ACT Science-style charts, graphs, and figures into the science passages.
- Textual complexity varies by passage, with some passage as difficult as those found on the SAT Literature test or AP English test.

SAT Reading greatly reduced line references and added evidence pairs

- Roughly 32 of the 52 items on a CR test have no line references. Thus, students will need to read the entire passage first before moving to the questions.
- 9-10 items ask students to identify the “best evidence” for the answer to the previous question. Students will need to search the passage to find the right answer choice.

Reading strategies will change on the new SAT

Sample evidence item

12


In the passage, the author anticipates which of the following objections to criticizing the ethics of free markets?

- A) Smith's association of free markets with ethical behavior still applies today.
- B) Free markets are the best way to generate high profits, so ethics are a secondary consideration.
- C) Free markets are ethical because they are made possible by devalued currency.
- D) Free markets are ethical because they enable individuals to make choices.

13

Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A) Lines 4-5 ("Some . . . ethical")
- B) Lines 7-10 ("But . . . about")
- C) Lines 21-22 ("Smith . . . outcome")
- D) Lines 52-54 ("When . . . way")



Students will need to scour a fairly large section of the passage to find the necessary evidence. This will take more time per item, but students will have more time.

Vocabulary in context is remarkably easy on Critical Reading

Common words with multiple meanings have replaced the most challenging words from sentence completions. Students must use context to discern the intended meaning.

bearing, flat, expert, directly, form, ambivalent,
convey, hold, demands, embraced, clashes, plastic

25

As used in line 40, “plastic” most nearly means

- A) creative.
- B) artificial.
- C) malleable.
- D) sculptural.



Students will occasionally have to pull out a harder definition such as translating “plastic” into “malleable”

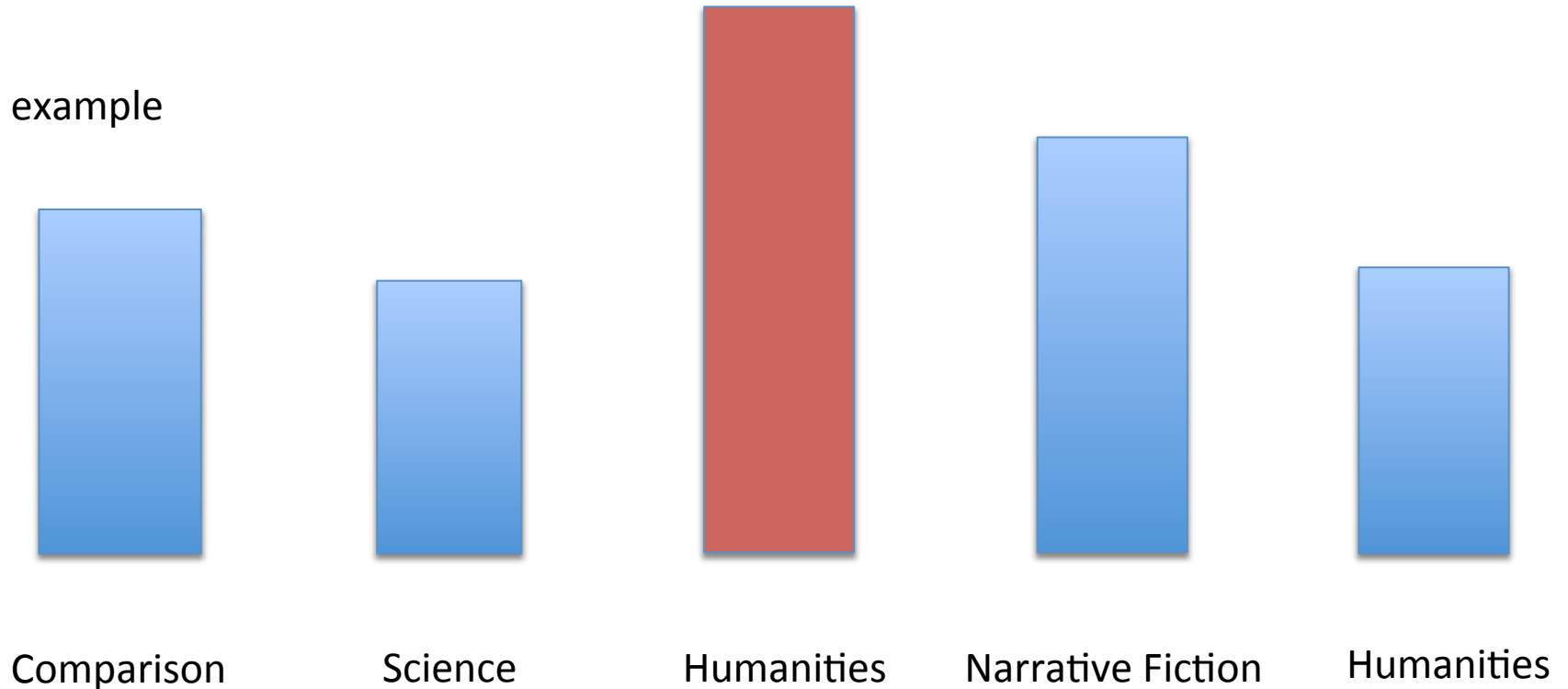
Passage complexity on SAT Reading is significantly greater than on the ACT

This is informed by CCSSI research on text complexity:

“...while the complexity of reading demands for college, career, and citizenship have held steady or risen over the past half century, the complexity of texts students are exposed to has steadily decreased in that same interval. **In order to address this gap, the CCSS emphasize increasing the complexity of texts students read as a key element in improving reading comprehension.**”



Expect an extremely hard passage on each test



Students need to be prepared for the spikes in difficulty. Certain student populations need to be coached not to abandon hope when they hit a really hard passage.

