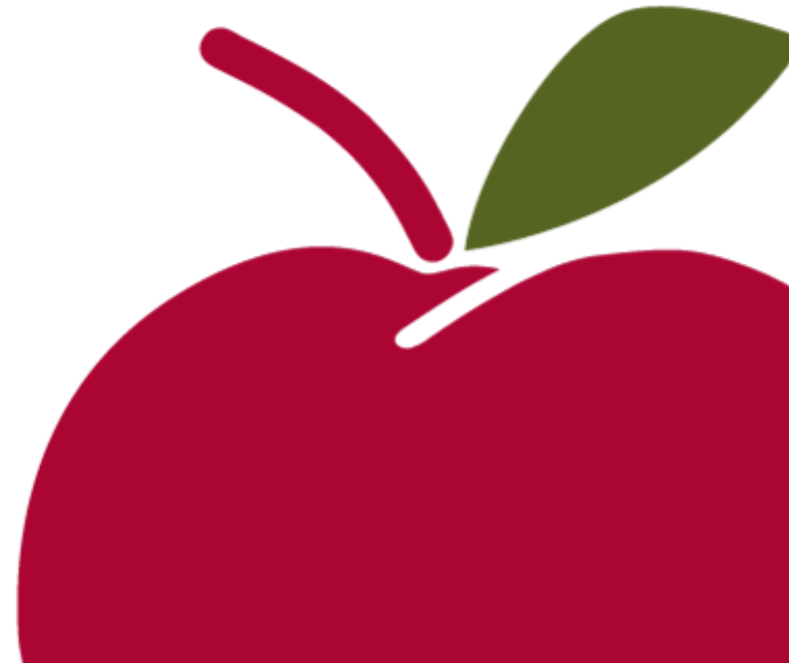


Everything College Admissions

Maxwell Smith, Senior Director,
Applerouth Tutoring

applerouth
tutoring services llc



Admissions Factors

What are colleges looking for?



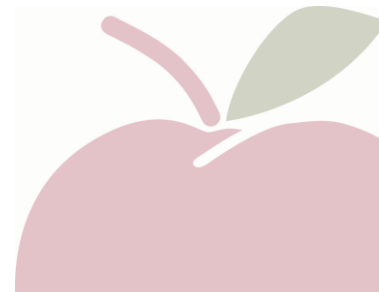
Understand the Needs of Colleges and Universities



If you understand institutional priorities, you can craft an application that makes you more appealing.

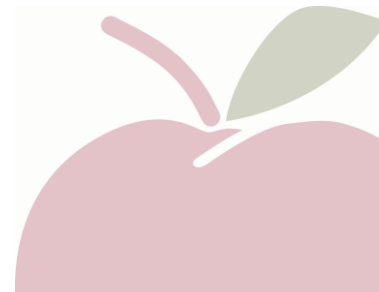
Key Institutional Needs When Constructing a Class

- Financial Health
 - Discount rate
 - Legacy
- Rankings: Staying on Par with Peer Schools
 - Academic strength of applicants



Key Institutional Needs Cont'd...

- Diversity
 - Ethnic
 - Geographic
 - Serving first-generation students
- Activities and Campus Life
 - Athletics
 - Fine and performing arts



Admissions Process

What happens to my application after I submit it?



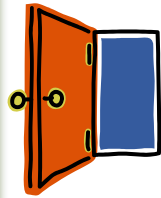
NACAC Admissions Trends Survey 2012:

Factors Influencing Admissions decisions

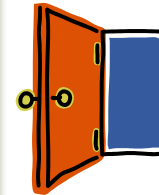
Importance	Considerable	Moderate	Limited	None
Grades in college prep	86.5%	11.5%	1.6%	0.3%
Strength of curriculum	70.7	22.0	5.9	1.3
Admission test scores	57.8	32.0	9.2	1.0
Grades in all courses	45.6	43.9	9.8	0.7
Essay or writing sample	26.4	37.5	19.9	16.3
Demonstrated interest	20.7	27.0	27.6	24.7
Teacher recommendation	17.4	47.7	23.7	11.2
Counselor rec.	17.1	50.0	22.0	10.9
Class rank	16.3	42.2	31.7	9.8
Extracurricular activities	8.9	43.9	34.3	12.9
Subject test scores (AP, IB)	7.0	27.2	33.6	32.2
Extracurricular activities	8.9	43.9	34.3	12.9
Interview	6.6	26.3	31.9	35.2
SAT II scores	5.0	11.0	28.0	56.0

Application “Gates”

High School
GPA,
considering
strength of
schedule and
school



SAT
ACT
SAT Subject
Tests



Admissions Essays
Teacher/Counselor
Recommendations
Activities
(Leadership, Depth)

Academic Index:
Quantitative Components
How will they read your
application?

Qualitative
Components
Have you told a
cohesive story?

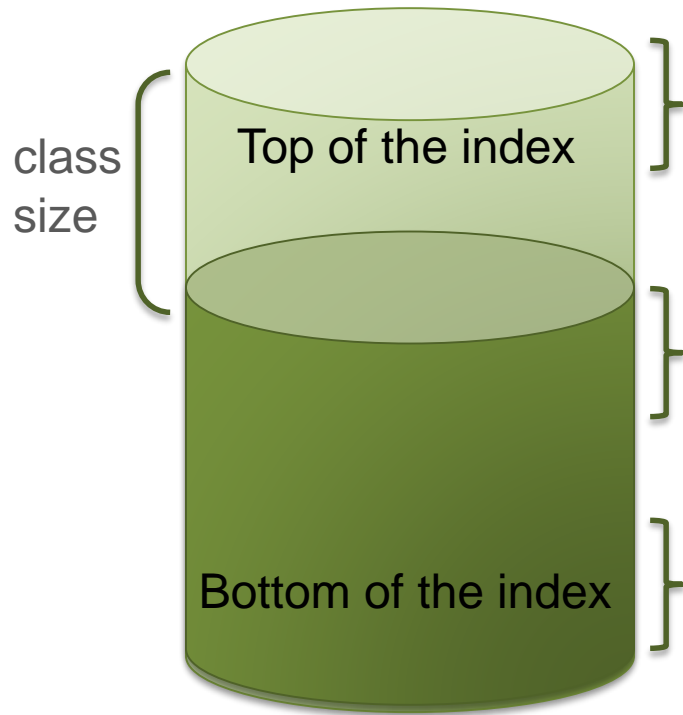
How Most Colleges Evaluate Applicants

Step 1: Academic Indexing

- Applications are indexed through an algorithm that typically includes:
 - *Course rigor*
 - *Grades in core classes*
 - *Test scores*
 - *School strength*
- Schools assign different weights to these factors, but core GPA and course rigor often trump testing



The Academic Index Impacts the “Read” a Student Receives



Is there a compelling reason **not** to give an offer to these students?

