

College Admissions and Testing for Juniors

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applerouth

Application numbers continue to rise

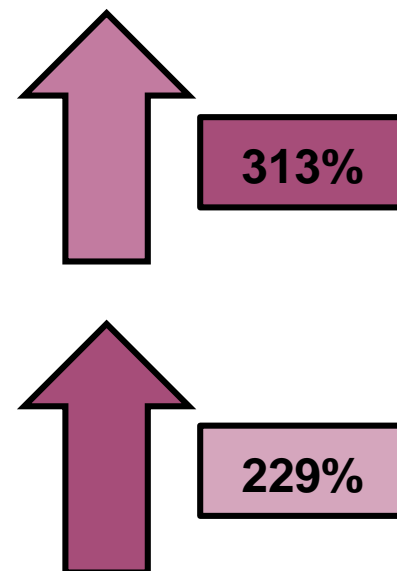
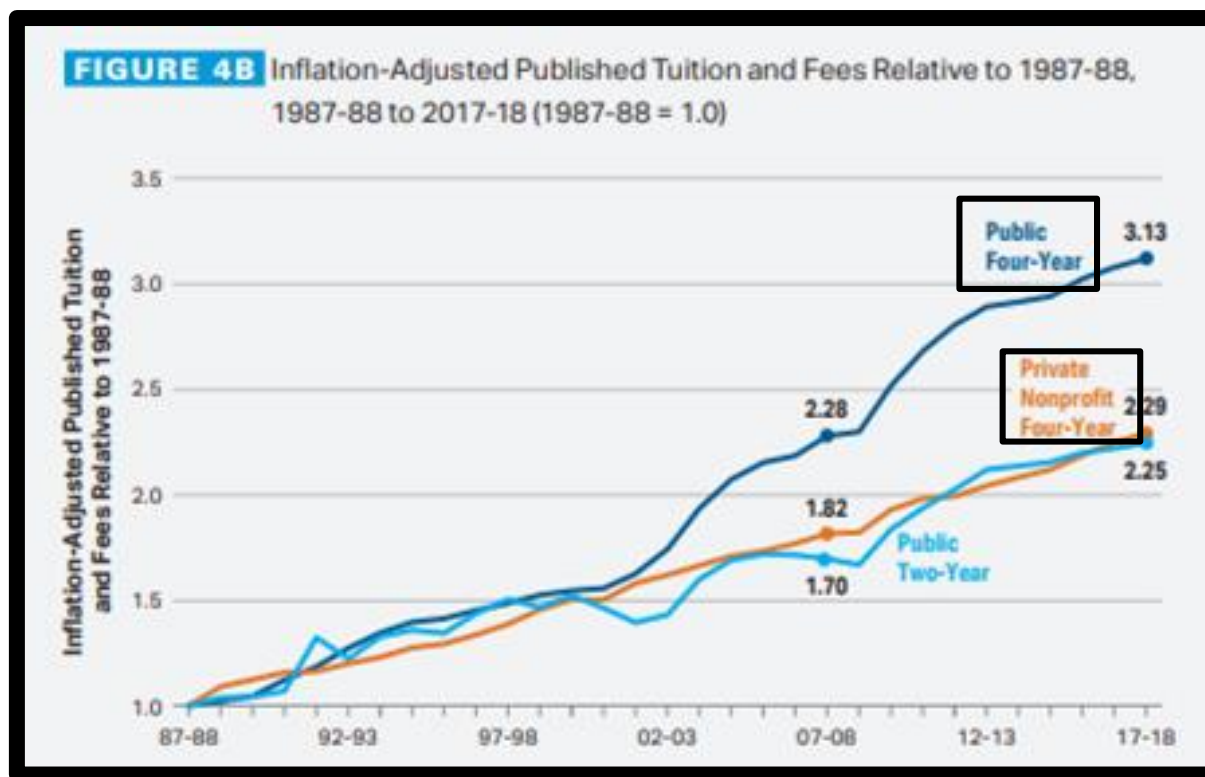
- **35% of freshmen applied to 7+ institutions in 2016.**
- **Yield rates are falling at most colleges.**
- **The average yield rate for US institutions was 32% in 2017.**



Many students use the Common and Coalition apps, which allow them to easily submit multiple applications.