Spikes in difficulty

- **Test 1:** Implications of structure of DNA, Watson and Crick (1953) Scientific Paper: jargon, and complexity
- **Test 2:** Charlotte Bronte, *the Professor* (1857): levels of meaning, structure, archaic language, 40 words per sentence (compared to 26- rest of test)
- **Test 3:** Decline of the bees: scientific jargon, vocabulary and structure, 36 words per sentence (compared to 24- rest of test)
- **Test 4:** Edmund Burke, Reflections on the French Rev. (1790) and Thomas Paine, Rights of Man (1791): archaic language, complex sentence structure
- **October PSAT:** Frederick Douglass 1852 speech

Tough Passage: Charlotte Brontë

25 my darling, my cherished-in-secret, Imagination, the
tender and the mighty, should never, either by
softness or strength, have severed me. But this was
not all; the antipathy which had sprung up between
myself and my employer striking deeper root and
30 spreading denser shade daily, excluded me from
every glimpse of the sunshine of life; and I began to
feel like a plant growing in humid darkness out of the
slimy walls of a well.

Antipathy is the only word which can express the
35 feeling Edward Crimsworth had for me—a feeling, in
a great measure, involuntary, and which was liable to
be excited by every, the most trifling movement,
look, or word of mine. My southern accent annoyed

Hard core sentence structure, typically found on AP
English or SAT Literature exam

Tough Passage: Edmund Burke

Passage 1

To avoid . . . the evils of inconstancy and versatility, ten thousand times worse than those of obstinacy and the blindest prejudice, we have
Line consecrated the state, that no man should approach
5 to look into its defects or corruptions but with due caution; that he should never dream of beginning its reformation by its subversion; that he should approach to the faults of the state as to the wounds of a father, with pious awe and trembling solicitude. By
10 this wise prejudice we are taught to look with horror on those children of their country who are prompt rashly to hack that aged parent in pieces, and put him into the kettle of magicians, in hopes that by their poisonous weeds, and wild incantations, they may
15 regenerate the paternal constitution, and renovate their father's life.

Pious and trembling solicitude: some students will be intimidated by this level of difficulty

Tough Passage: DNA

Questions 22-31 are based on the following passage and supplementary material.

This passage is adapted from J. D. Watson and F. H. C. Crick, "Genetical Implications of the Structure of Deoxyribonucleic Acid." ©1953 by Nature Publishing Group. Watson and Crick deduced the structure of DNA using evidence from Rosalind Franklin and R. G. Gosling's X-ray crystallography diagrams of DNA and from Erwin Chargaff's data on the base composition of DNA.

The chemical formula of deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) is now well established. The molecule is a very long chain, the backbone of which consists of a regular alternation of sugar and phosphate groups.
Line 5 To each sugar is attached a nitrogenous base, which can be of four different types. Two of the possible bases—adenine and guanine—are purines, and the other two—thymine and cytosine—are pyrimidines. So far as is known, the sequence of bases along the
10 chain is irregular. The monomer unit, consisting of phosphate, sugar and base, is known as a nucleotide.

Students need to be able to wade through the jargon and answer specific questions about the concepts

Math



The CB made a Common Core math test emphasizing conceptual understanding

- Interpreting trumps solving.
- Understanding how to build and manipulate functions and equations.
- It's more of an applied math test, gauging fluency and understanding, rather than systematic solving.
- No more immediate roadmap to an answer, students must be more discriminating and find a path to an answer.
- Overlapping content with fewer items assessing a solitary concept.

The SAT is now the king of testing math in the context of word problems, overtaking the ACT

Test	Contextual	Conceptual
Old SAT	27%	73%
ACT	36%	64%
New SAT	53%	47%

Solving is less important than being able to generate an equation or interpret a constant or variable

9

A worker uses a forklift to move boxes that weigh either 40 pounds or 65 pounds each. Let x be the number of 40-pound boxes and y be the number of 65-pound boxes. The forklift can carry up to either 45 boxes or a weight of 2,400 pounds. Which of the following systems of inequalities represents this relationship?

- A) $\begin{cases} 40x + 65y \leq 2,400 \\ x + y \leq 45 \end{cases}$
- B) $\begin{cases} \frac{x}{40} + \frac{y}{65} \leq 2,400 \\ x + y \leq 45 \end{cases}$
- C) $\begin{cases} 40x + 65y \leq 45 \\ x + y \leq 2,400 \end{cases}$
- D) $\begin{cases} x + y \leq 2,400 \\ 40x + 65y \leq 2,400 \end{cases}$

3

A landscaping company estimates the price of a job, in dollars, using the expression $60 + 12nh$, where n is the number of landscapers who will be working and h is the total number of hours the job will take using n landscapers. Which of the following is the best interpretation of the number 12 in the expression?