The real work for the admissions committee – the kids in the middle

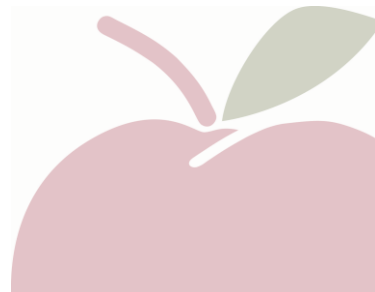
Is there a compelling reason to take a risk on these students?

How Most Colleges Evaluate Applicants Continued...

Step 2*: Involvement/Leadership Evaluation

- Student résumé
- Extra Curricular Activities
- Leadership positions (depth) trump variety (breadth)

*The factors in Steps 2 and 3 are considered *only if* the student's academic index justifies a holistic read



How Most Colleges Evaluate Applicants Continued...

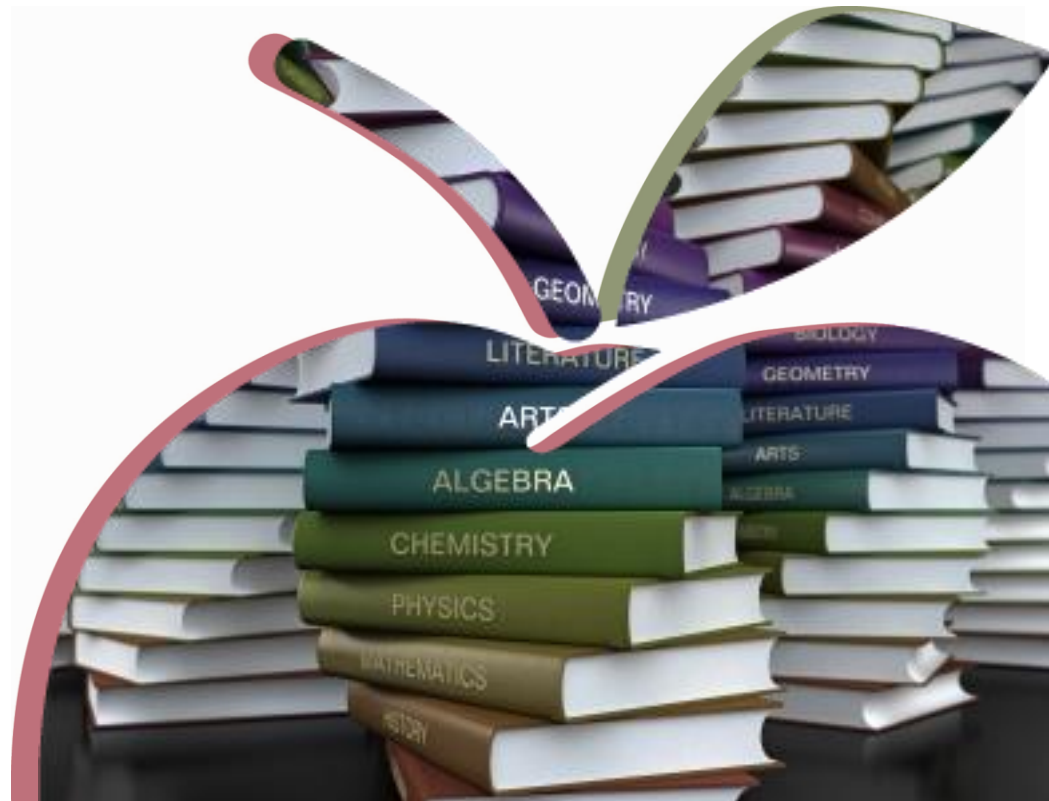
Step 3: Consider Other, Qualitative Factors

- Adversity
- Contributions to the community
- Diversity
- Awards and recognitions
- Personality and voice
- Student's self-awareness or insights, as demonstrated through the essays or letters of recommendation



Academics

How will colleges view my transcript?



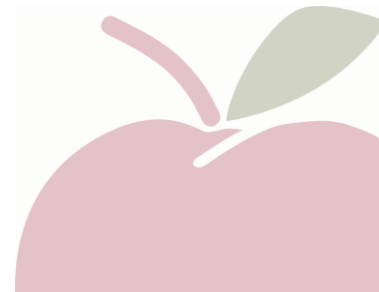
Balance Course Rigor and GPA

Encourage students to take a challenging curriculum
in the context of your school



To strike the right balance, consider:

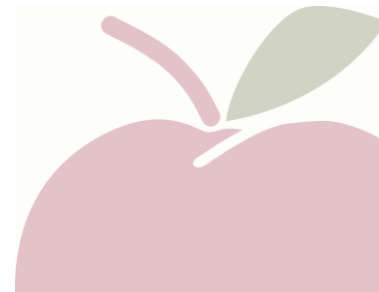
- Past performance
- In-school commitments
- Other commitments



Grade *Trends* are Essential

It is **never** too late to improve your grades. It may be tough to change your cumulative GPA first semester senior year, but an upward

trend can help with admissions -- *especially* if you can explain the change with a compelling narrative.



Competition within Cohorts

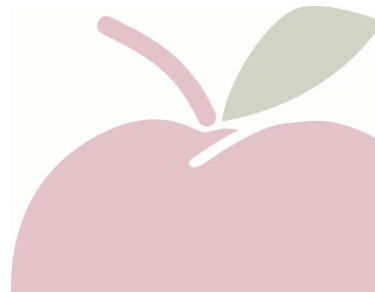


You are compared to other students at your school; you are also compared within ethnicity and gender bands



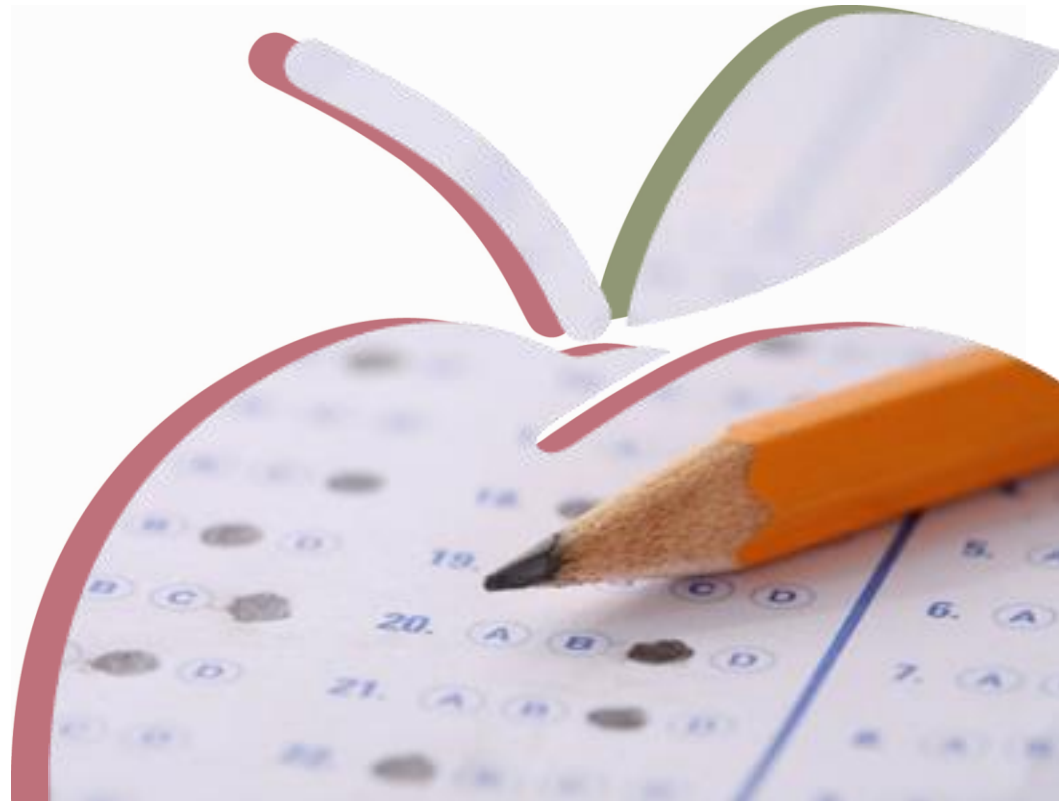
Calibrate the Relative Importance of GPA