NACAC State of College Admissions, 2017; US News and World Report, 2018

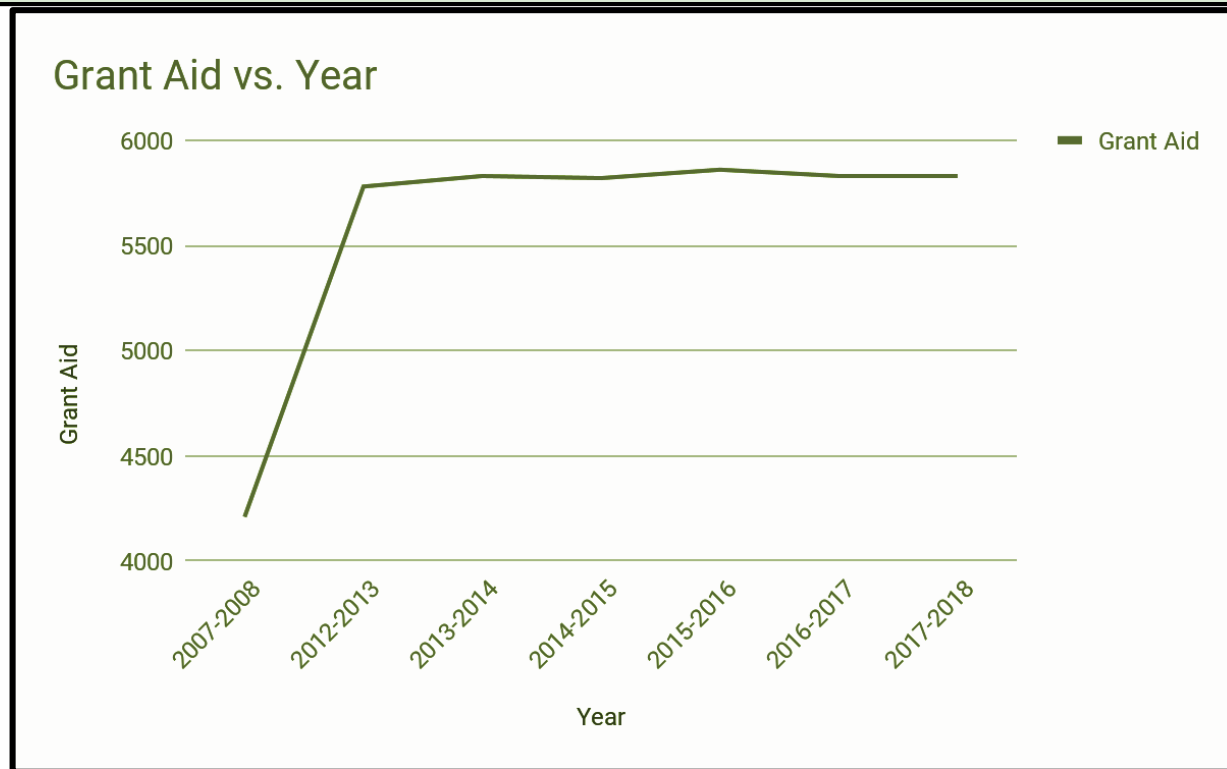
Costs continue a decades long trend of increasing



Trends in College Pricing, 2017- College Board.

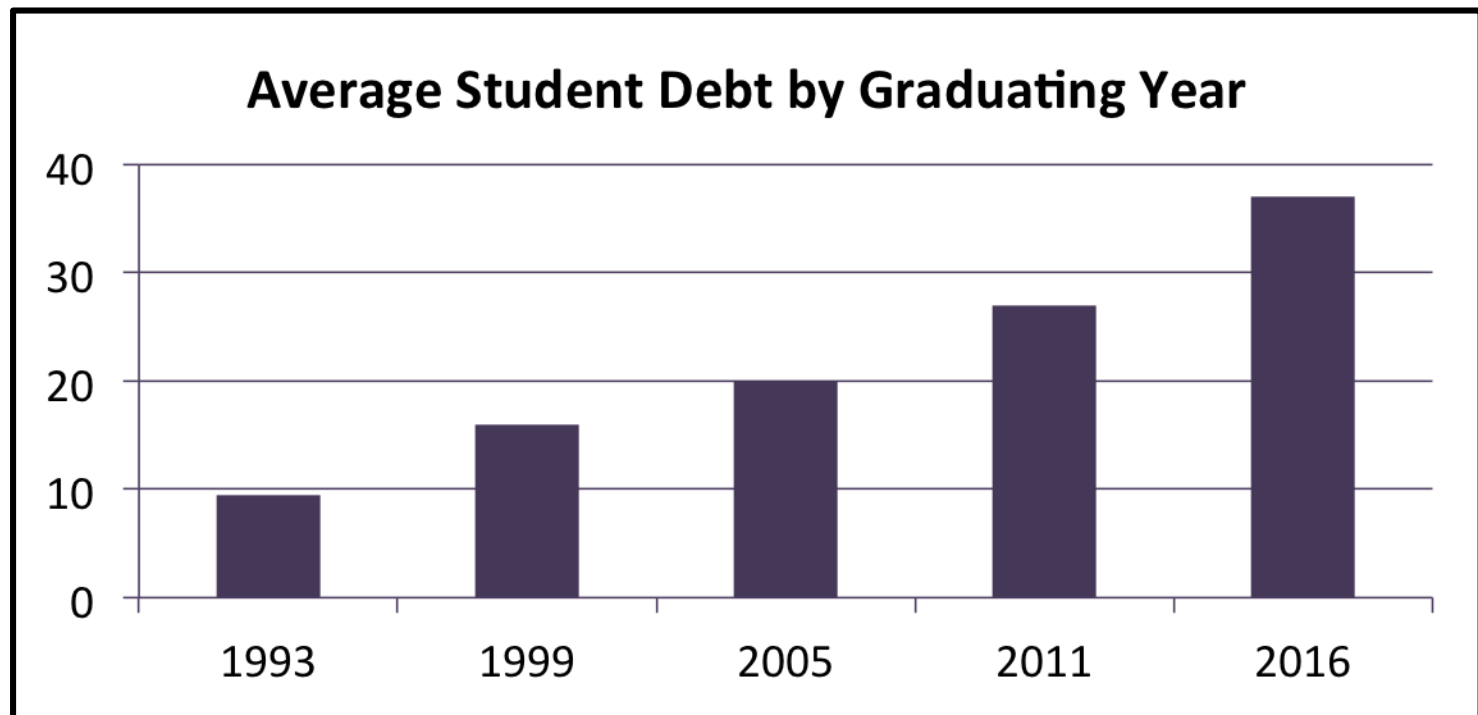
But grant funding has remained stagnant since 2010