- A) The company charges \$12 per hour for each landscaper.
- B) A minimum of 12 landscapers will work on each job.
- C) The price of every job increases by \$12 every hour.
- D) Each landscaper works 12 hours a day.

The calculator section puts the greatest emphasis on word problems in a real-world context

Section	Contextual	Conceptual
No Calculator	24%	76%
Calculator	69%	32%
Overall	53%	47%

Whereas the No Calc section primarily tests algebraic concepts in the abstract. **October PSAT-** the No Calc section demanded time-intensive hand calculations.

There are significant content changes

- Algebra is king of the redesigned SAT Math section
- Geometry takes a major backseat
- Deeper Algebra 2 content and some Trigonometry



$$x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$$

How does the new SAT content compare?

Test	Algebra	Geometry	Arithmetic/ Data Analysis	Trigonometry
Old SAT	50%	24%	26%	0%
ACT	46%	23%	24%	7%
New SAT*	62%	6%	30%	2%

Algebra is up and Geometry is way down

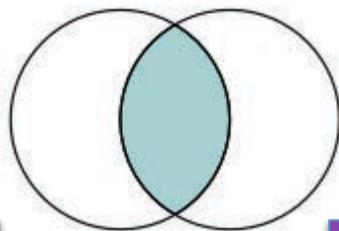
*based on analysis of 4 released tests, using College Board's new categories, which reclassify some SAT topics we traditionally called "Geometry" as "Algebra"

New SAT added many concepts from Math 1 and Math 2 subject tests

- Math 1: trigonometry, complex numbers, irrational numbers, advanced geometry
- Math 2: inverse functions, radians, more trigonometry (secant, cosecant, cotangent, and laws of sines & cosines), more coordinate geometry and functions

Effectively catching up to the ACT in terms of content difficulty, and surpassing it in many areas. Do we still need Math 1?

New SAT Math is about the intersection and interconnectivity of ideas



Old SAT

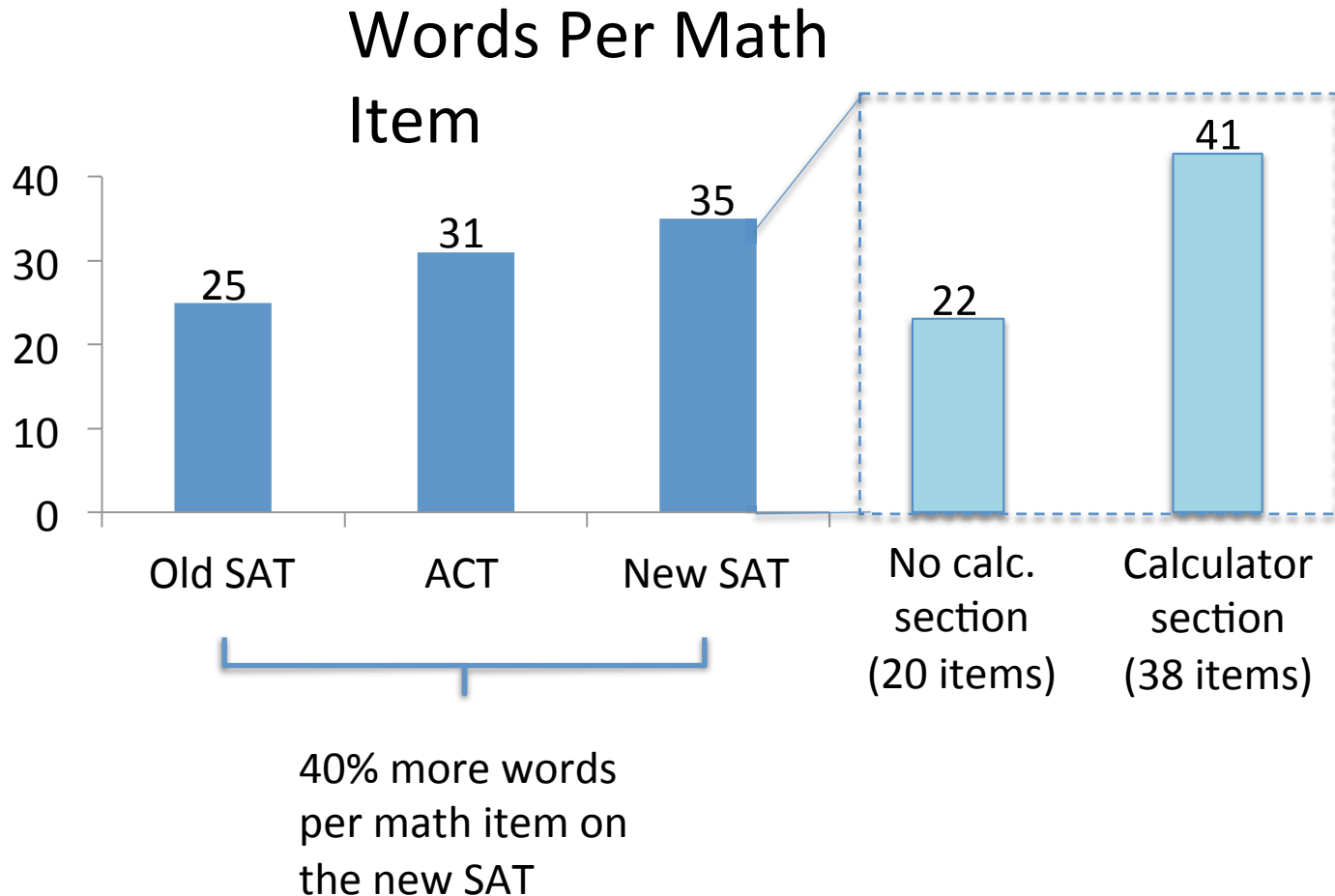
Question 13: Slope
Question 14: Functions