- Grade inflation is rampant in the US
- With so much aid money on the line, many teachers feel that giving a C is like taking money out of a student's pocket
- Some students get too caught up in GPA, an unstandardized metric, and ignore testing, which is standardized



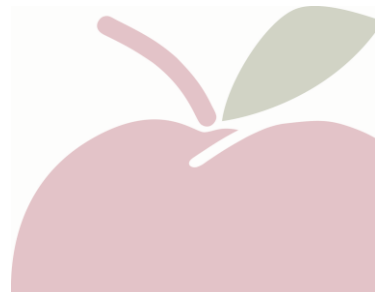
Testing

Should I take the SAT or the ACT?

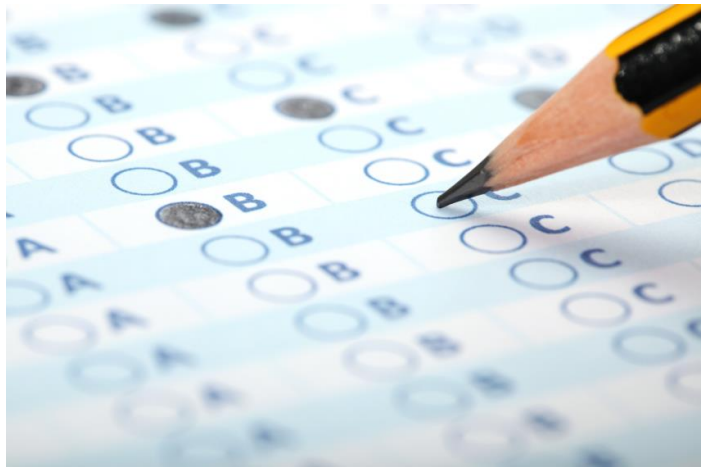


How Important are the Tests?

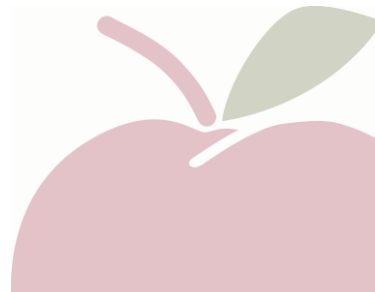
Over the last decade, the tests have become a more significant part of the application process, affecting both admissions and merit-based scholarship decisions.



Why Testing Has Increased in Importance



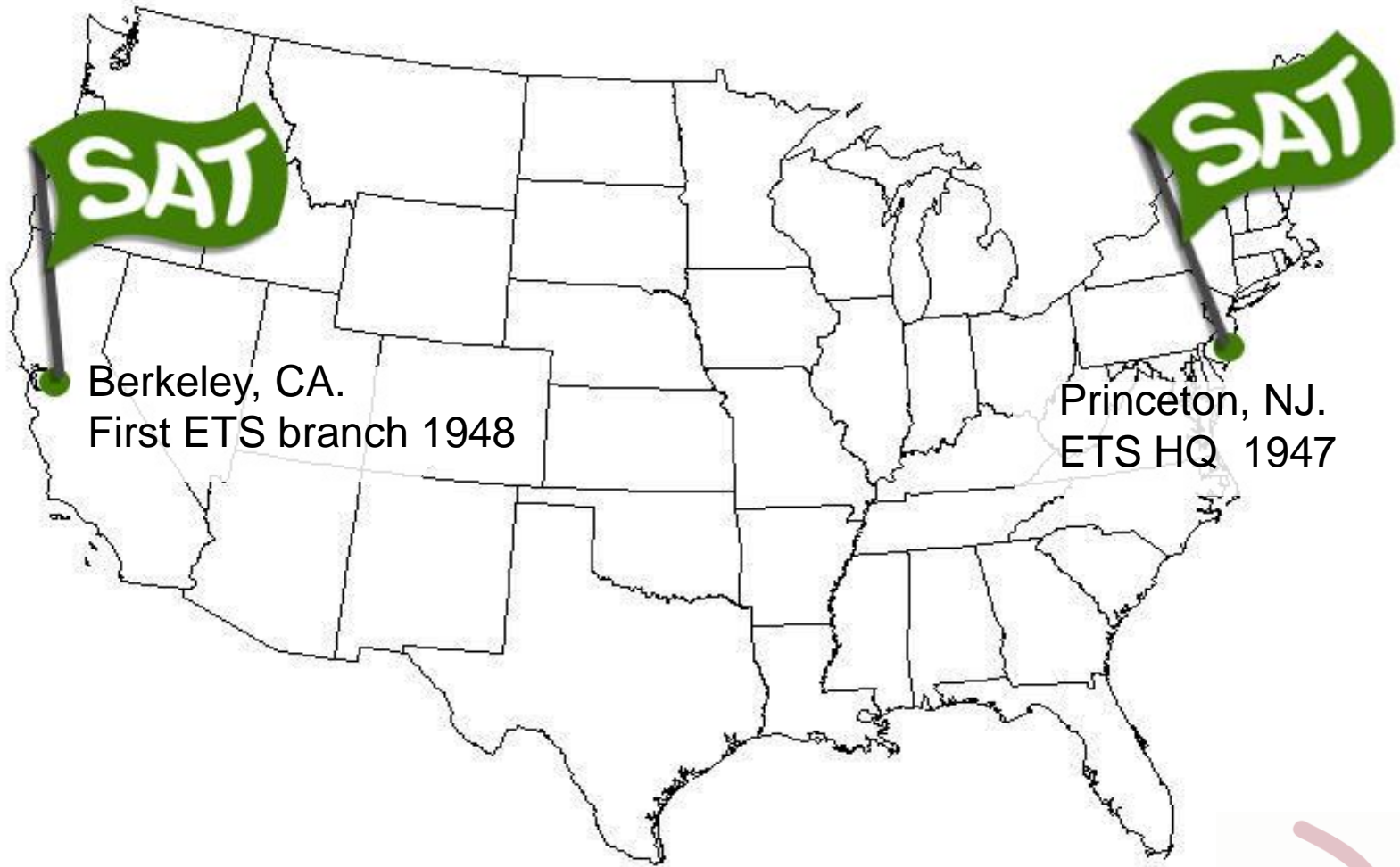
- Standardized, which allows for easy comparison across geographic & demographic lines
- A hedge against grade inflation
- Efficient way to make big cuts
- Moderately useful predictor of success in college