Average Grant Aid and Tax Benefits per Student in 2017 dollars (4-year Public Institutions, in-state tuition)



Trends in College Pricing, 2017- College Board.

Students are borrowing more than ever before



Students now leave college owing an average of \$37,172; Total US student debt in 2018 surpassed \$1.4 trillion, according to the Fed.

Many colleges discount tuition to boost enrollment

80% of admissions directors (especially those at private schools) think their institution is losing applicants because of concerns about student debt.

In order to fill their classes, private colleges increasingly discount their tuition. The average discount for first-year students at private colleges is now 49.9%.

Need vs. Merit-based aid

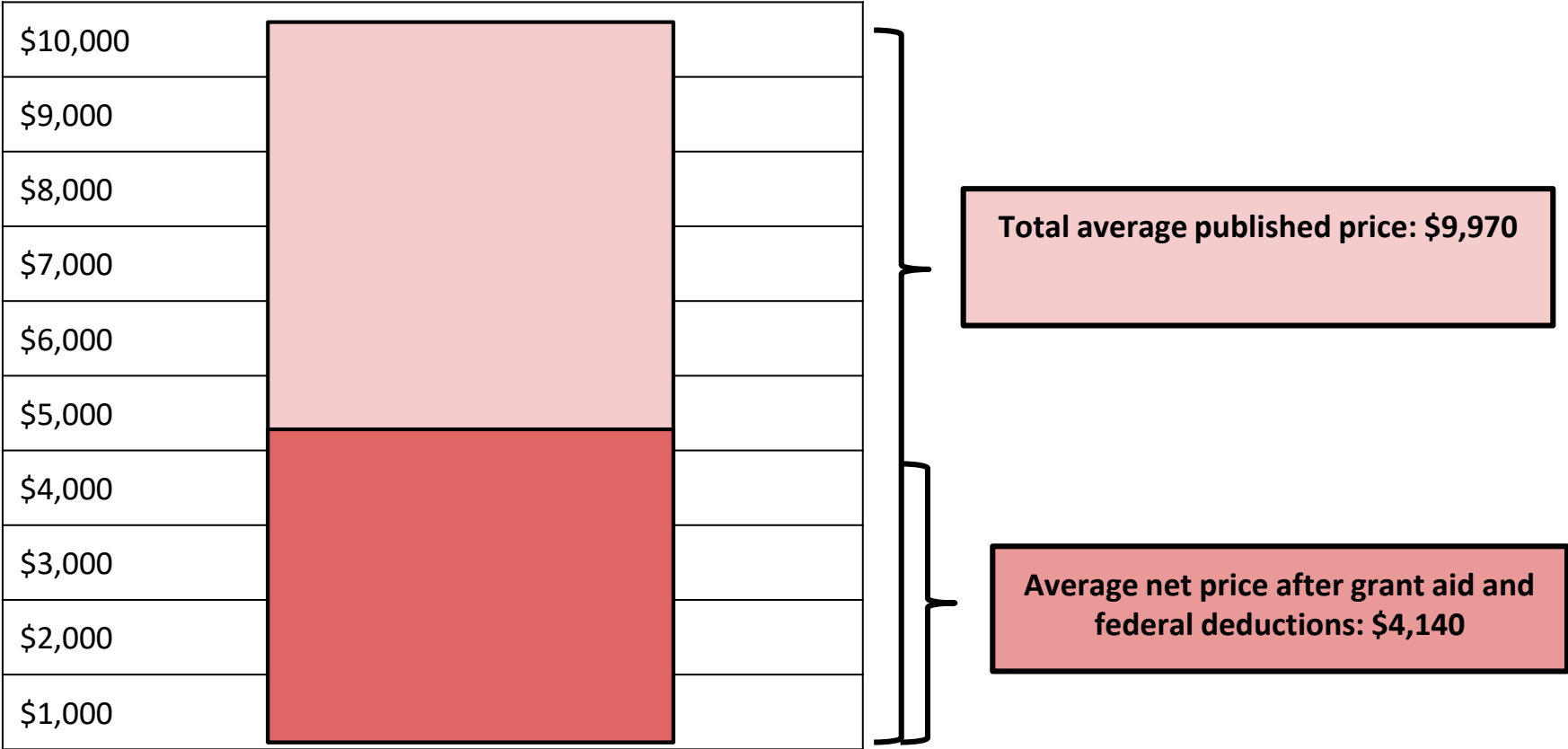
Students are typically awarded two types of aid in the form of grants and scholarships: **Need-based aid** and **merit-based aid**.