New SAT

Question 13: Slope + Functions
Question 14: Functions + Max/Min

A full **2/3** of math items simultaneously assess two discrete skills

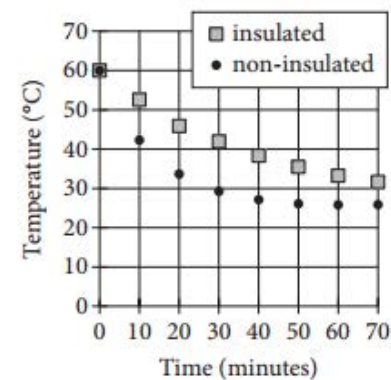
Reading is a much bigger deal on math



Reading comprehension becomes paramount on the new SAT math, as it is on the revised Reading and Writing sections.

Where Math meets Science

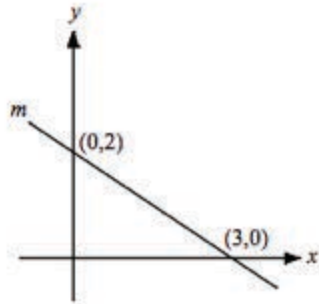
This problem is very much like one found on the ACT, with a greater degree of reading than one would expect on a math section



Two samples of water of equal mass are heated to 60 degrees Celsius ($^{\circ}\text{C}$). One sample is poured into an insulated container, and the other sample is poured into a non-insulated container. The samples are then left for 70 minutes to cool in a room having a temperature of 25°C . The graph above shows the temperature of each sample at 10-minute intervals. Which of the following statements correctly compares the average rates at which the temperatures of the two samples change?

- A) In every 10-minute interval, the magnitude of the rate of change of temperature of the insulated sample is greater than that of the non-insulated sample.
- B) In every 10-minute interval, the magnitude of the rate of change of temperature of the non-insulated sample is greater than that of the insulated sample.
- C) In the intervals from 0 to 10 minutes and from 10 to 20 minutes, the rates of change of temperature of the insulated sample are of greater magnitude, whereas in the intervals from 40 to 50 minutes and from 50 to 60 minutes, the rates of change of temperature of the non-insulated sample are of greater magnitude.
- D) In the intervals from 0 to 10 minutes and from 10 to 20 minutes, the rates of change of temperature of the non-insulated sample are of greater magnitude, whereas in the intervals from 40 to 50 minutes and from 50 to 60 minutes, the rates of change of temperature of the insulated sample are of greater magnitude.

The Old SAT tested slope in isolation as a singular concept



1. In the figure above, what is the slope of line m ?

- (A) $-\frac{3}{2}$
- (B) $-\frac{2}{3}$
- (C) $\frac{2}{3}$
- (D) $\frac{3}{4}$
- (E) $\frac{3}{2}$

5. Which of the following is an equation of the line in the xy -plane that passes through the point $(4, 1)$ and is parallel to the line $y = 3x - 4$?

- (A) $y = -\frac{1}{3}x$
- (B) $y = -3x - 4$
- (C) $y = 3x - 11$
- (D) $y = 3x + 4$
- (E) $y = 3x + 13$

Slope is Rise/Run. I can memorize that!

The New SAT approaches slope from a very different perspective

7

While preparing to run a marathon, Amelia created a training schedule in which the distance of her longest run every week increased by a constant amount. If Amelia's training schedule requires that her longest run in week 4 is a distance of 8 miles and her longest run in week 16 is a distance of 26 miles, which of the following best describes how the distance Amelia runs changes between week 4 and week 16 of her training schedule?

- A) Amelia increases the distance of her longest run by 0.5 miles each week.
- B) Amelia increases the distance of her longest run by 2 miles each week.
- C) Amelia increases the distance of her longest run by 2 miles every 3 weeks.
- D) Amelia increases the distance of her longest run by 1.5 miles each week.

2

One of the requirements for becoming a court reporter is the ability to type 225 words per minute. Donald can currently type 180 words per minute, and believes that with practice he can increase his typing speed by 5 words per minute each month. Which of the following represents the number of words per minute that Donald believes he will be able to type m months from now?