Quick Intro to the Assessments



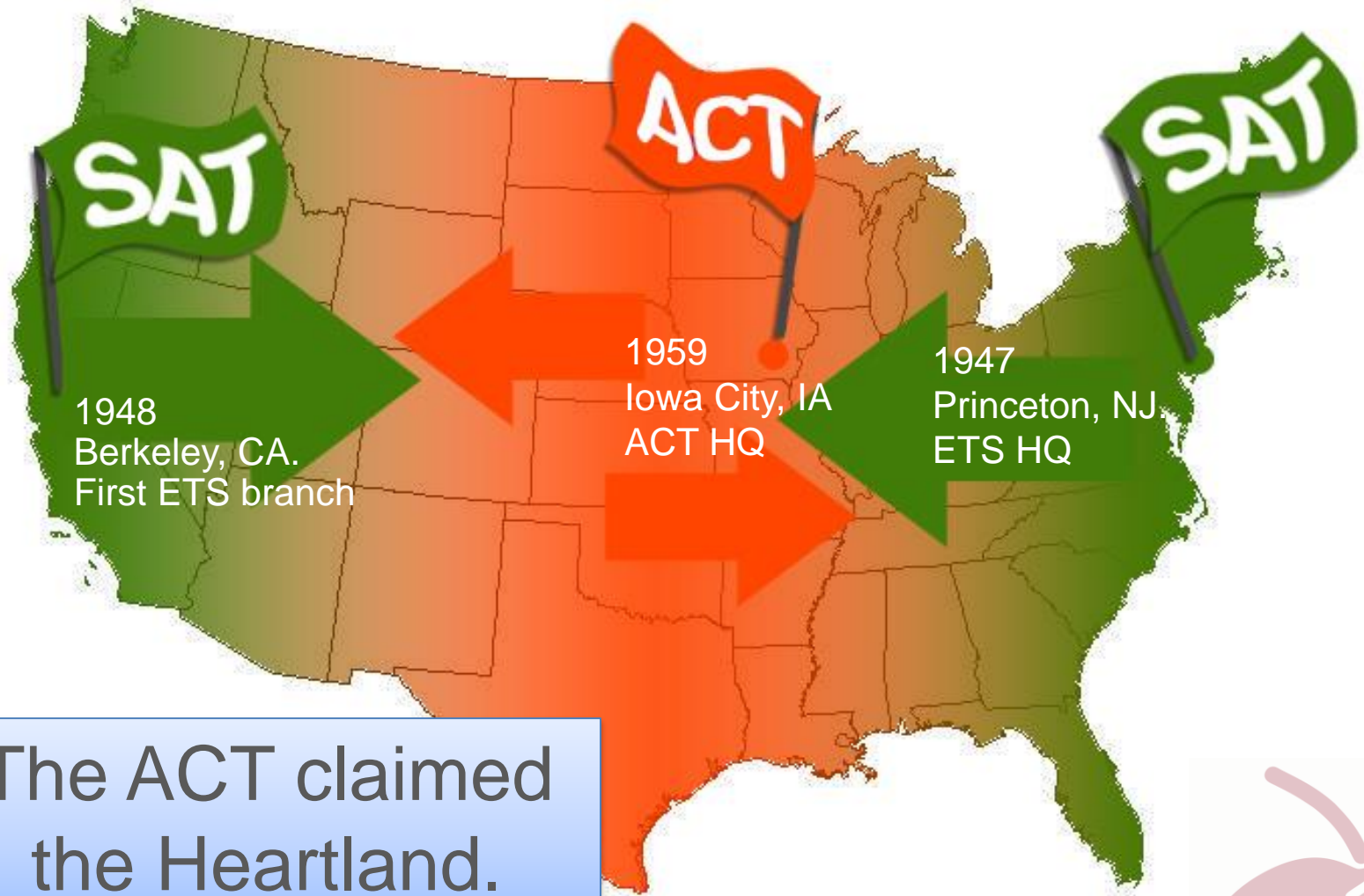
SAT/ACT Geographic Origins



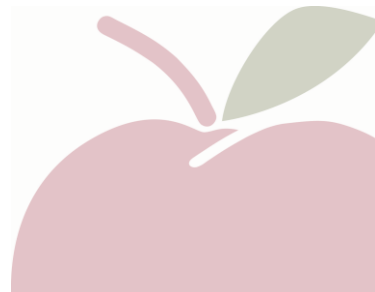
The SAT was first on the scene.



SAT/ACT Geographic Origins

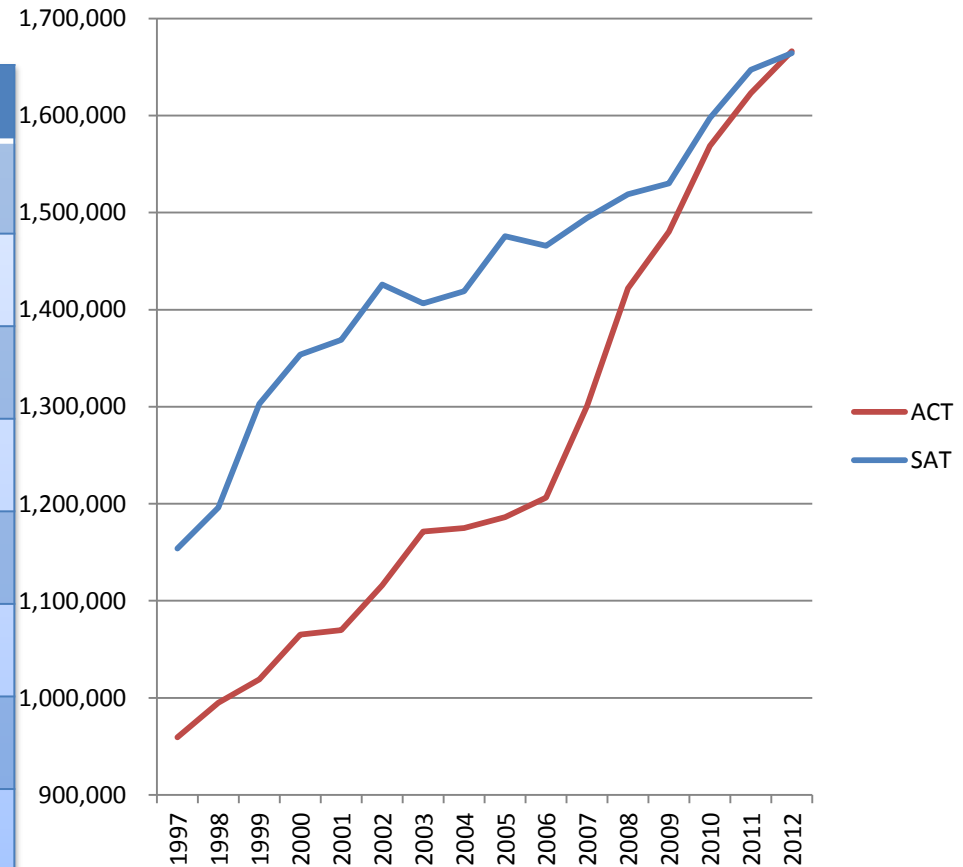


The ACT claimed
the Heartland.