Need-based aid is connected to a student's **Demonstrated Need** - the difference between the Cost of Attendance and the Estimated Family Contribution. Two good examples of need-based aid are **Federal Pell Grants** and **Work Study**.

Merit-based aid is awarded without consideration of a family's income. This aid is often connected to **academic achievement, athletic skill** or some other talent in the **arts or sciences**.

Retail price vs. net price (what students pay)

2017-2018 Public 4-year tuition and fees*



Trends in College Pricing, 2017. College Board.

*Note: Does not include room and board or books

FAFSA vs. CSS Profile

Both FAFSA and the CSS Profile are applications for financial aid and scholarships, but they are very different.

FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) allows a student to apply for federal aid, like the Pell Grant and various other scholarships. FAFSA shields home equity and is largely income-based.



The CSS Profile (College Scholarship Service) is operated by the College Board and is one way that colleges allocate their own scholarship dollars to incoming students. The CSS Profile is a deeper dive into family assets than FAFSA is.



Prior Prior Year: A small victory

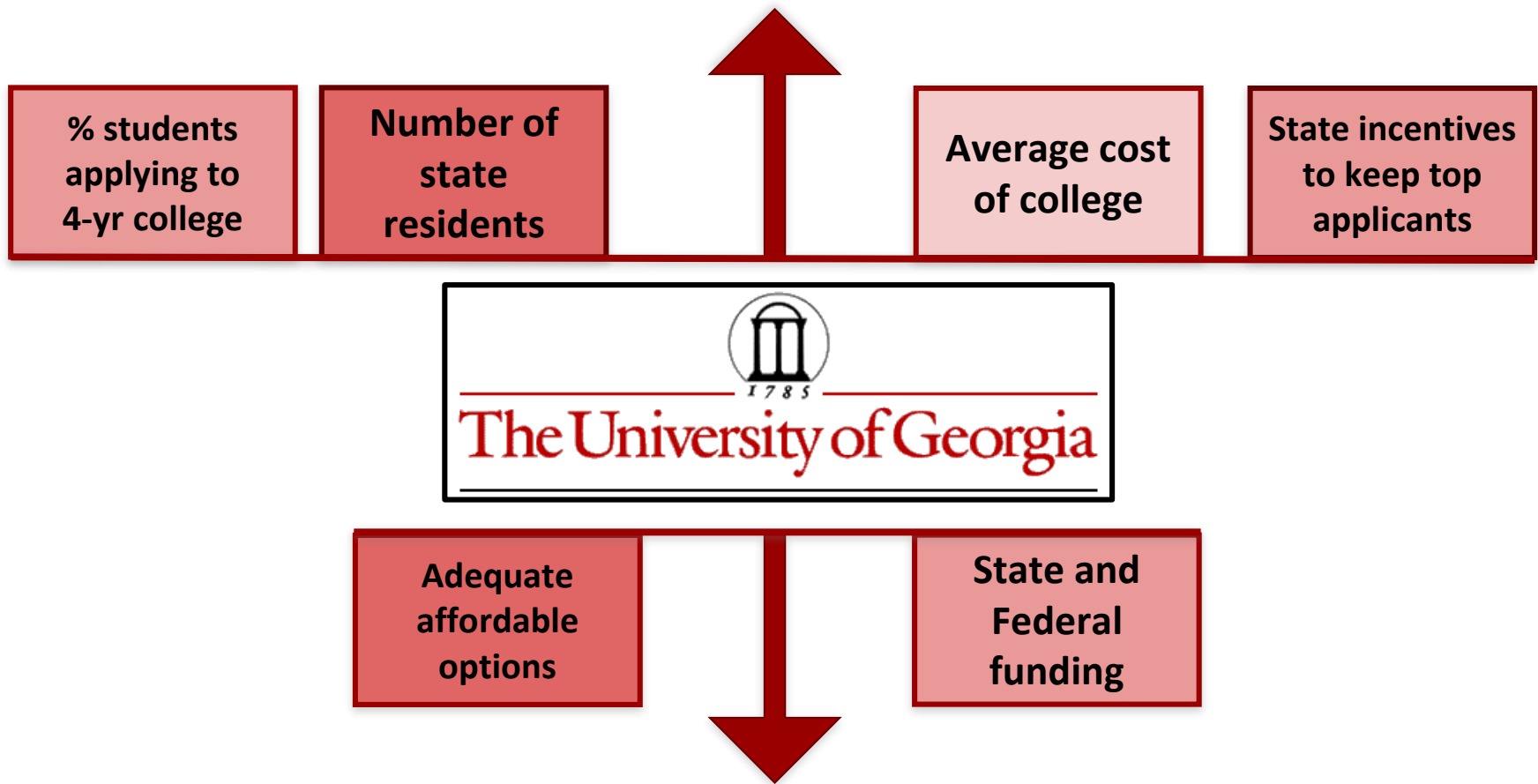
- FAFSA submission opens **October 1**, rather than Jan 1, using prior year's income and tax info.
- CSS Profile will also accept prior-prior year tax data