- A) $5 + 180m$
- B) $225 + 5m$
- C) $180 + 5m$
- D) $180 - 5m$

Actually, slope is an idea: “rate of change”.
And we can test it from a bunch of different angles.

Expect tougher algebra than ever before

15

$$x^2 - \frac{k}{2}x = 2p$$

In the quadratic equation above, k and p are constants. What are the solutions for x ?

- A) $x = \frac{k}{4} \pm \frac{\sqrt{k^2 + 2p}}{4}$
- B) $x = \frac{k}{4} \pm \frac{\sqrt{k^2 + 32p}}{4}$
- C) $x = \frac{k}{2} \pm \frac{\sqrt{k^2 + 2p}}{2}$
- D) $x = \frac{k}{2} \pm \frac{\sqrt{k^2 + 32p}}{4}$

18

$$x^3 - 5x^2 + 2x - 10 = 0$$

For what real value of x is the equation above true?

Quadratic formula and polynomial factoring are staples of the new test

The integration of statistics and applied math

13

A researcher conducted a survey to determine whether people in a certain large town prefer watching sports on television to attending the sporting event. The researcher asked 117 people who visited a local restaurant on a Saturday, and 7 people refused to respond. Which of the following factors makes it least likely that a reliable conclusion can be drawn about the sports-watching preferences of all people in the town?

- A) Sample size
- B) Population size
- C) The number of people who refused to respond
- D) Where the survey was given

The New Essay: A document based question

As you read the passage below, consider how Jimmy Carter uses

- evidence, such as facts or examples, to support claims.
- reasoning to develop ideas and to connect claims and evidence.
- stylistic or persuasive elements, such as word choice or appeals to emotion, to add power to the ideas expressed.

Write an essay in which you explain how Jimmy Carter builds an argument to persuade his audience that the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge should not be developed for industry. In your essay, analyze how Carter uses one or more of the features listed in the box above (or features of your own choice) to strengthen the logic and persuasiveness of his argument. Be sure that your analysis focuses on the most relevant features of the passage.

Your essay should not explain whether you agree with Carter's claims, but rather explain how Carter builds an argument to persuade his audience.

The Essay is “optional,” is 50 minutes long, is at the end of the test, and is more analytical and challenging

“Your essay should not explain whether you agree with [the author’s] claims, but rather explain how [the author] builds an argument to persuade his audience.”

New scoring rubric grants a max of 4 points for reading, 4 points for analysis, 4 points for writing.



Essay Scoring conventions TBA

	Reading	Analysis	Writing	Total
Reader 1	4	3	3	10
Reader 2	4	4	3	11
	8	7	6	21

CB will provide 3 scores with a max of 8 points for Reading, Analysis and Writing. Will Colleges say, Sarah scored a 21? Or a 7? Or a 10.5? Or will they go into the weeds with her 8,7,6?

Not all schools will require the new SAT (or ACT) essay



Citing cost and validity issues as decision factors

CB allowed more time per question, backing off of processing speed



Seconds Per Question			
Section	ACT	Current SAT	New SAT
Grammar	36.0	42.9	47.7
Reading	52.5	62.7	75.0
Math	60.0	77.8	84.2
Science	52.5	-	