The ACT Has Rocked the SAT's World!

	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



Aligning with the Common Core has made the ACT the big winner!

Today the SAT and ACT
are universally accepted

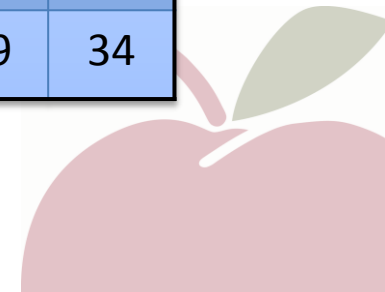


Colleges will accept either
test **without prejudice.**



GA and Regional Schools

25-75% Ranges	Critical Reading		Math		Writing		ACT	
GA Southern	510	590	510	600			21	24
GSU	490	590	490	590			21	25
UGA	560	660	570	660	560	660	24	29
GA tech	590	690	650	730	580	670	27	31
Emory	640	740	670	760	650	740	30	33
Charleston	570	650	570	650			23	26
Furman	590	690	590	680	590	680	26	30
Clemson	550	640	590	680			25	30
Wake Forest	610	690	630	710			27	31
Duke	660	750	680	790	680	780	29	34



Get More Information Online

Highest SAT Scores

HOW DO YOU STACK UP?

What are your highest SAT scores (real or predicted)?

Enter and save your info to compare yourself to this or any college.

SAT Critical Reading
-- ▾

SAT Math
-- ▾

SAT Writing
-- ▾

[Save](#)

SAT MID-RANGE TEST SCORES ?

SAT Critical Reading

200 |-----| 560-660 |-----| 800

SAT Math

200 |-----| 560-660 |-----| 800

SAT Writing

200 |-----| 560-660 |-----| 800

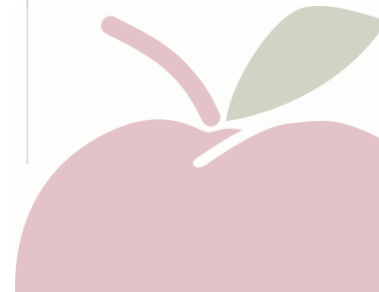
Percent of freshmen in each SAT score range

[Critical Reading](#) | [Math](#) | [Writing](#)

700 - 800	11%
600 - 699	45%
500 - 599	36%
400 - 499	8%

100% of freshmen who submitted SAT scores: 100%

Use the College Board.com site to see what the average applicant's scores are and how you measure up.



A few basics about the new SAT

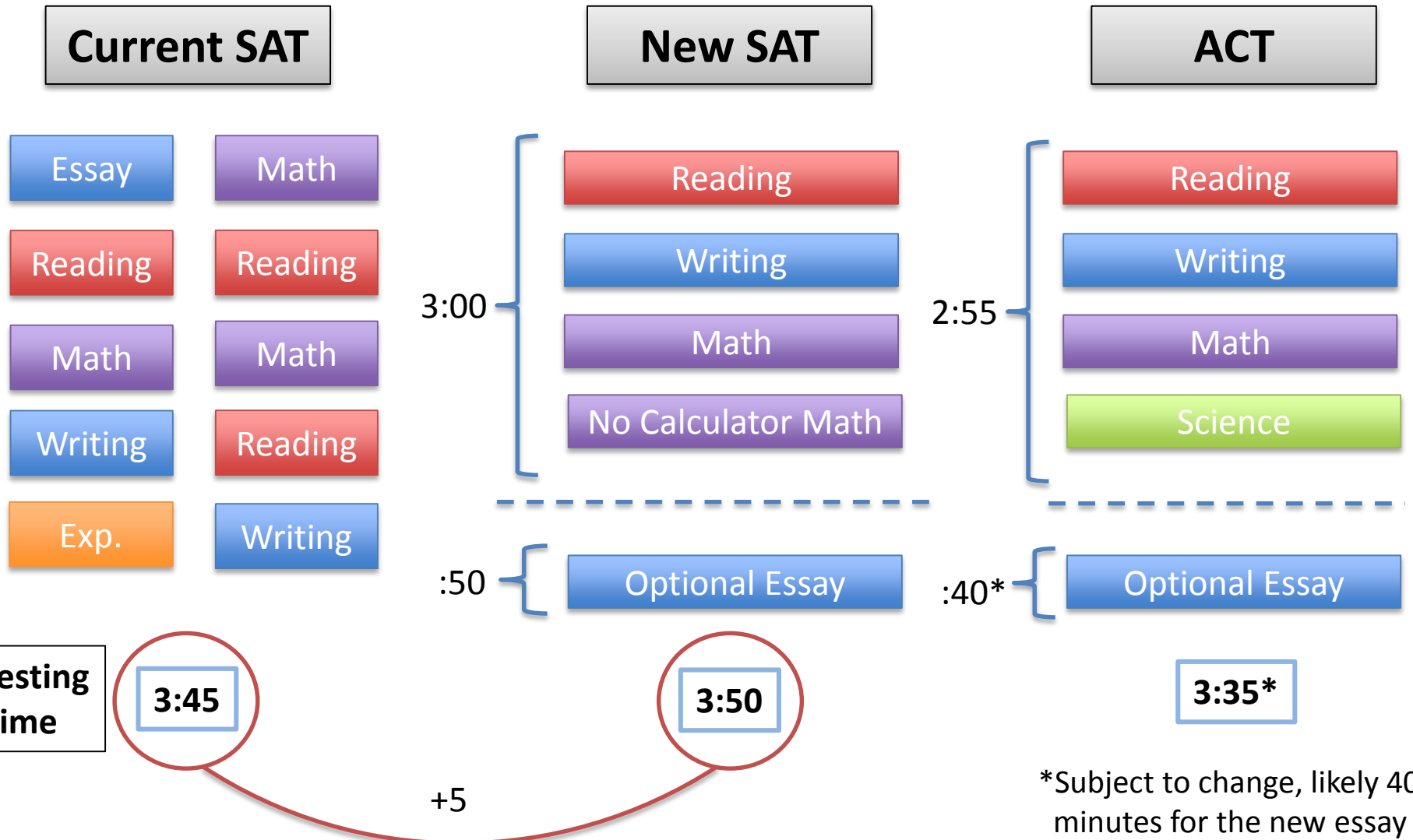


The SAT nixed the guessing penalty



So students will never again have to worry about that pesky quarter point.