**What does that mean
for my family?**

- Some institutions are moving financial aid application deadlines (some for priority deadlines) earlier.
- Some institutions accepting earlier applications will be sending out earlier financial aid awards.

Expect increasing competition at state flagship universities



Schools may increase recruitment of out-of-state students

To drive revenue, expect more proposals to amend school charters to increase the proportion of out of state students

This may benefit some students applying out of state, but remember that out-of-state tuition does have a higher pricetag.

UGA's Predicted Cost of Attendance 2018-19

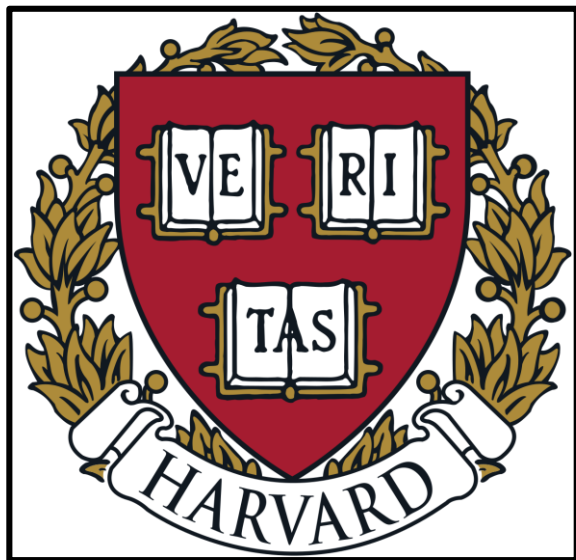
**Georgia Residents:
\$26,404**

**Non-residents:
\$45,668**



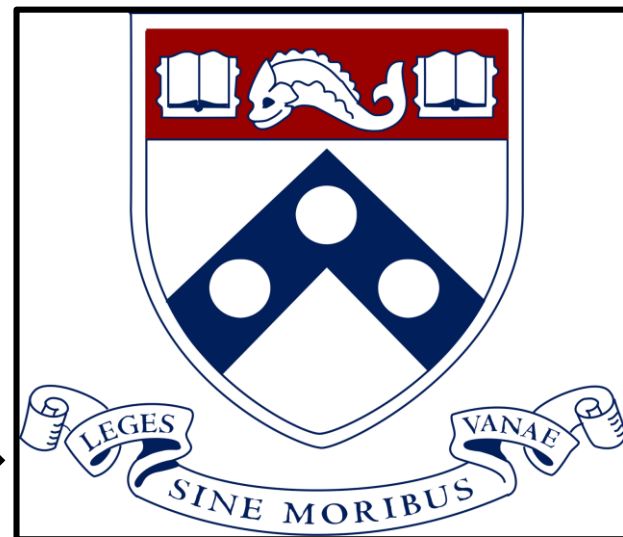
Types of Applications: Early admissions

Early action: you're not committing to a school! Some schools only allow you to apply early to them (that's restricted early action), but others allow you to apply to as many early as you like (that's unrestricted!)



Harvard uses
(restricted) early
action, and Penn uses
early decision.

Early decision: this is a binding commitment to attend the school if you are accepted.



Applying early can pay off big for students!