33 %

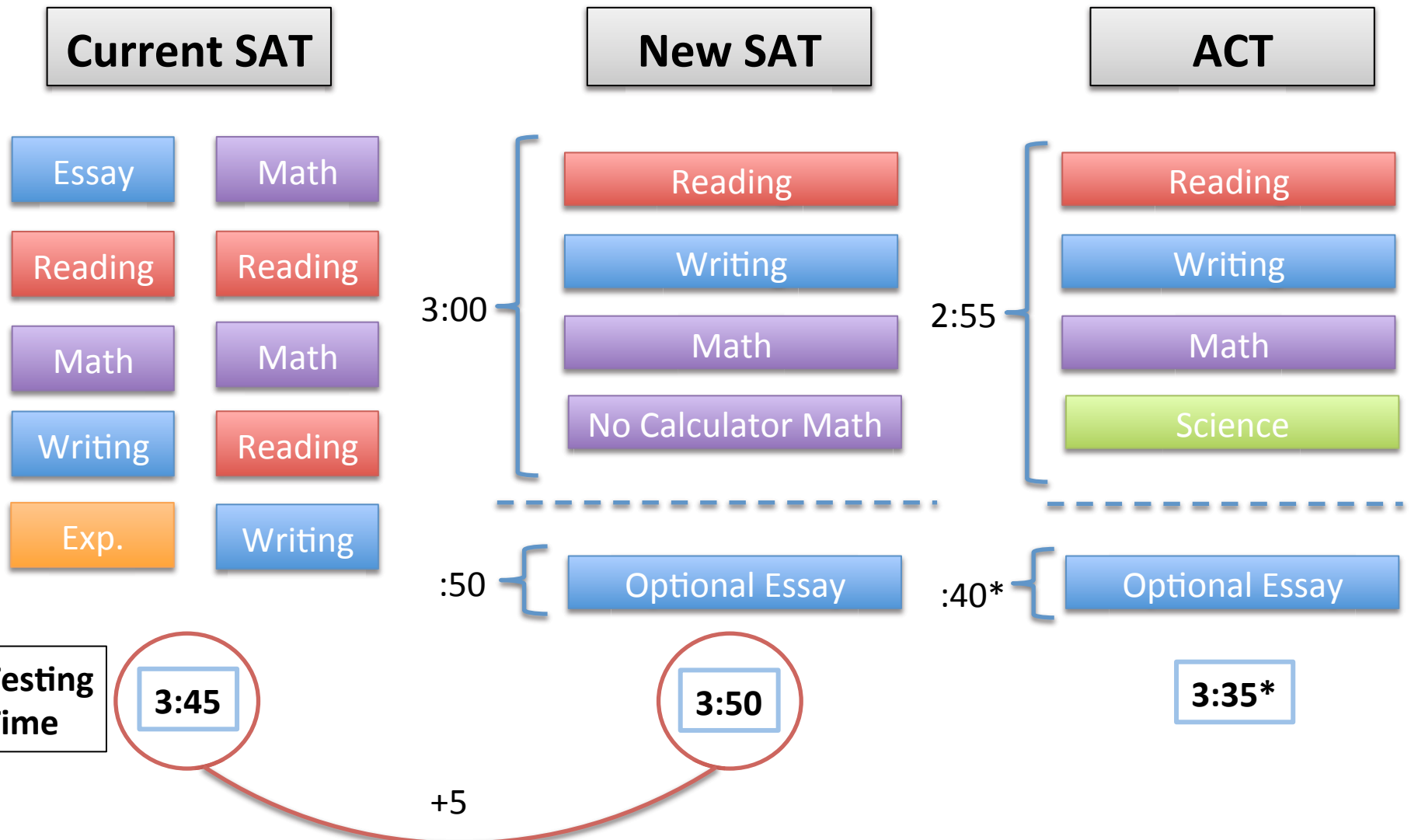
43 %

40 %

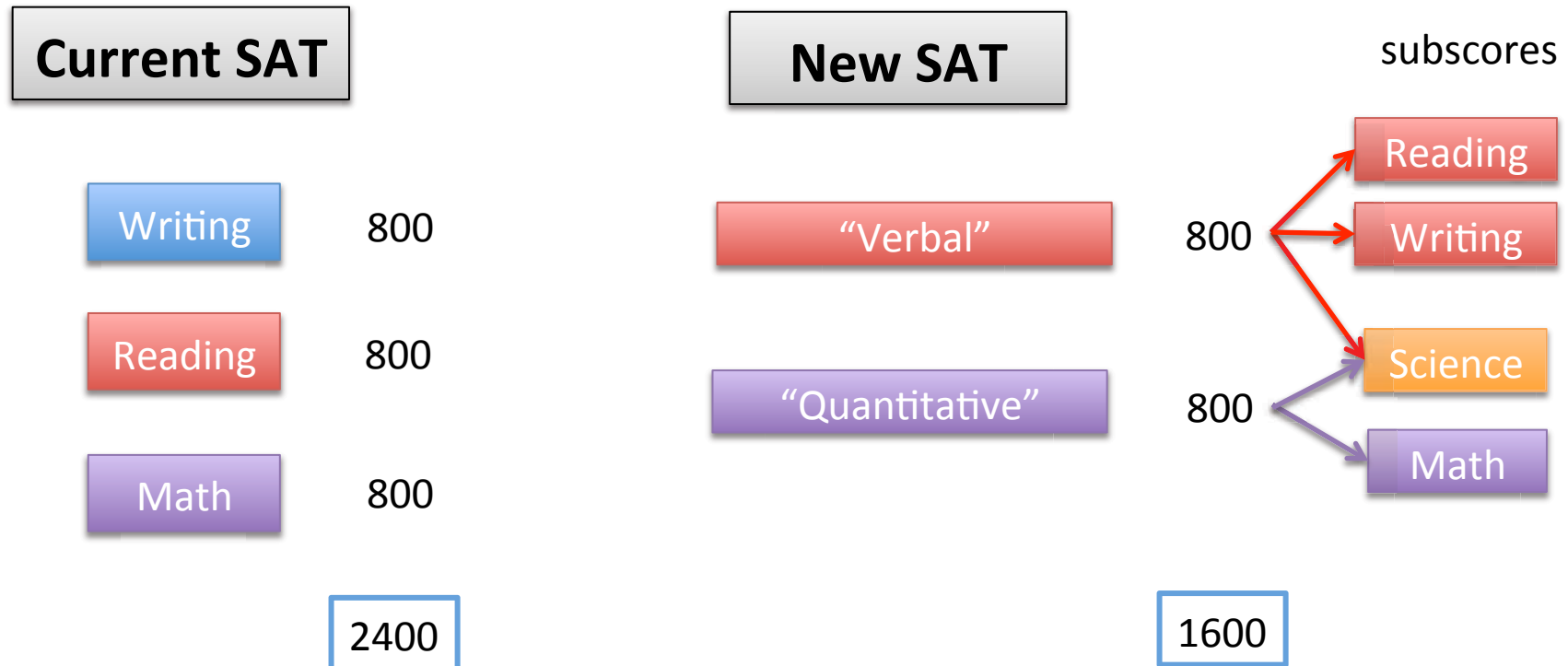
Extended time
SAT over ACT!