Test Comparison



CB allowed more time per question,
but many students will need more
time for the harder question types



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 %

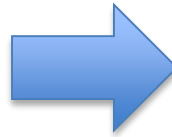
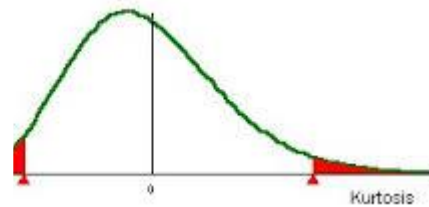
40 %

Extended time
SAT over ACT!

Even considering the more difficult items on the New SAT, the extra time will help students with slower processing speeds

The curve has changed, reflecting a more challenging test

Kurtosis
Critical
Values



The new Reading curve is much closer to the current curve

	Current SAT (67 items)		Redesigned SAT (52 items)	
Reading Section Scaled Score	Incorrect Answers	Percent Accuracy	Incorrect Answers	Percent Accuracy
700	8	88%	8	84%
600	16	76%	18	65%
500	29	57%	27	52%
400	41	39%	37	29%

As is Writing

	Current SAT (49 items)		Redesigned SAT (44 items)	
Writing Section Scaled Score	Incorrect Answers	Percent Accuracy	Incorrect Answers	Percent Accuracy
700	4	92%	5	88%
600	9	82%	10	75%
500	17	65%	17	58%
400	27	49%	24	40%

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

With the reduced number of answer choices and the elimination of the guessing penalty

A student could randomly guess his way to a 360 on Math and a 380 on Reading according to the current curve

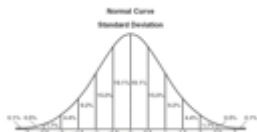


This scoring glitch will certainly be corrected by the time official scores are released in May or June

EXPECT DELAYS

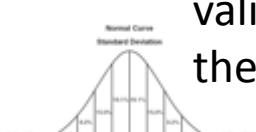
College Board is intentionally delaying the March and possibly May 2016 SAT score returns. CB psychometricians will use May scores to help validate the new scoring scale from the March norming group.

Establish the curve, raw to scaled scores



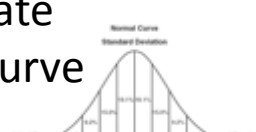
March
2016

validate
the curve



May
2016

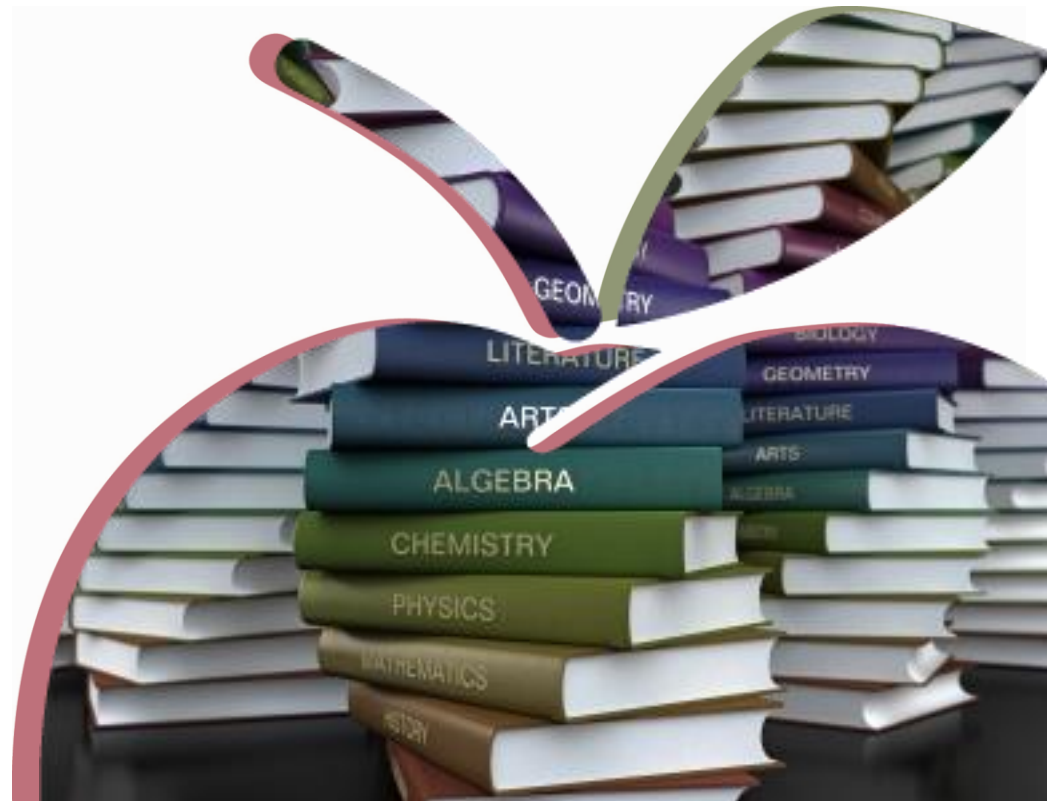
Release
the results



Late
May/June
2016

Is March is a truly
representative sample?

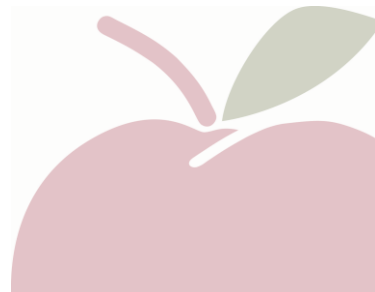
How do I prep most effectively?



Allow Enough Time to Prep



- This is a process, not a one-shot deal.
- Cram jobs almost never work.
- Plan on taking the test 3 times.
- It's smart to start **early!**



Momentum: Go in Strong



- Don't spread this out evenly over the year; kids can and do burn out on testing
 - Go hard before the actual tests
 - Take a mock test within a month of every real test
-
- Give students breaks and time away from prep



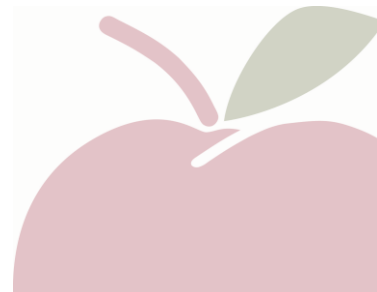
Mock Tests: You MUST Practice

These tests reveal:

- Wrong answer patterns (carelessness)
- Time management
- Mental fatigue
- Guessing efficacy



It's not JUST about the content.
The process is about 50%!

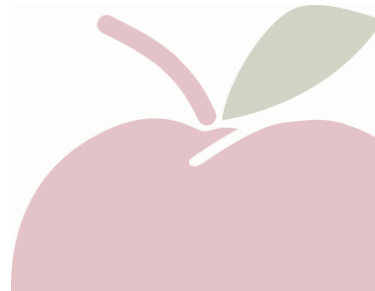


What do I need to know
about the tests for
colleges?