	Accepted Early	Accepted Regular
Brown ED	22%	7%
Cornell ED	26%	11%
Dartmouth ED	28%	8%
Johns Hopkins ED	30%	8%
Northwestern ED	27%	7%
Penn ED	22%	7%
Vanderbilt ED	24%	9%

Types of Applications: Rolling admissions

Schools with rolling admissions accept students over the course of months, stopping when they've filled their class up. They notify families of their decisions a few weeks after they receive completed applications. Students have better odds if they apply early, especially if it's a first-choice school!



If you want to Roll Tide, earlier is better!

Types of Applications: Regular Admissions

DEADLINES

Summer/Fall:

PRIORITY

U.S. applicants only

November 1

Notification by February 1

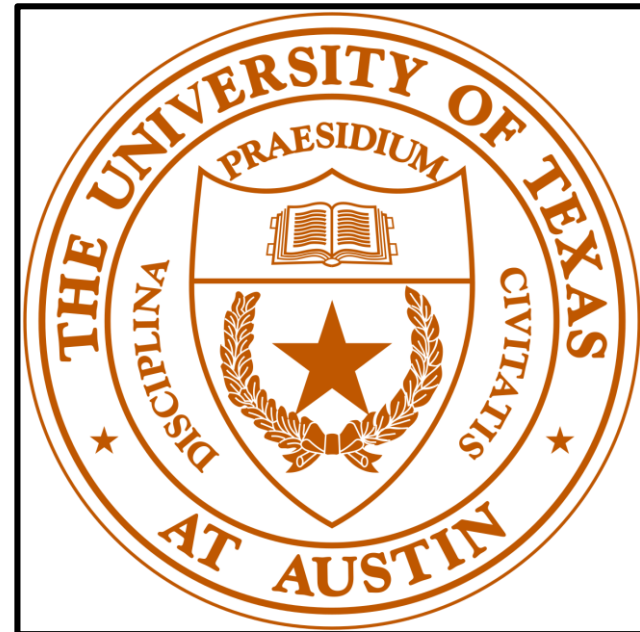
REGULAR

Test scores accepted through December 31

December 1

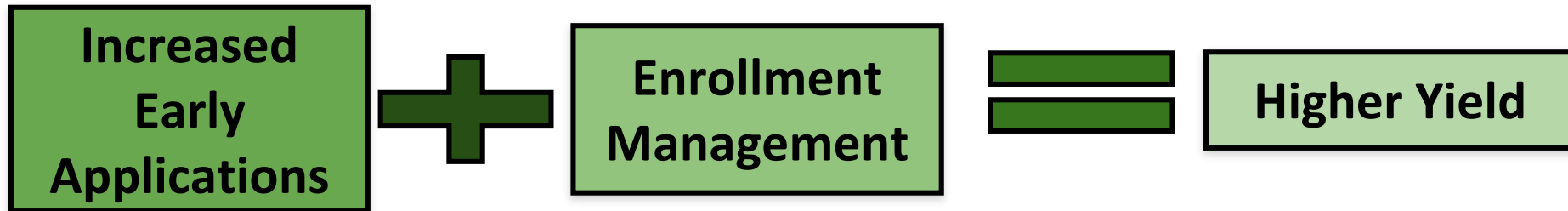
Notification by March 1

Priority deadlines give students a better chance at admissions during the regular admissions period; some conditions may apply, as seen in the University of Texas's policy - it's only open to U.S. applicants.

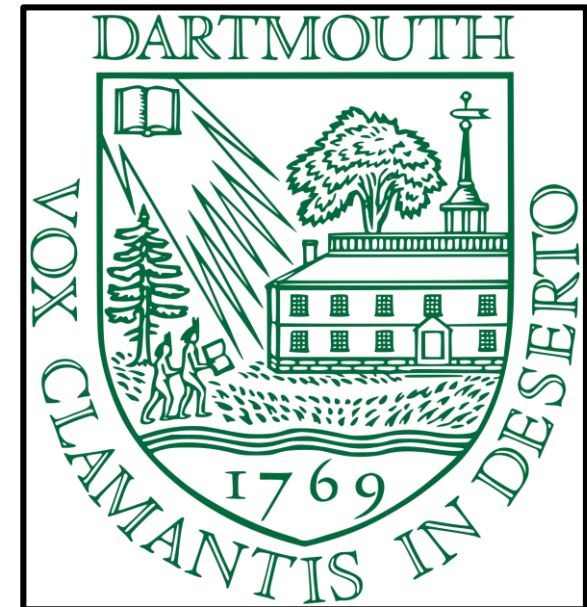


Priority and regular admissions deadlines are usually in the late fall or early spring of senior year.

Some schools may move away from wait lists



Waitlists are unpredictable for both students and schools - a student might commit to another school while waiting. Schools with strong early admissions programs don't rely on waitlists to fill classes. For example, in 2017, Dartmouth didn't offer admission to a single student on its waitlist of 1,345 applicants.