Some of our ACT-oriented students are doing very well on the revised SAT practice tests. One student commented: “It’s like the ACT, without the timing pressures and the challenging Science section.”

CB adopted the ACT's format



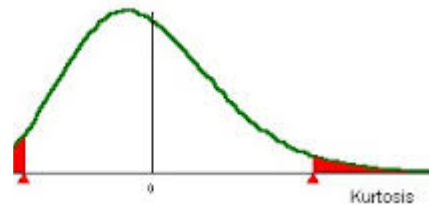
Returns to the 1600 Scale with subscores



Subscores will be meaningful for colleges and programs looking for students with particular skill sets; some colleges may focus exclusively on the Reading section scores (William and Mary hinted at this) and ignore the Writing.

The curve has changed, reflecting a more challenging test

Kurtosis
Critical
Values



the new Math curve is much more forgiving

	Current SAT (54 items)		Redesigned SAT (58 items)	
Math Section Scaled Score	Incorrect Answers	Percent Accuracy	Incorrect Answers	Percent Accuracy
700	4	93%	8	84%
600	13	76%	20	66%
500	21	57%	32	45%
400	32	41%	43	26%

Students can miss twice as many problems (at a 700) on the new test and receive the same score. This is comparable to the Math 2 curve being much more forgiving than Math 1, an easier test

EXPECT DELAYS

College Board is intentionally delaying the March and possibly May 2016 SAT score returns. CB psychometricians will use May scores to help validate the new scoring scale from the March norming group.

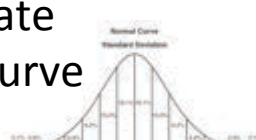
Establish the curve, raw to scaled scores



March
2016

Is March is a truly representative sample?

validate the curve



May
2016

Release the results

Late May/
June
2016

Waive late fees for June

The ACT shifts, albeit more subtly

- Essay Changes
- Extra Scores/Reporting
- Digital Assessments
- Reading Changes
- Optional Constructed Response subject tests



ACT is getting itself more Common-Core aligned,
gradually and without fanfare

ACT Reading has been changing gradually since October 2013

New ACT reading sections have **compare and contrast** dual passages! Taking a note directly from the SAT playbook

How is Author 1's tone distinct from that of Author 2?



Author 1

VS



Author 2

Slight changes to Science

- Shift from 7 to 6 passages
- Elimination of the 5-item passage



With the elimination of one of the passages, students will need to shift gears one less time. This does not seem to have had any significant effect on student perceptions of the section or the scores attained.

Much harder ACT essay

- Evaluates 4 areas: ideas and analysis, development and support, organization, and language use. 48 total points scaled to a 36 point score.
- 40 minutes long
- Students are provided several perspectives and asked to create their own analysis of a complex issue
- Some issues with delays in the grading of the first essays

Old Essay

Should students who have C averages in high school be allowed to get driving permits?



New Essay



ACT is shifting its expectations for the essay

- After the September ACT, www.ACT.org updated the sample essay with a more sophisticated and longer example.
- It seems there are some issues with inter-rater reliability for the graders, some consistency issues.
- It may take some time before a consistent new standard is agreed upon and applied

Writing Test

[About the Test](#)
[FAQs](#)
[Scores](#)

Prepare

[Test-taking tips](#)
[Practice writing skills](#)
[Build writing skills](#)
[Sample essays](#)

Sample Essay 6

Ideas and Analysis: Score = 6

Development and Support: Score = 6

Organization: Score = 6

Language Use and Conventions: Score = 6

Before the Sep. ACT

Begin WRITING TEST Here.

As technology improves, and more and more tasks are completed by machines instead of humans, the question is no longer about what we can do with machines, but rather what we should. Although the usage of machines increases efficiency and our standard of living, it detracts from the value of human life.

As machines increasingly perform all our basic tasks, society is able to produce more. The additional production adds material value to our society and frees people up from these low-skill tasks. This is in agreement with Perspective Two which claims that this industrialization leads to more prosperity. For example, in the 18th century, short-staple cotton that was grown in the Southern United States required an immense amount of labor in order to separate the seeds from the fiber to process the cotton to make it marketable. However, in the mid-19th century, Eli Whitney, an American entrepreneur, invented the cotton gin, which allowed for automation of cotton processing. This machine replaced the need of a large work force for the process and greatly improved production. As a result of the cotton gin, short-staple cotton production skyrocketed, increasing by more than 10 times in the South while bringing prosperity to the region and setting in motion a new industrial era in America. This is in agreement with Perspective Three, which says that mechanization allows for “unimagined possibilities”. Although there are clearly many advantages to industrialization, there are also some heavy drawbacks.

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Sample Essay 6

After the Sep. ACT

Ideas and Analysis: Score = 6

Development and Support: Score = 6

Organization: Score = 6

Language Use and Conventions: Score = 6

Begin WRITING TEST Here.