Trends

- Taking multiple tests and superscoring
- Sending all scores (elite schools only)
- Students taking (and sending!) both SAT and ACT



Admissions Essays

How do I describe myself in 650 words or less?



College Admissions Essay

- The personal statement is the single most important essay most students will write in high school
- Students often need specific help with essay writing instruction



Why the Essay Matters

- Offers the student a chance to come alive as a human being and share something not found anywhere else in the application
- A well-crafted essay can turn an application reader into a vocal advocate in committee

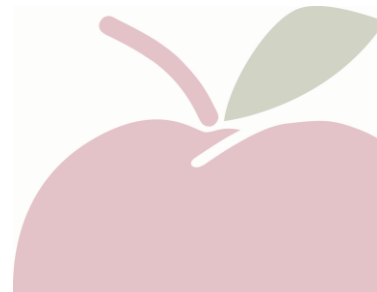
For students on the margin, the essay can be a **deciding factor** in admissions



Tips to Write a Better Essay

- 1) Write the essay *only you* could write.
- 2) Write in your own voice.
- 3) Keep the scope narrow; focus on a “thin slice” of life.
- 4) Be specific.
- 5) Hook your reader. Use a dynamic introduction or cut the intro altogether. Start in medias res.

For a full article on writing successful essays, go to www.applerouth.com
Resources- Experts Corner-
Jed Said- Writing the
College Essay



Activities

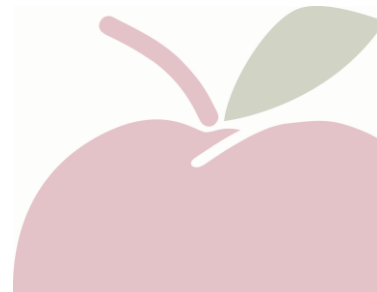
Should I join every club in school?



How Do Activities Factor into Admissions?

- Admissions officers look for **continuity, depth, and contribution**
- Doing the activity consistently over multiple years is key; do not switch every year

It's good to have involvement beyond sports, if possible. Admissions officers are asking, "what will this student bring to campus?"



Demonstrated Interest

Why should I go on college visits?



Demonstrated Interest May Improve Admissions Chances

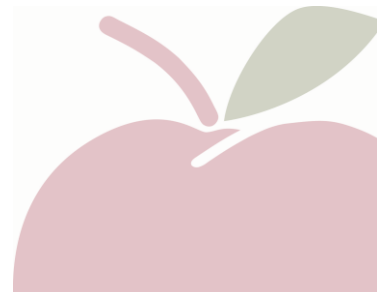
D. I.



Yield

- Interact with college admissions officers, even if you cannot visit their schools.
- Students from less academically sophisticated households may especially benefit from these meetings

Demonstrated interest is a plus,
but it's not essential for low
SES students



College Visits Demonstrate Interest and More

- Increases your motivation to apply
- Informs your application (why Oberlin?)
- Helps you narrow your list
- Provides a chance for an on-campus interview



Interviews Demonstrate Interest

- Why Interview

- Can help borderline students with admissions
- Helps you get information about the school

- Interview Tips

- Convey enthusiasm and interest
- Have an answer to the question “Why our school?”
- Be prepared to ask questions
- Always follow-up with a thank you note

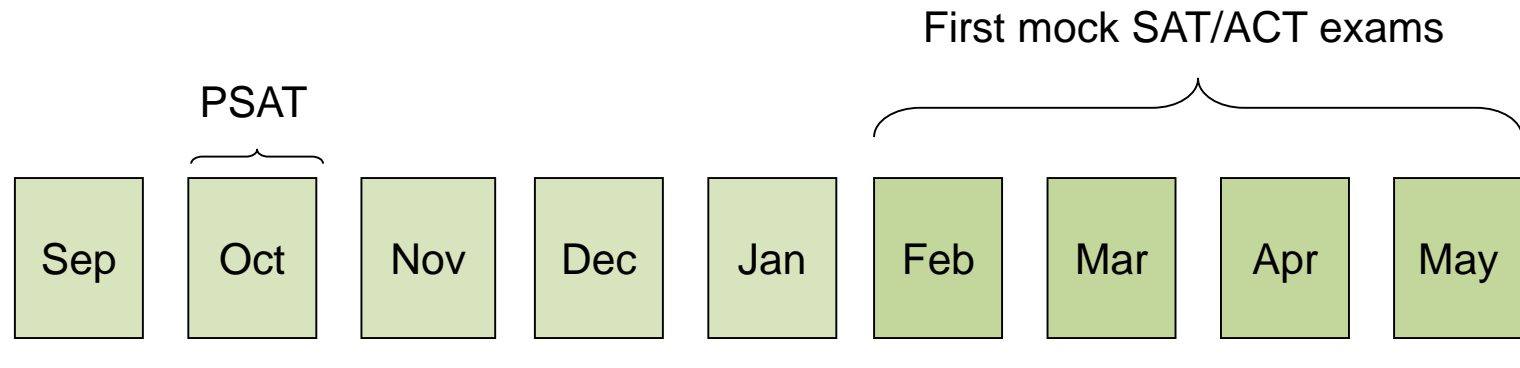


Suggested Timelines

How do I do the right things at the right time?



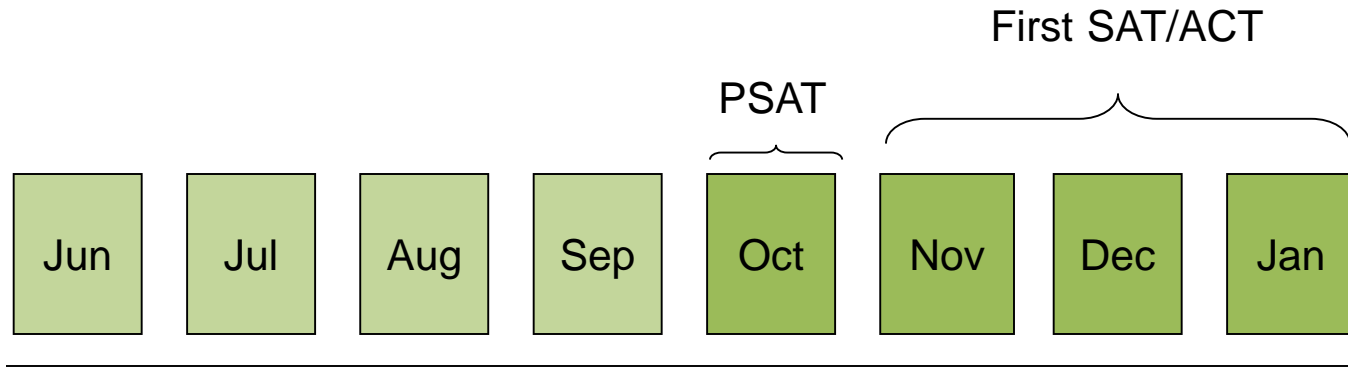
Sophomore Year Timeline



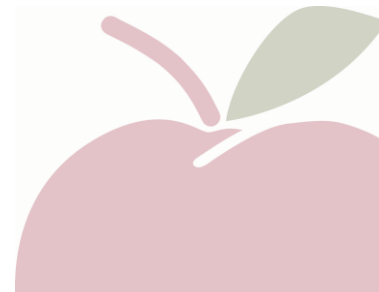
- Take a challenging schedule, possibly with your first AP classes. GET INVOLVED with extra curricular activities.
- Oct: Take the PSAT. It's practice this year, but if you score a 180+ you'll probably want to do some prep before next year.
- Feb – May: Take your first mock SAT/ACT exams to determine which test you prefer.
- Apr – May: Look into summer programs. Internships, meaningful work experiences, enrichment camps, etc. could all help on college applications.