The Coalition App and the Common App



T H E C O A L I T I O N

THE COMMON
APPLICATION

The Common and Coalition applications allow students to apply to multiple schools. Over 700 schools use the Common App, while over 90 schools use the Coalition App.

Academic Common Market

Students can gain in-state tuition at select schools in other states if the program they wish to study is not offered in their own home state.



We will see more test-optional schools



Going test optional gets an immediate admissions bump (more students apply) & increases average reported test scores (lower scores disappear). More than 950 accredited schools in the United States do not require an SAT or ACT score for admission.

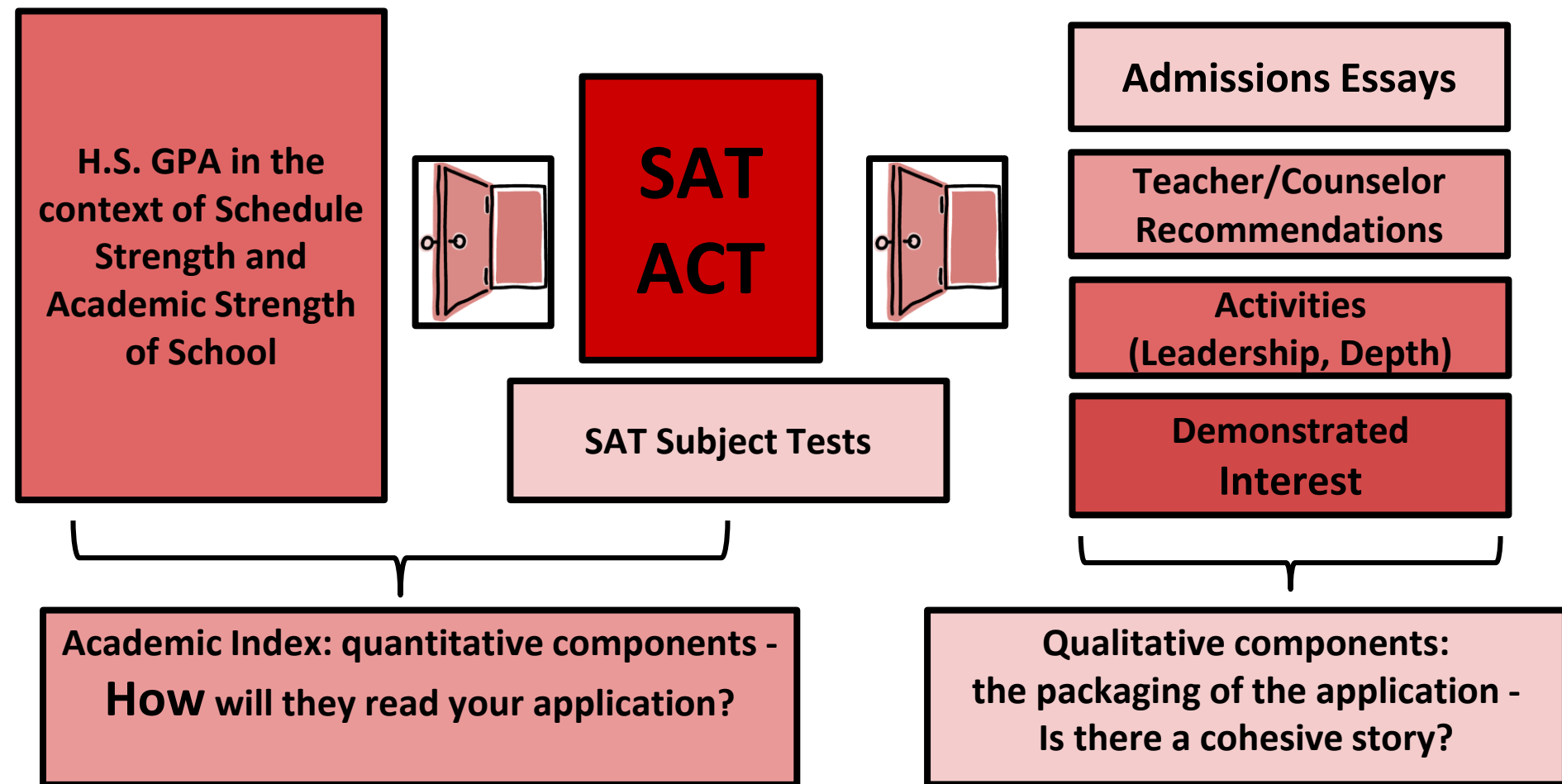
The Washington Post, 2017

However, US schools still put a premium on testing

NACAC Survey 2017: Factors influencing admissions decisions

Importance	Considerable	Moderate	Limited	None
Grades in all courses	77.1%	13.8%	6.4%	2.8%
Grades in college prep	76.9	12.5	9.3	1.4
Strength of curriculum	51.8	35.3	7.3	5.5
Admission test scores	54.3	27.9	13.7	4.1
Essay or writing sample	18.9	35.9	22.1	23.0
Counselor recommendation	14.6	46.0	25.8	13.6
Demonstrated interest	13.7	25.5	32.1	28.8
Teacher recommendation	10.9	46.4	28.0	14.7
Class rank	9.2	24.0	34.6	32.3
Extracurricular activities	7.9	36.0	36.9	19.2
Subject test scores (AP, IB)	6.9	30.6	30.6	31.9
Interview	4.7	17.4	31.9	46.0
SAT II scores	2.4	6.1	21.2	70.3

