

# Getting to Know the New SAT

Submitted by Bob Kefgen on Sun, 01/11/2015 - MASSP ([http://mymassp.com/files/New\\_SAT\\_blueprint.pdf](http://mymassp.com/files/New_SAT_blueprint.pdf))

Not only is Michigan switching from ACT to SAT in 2016, the SAT itself is getting a huge overhaul. Out goes the 2400-point scale, the surfeit of esoteric vocabulary, and the penalty for wrong answers that discouraged guessing.

So what does the new SAT look like and how does it compare to the more familiar ACT? If you're like us and you've been googling around trying to find a comparison between the new SAT and the ACT, you'll know that such a comparison is hard to find. So MASSP has put together a brief [side-by-side comparison](#) of the redesigned SAT and the ACT to help members contextualize the new test (see below). For those familiar with the current SAT and just trying to get a handle on the changes, there is a link to a side-by-side comparison of the current SAT and the new SAT at the end of this article. In addition to that comparison, we've also collected a host of resources that we've found helpful in learning about the new SAT. And there is lots of information available for the ambitious, including a complete blueprint of the test with a breakdown of questions by type, content, number and weight. For the rest of us, there is also a simple one-page blueprint you could use as a handout and a presentation you can use to explain the new test to parents and students.

	<b>ACT</b>	<b>Redesigned SAT</b>
<b>Test Length</b>	3 hours, 25 min (with Writing Test)	3 hours, 50 min (with Essay)
<b>Subjects Tested and Time Per Section</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ English – 45 min</li><li>▪ Reading – 35 min</li><li>▪ Science – 35 min</li><li>▪ Math – 60 min</li><li>▪ Writing – 30 min</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Writing and Language – 35 min</li><li>▪ Reading – 65 min</li><li>▪ 2x Math (one section with calculators and one without) – 80 min total</li><li>▪ Essay (optional) – 50 min</li></ul>
<b>Scoring Scale</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Composite of 1-36 based on average scores from the 4 test sections</li><li>▪ 4 scores of 1-36 for each test</li><li>▪ Writing Test scored 0-12 with results reported separately</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Scale ranging from 400 to 1600</li><li>▪ Scale ranging from 200 to 800 for Evidence-Based Reading and Writing</li><li>▪ 200 to 800 for Math</li><li>▪ 2 to 8 on each of three traits for Essay with results reported separately</li></ul>
<b>Wrong Answer Penalty</b>	No penalty.	No penalty.

<p><b>Question Types</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reading, Writing, Math, Science – 100% multiple choice</li> <li>▪ Essay – writing prompt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reading – 100% passage-based multiple choice</li> <li>▪ Writing – 100% passage-based multiple choice</li> <li>▪ Math – 78% multiple choice, 22% student-produced response (grid-in).</li> <li>▪ Essay – writing prompt</li> </ul>
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## Test Content Expectations

	<b>ACT</b>	<b>Redesigned SAT</b>
<b>English/Writing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Usage/Mechanics               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Punctuation</li> <li>▪ Grammar and usage</li> <li>▪ Sentence structure</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Rhetorical Skills               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strategy</li> <li>▪ Organization</li> <li>▪ Style</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 4 passages, 400-450 words per passage</li> <li>▪ Questions on:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Expression of ideas</li> <li>▪ Standard English conventions</li> <li>▪ Vocabulary in context</li> <li>▪ Analysis</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Reading</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 4 long passages</li> <li>▪ Reading comprehension with a focus on showing understanding of:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is directly stated</li> <li>▪ Statements with implied meanings</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Little emphasis on vocabulary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Vocabulary deemphasized compared to current SAT</li> <li>▪ 4 single passages and 1 paired passage</li> <li>▪ Questions on:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Vocabulary in context</li> <li>▪ Command of Evidence</li> <li>▪ Analysis in history/social studies and science</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Science</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Focus on scientific reasoning</li> <li>▪ Analysis/interpretation/evaluation of scientific passages, charts, diagrams, etc.</li> </ul>	<p>No standalone science section, but science questions built into math, reading, and writing sections</p>

<b>Math</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Arithmetic</li> <li>▪ Algebra</li> <li>▪ Geometry</li> <li>▪ Algebra II</li> <li>▪ Trigonometry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Heart of Algebra</li> <li>▪ Problem Solving and Data Analysis</li> <li>▪ Passport to Advanced Math</li> <li>▪ Additional Topics in Math</li> </ul>
<b>Essay</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Final Section</li> <li>▪ 30 min</li> <li>▪ Topic of importance to high school students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Final Section</li> <li>▪ 50 min</li> <li>▪ Students produce a written analysis of a provided source text</li> </ul>

[Click here to download a PDF version of this information.](#)

## Resources

A great deal of information about the redesigned SAT is available directly from College Board, which maintains a website specifically for informing students, parents, educators, and college admissions faculty about the redesigned SAT: <http://deliveringopportunity.org/>

Here is a list of some of the best resources we've found on that site...

A side-by-side comparison of the current SAT and the redesigned SAT: <https://www.collegeboard.org/delivering-opportunity/sat/redesign/compare-tests>

Sign-up for updates from College Board about the new SAT: <https://www.collegeboard.org/delivering-opportunity/sat/updates>

A simplified one-page blueprint of the redesigned SAT: <https://www.collegeboard.org/sites/default/files/sat-blueprint.pdf>

Information on the new SAT scoring scale and the types of score reports that you can expect: <https://www.collegeboard.org/delivering-opportunity/sat/higher-ed/scores>

A presentation you can use to help you discuss this transition with parents and students: <https://www.collegeboard.org/sites/default/files/sat-presentation-k-12-students-parents.ppt>

The complete test blueprint for the redesigned SAT including a breakdown of the number, type, and tested content for every question on the test, how those questions contribute to the composite score and some sample questions for each subject area and question type: <https://www.collegeboard.org/pdf/sat/delivering-opportunity/test-specifications-for-the-redesigned-sat-102414.pdf>

There are three pages within SAT website specifically designed for different audiences, which you can use and share...

- Students and parents: <https://www.collegeboard.org/delivering-opportunity/sat/student-parent>
- K-12 Educators: <https://www.collegeboard.org/delivering-opportunity/sat/k-12-educator>
- Higher Ed (this page also has the most detailed information, which could be an overload for some, but for testing gurus and college admissions counselors, provides a wealth of information):  
<https://www.collegeboard.org/delivering-opportunity/sat/higher-ed>

A skills crosswalk between the current SAT and the redesigned SAT and PSAT/NMSQT (thanks to Patrick O'Connor at MACAC for sharing this resource with us):  
<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat-suite-assessments/practice>