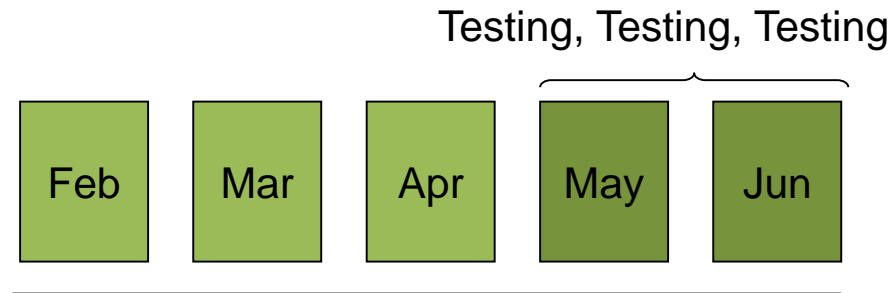
Junior Year Timeline (first half)



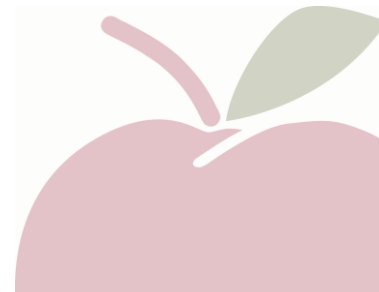
- Summer: Stay involved in extracurricular activities. Show consistency and depth.
- Aug: Take a challenging schedule. Add as many APs as you can realistically handle. Junior grades must be solid.
- Oct: PSAT. PSAT prep course if you are a potential National Merit Scholar or want to jumpstart SAT prep.
- Nov – Jan: Take first SAT or ACT. Prepare 8 to 12 weeks prior to scheduled test date.



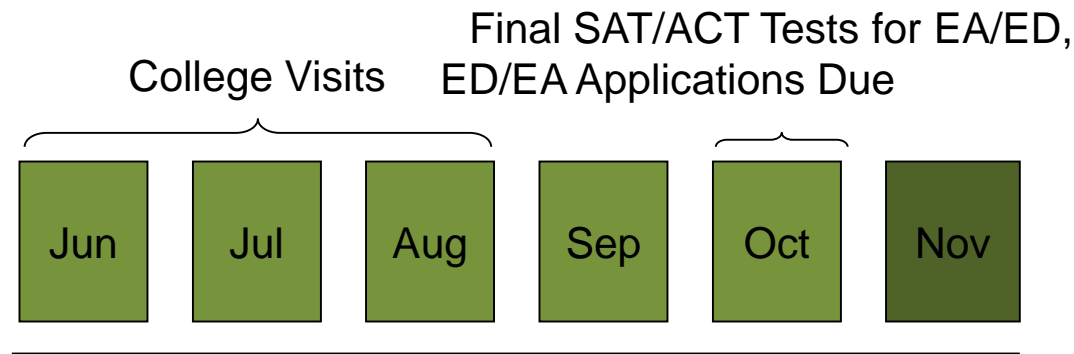
Junior Year Timeline (second half)



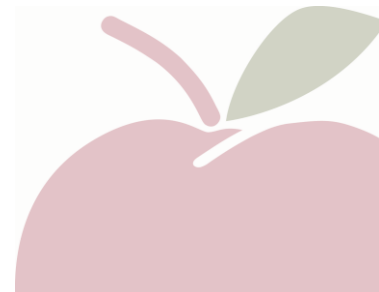
- Jan – Feb: Register for spring AP exams (if schools don't register the students).
- Dec – May: Explore financial aid/ scholarships/ grants for college.
- May – Jun: Take APs, SAT subject tests, ACT, SAT (prep courses as needed).
- Jun – Aug
 - ☐ Make a college list and collect applications
 - ☐ Begin applications/essays
 - ☐ Set up interviews and college visits



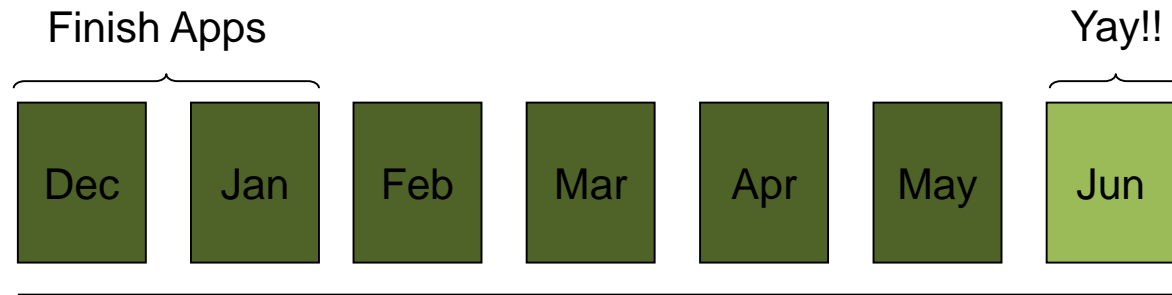
Senior Year Timeline (first half)



- Summer: Stay involved in extracurricular activities.
- Aug: Strong academic schedule. APs are ideal. Keep grades solid.
- Sep – Nov
 - ☐ SAT/ACT final push if needed
 - ☐ Meet with your guidance counselor for application advice
 - ☐ Finish early applications
 - ☐ October: ED deadlines



Senior Year Timeline (second half)



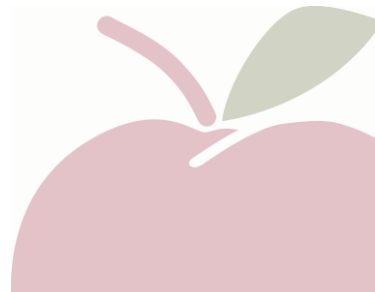
- Nov – Dec: Complete remaining applications
- Dec: ED responses arrive
- Mar – Apr: Responses from colleges
- May: Deposits due
- Jun: Graduate and send final transcript to your school of choice!



Our Services

- Tutoring and Test Prep for:
 - PSAT, SAT, & ACT
 - SAT subject tests
 - AP exams
 - High school classes
 - Study skills

Visit
www.applerouth.com
**or fill out a contact
card to learn more.**



Questions?

We'll stick around after the program. Come find us, or fill out a contact card.

applerouth
tutoring services llc