Advances in technology have become so widely accepted in today's culture that very few people are willing to pause to consider the consequences. People get so excited about what new technologies can offer that they forget to question whether there might be any negative effects. Without caution and deliberation, replacing the natural with the mechanical would undoubtedly be disastrous.

The economic implications of the potential mechanical takeover alone should be enough to dissuade anyone from moving too fast. In the event the robots are more widely used in the workplace, humans would surely be replaced. At first, businesses would benefit from the efficiency of robots, but eventually a depressed job market would lead to a population that struggles just to feed themselves and their families, let alone purchase the products these robots make. In the long run, society will suffer if it does not take care to prevent the economic consequences of giving everything over to machines.

Our careless use of automation has already taken a toll on our culture. People have been interacting with automation in nearly every aspect of their lives, whether it be shopping, banking, or the use of a telephone. The effect of this is obvious: basic respect for our fellow man is all but absent today because of increased interaction with automation. Why treat a machine with kindness? It suffers no emotional or psychological damage. In a culture

Essay changes: Less explicit comparison

- The new "perfect" essay abandons explicit references to the three different perspectives.
- It seems that the ACT now doesn't want a student to write "This view resonates with Perspective 2, which..."

This may improve the flow, and create a less mechanical analysis of the three view points.

Essay Delays and Screenshots

High volume of September test takers + longer scoring time = substantial delays and concerns regarding application deadlines

"Because of the unique nature of this situation, ACT urges colleges to consider accepting **screenshots** of the student's September multiple-choice scores from their official ACT student account as a provisional measure, if application deadlines are nearing, until official scores are sent. We will encourage students facing deadlines to send a copy of the email they receive from ACT, along with a screenshot of their ACT multiple-choice test scores, to any applicable colleges to verify that they are among the students impacted by this situation." - Steve Kappler, VP brand experience for ACT

Rhetorical Device Questions in Reading: students must now know the following terms

- Alliteration
- Allusion
- Anecdote
- Figurative language
- Idiomatic expressions
- Metaphor
- Personification
- Rhetorical question
- Simile



ACT math composition is shifting

Pre-algebra: 14 items (23%)

Elementary algebra: 10 items (17%)

Intermediate algebra: 9 items (15%)

Planar geometry*: 14 items (23%)

Coordinate geometry*: 9 items (15%)

Elementary Trigonometry: 4 items (6.7%)

More advanced math coming to the ACT as a response to the harder SAT math

* Defined differently from New SAT standards

Harder ACT math examples

- Expanding use of matrices (e.g., multiplication)
- Adding more conic sections (e.g., working with ellipses and parabolic equations)
- Understanding the domain of a function
- Vertical and horizontal asymptotes
- Trig: Using Radians, Terminal Sides and Coterminal Angles (e.g., 30° , -330° and 390°)

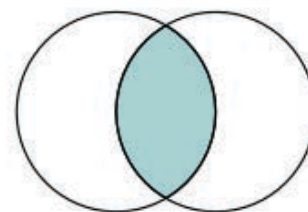
The great Convergence

SAT moves towards ACT

- Eliminates guessing penalty and E) answer choice
- Drops advanced vocabulary
- Uses exclusively long form passages for Writing and Reading from various contexts
- Focuses on rhetorical skills over grammar
- Adds science-type charts, tables, graphs
- Adds higher level math (e.g., trig) and puts more math in context
- Moves from 10 to 4 sections and drops experimental section
- Makes the essay optional at the end of the test

ACT moves towards SAT

- Adds comparison reading passages
- Adds more critical thinking, analysis and time to optional essay



Overlap of roughly 90%.
Scores should correlate more highly than ever.

How will colleges perceive the new SAT compared to the old?

- The vast majority of feedback we have received from colleges pertaining to the new test has been positive,
- Changes to SAT subject test policies may be coming: Yale announced they were dropping the requirement for subject tests, partially in response to the more rigorous SAT.
- The new SAT may correlate more closely with freshman and 4-year GPA. Colleges will have early data by Summer of 2018.

Some responses from colleges on the New SAT: <https://www.applerouth.com/blog/2015/02/16/how-will-top-colleges-use-the-redesigned-sat/>

Yale and Rochester weigh in

“The redesigned SAT does look to be an improvement over the last exam, in terms of clearness and connection to our curriculum.”



-Jeremiah Quinlan
Yale Dean of Undergraduate Admission

“We will prefer the new test over the old at Rochester because it’s a better test of the skills we value.... So for those students who submit both new and old SAT scores, I believe that during review and Committee we are likely going to rely on those new scores more.”



-Jonathan Burdick
VP & Dean of College Admission U. Rochester

Virginia Tech: the Hokie Pokey



The Hokies are the first and currently only school in the country who will require current juniors to submit either a new SAT score or an ACT score

Will many schools follow? Unlikely, from all the feedback we've received. A small number of schools will take this position, but the overwhelming majority will not.

Things to ponder

- How will superscoring be affected by the new changes to the SAT?
- Will accommodations be affected by the changes? Will the College Board move to ACT-style accommodations?
- Will two highly similar assessments be necessary or will we move to one dominant test?

Questions?



Helping prepare students and schools for the SAT and ACT since 2001