The admissions process



Curricular strength is more important than ever

Student Participation in AP Programs By Year		
Year	Students	Exams
2007-2008	1,580,821	2,736,445
2008-2009	1,691,905	2,929,929
2009-2010	1,845,006	3,213,225
2010-2011	1,973,545	3,456,020
2011-2012	2,099,948	3,698,407
2012-2013	2,218,578	3,938,100
2013-2014	2,342,528	4,176,200
2014-2015	2,483,452	4,478,936
2015-2016	2,611,172	4,704,980
2016-2017	2,741,426	4,957,931

Annual AP Program Participation 1956-2017, College Board

Students are taking more APs and IB classes and Dual Enrollment College Level Classes every year.

That's almost a 100% increase in both AP tests and students in ten years!

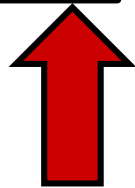


Grade Trends are Essential

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.

SUBJECT	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	FIN
Art	A	B	A	A	
Computer	A B	C	C	A	B
Economics	A	A	A	A	A
Calculus	C	B	B	B	B
C. Physics	B	A	A	A	A
AP/Senior English	A	B	B	A	A
Sociology	A	B	C	B	B
Psychology	B	A	A	A	A
French 4	B	B	B	B	B

If you can show growth, these grades matter a lot!



College Admissions Essay

The personal statement is the single most important essay most students will write in high school.

It 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

Extracurriculars: Continuity, Depth and Contribution

Continuity

Find what you love and stick to it! It's good to develop new passions and hobbies, but you shouldn't be switching to a new one every month.

It's better to be deeply involved in one or two activities than to dabble in five or six. That shows admissions officers that you can work hard and dive deep.

Depth

Contribution

You should be actively involved in extracurriculars. Take on a position with responsibilities - it doesn't have to be president!

Student Résumé

Writing a résumé is as easy as:

Record

Keep track of any awards/recognition (honor roll, NMSQT), accomplishments (sport playoffs, Eagle Scout projects), leadership positions and additional skills (like languages)

Write

There are many online resume templates available to you, and many schools offer résumé coaching in their college and career centers. Ask for help!
The hardest part is hammering out the initial structure.

Update

Keep updating your résumé as you go through your junior and senior year. It's vital to keep this information current!

Building a college list can be overwhelming

At last count, there were 3,011 four-year institutions in the USA*. That's a lot! Here are some steps to narrow down a preliminary list:

Take advantage of college fairs, school visits from college reps and virtual tours online to see **lots** of schools at once.

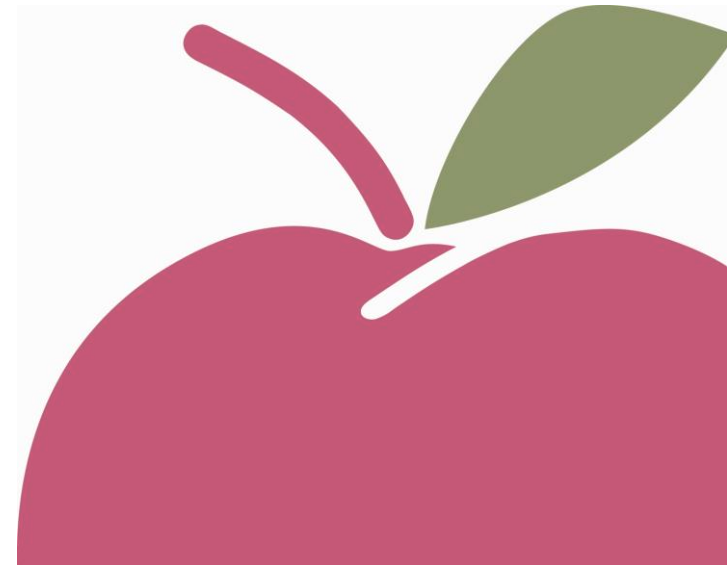
College visits, particularly local ones, can help you identify **categories** of schools that may interest you (e.g., big state school, football school, small liberal arts school, city, burbs)

Get the **“family non-negotiables”** on the table: what's the budget? Who is paying? In-state or out? What major(s) *must* the right school have?

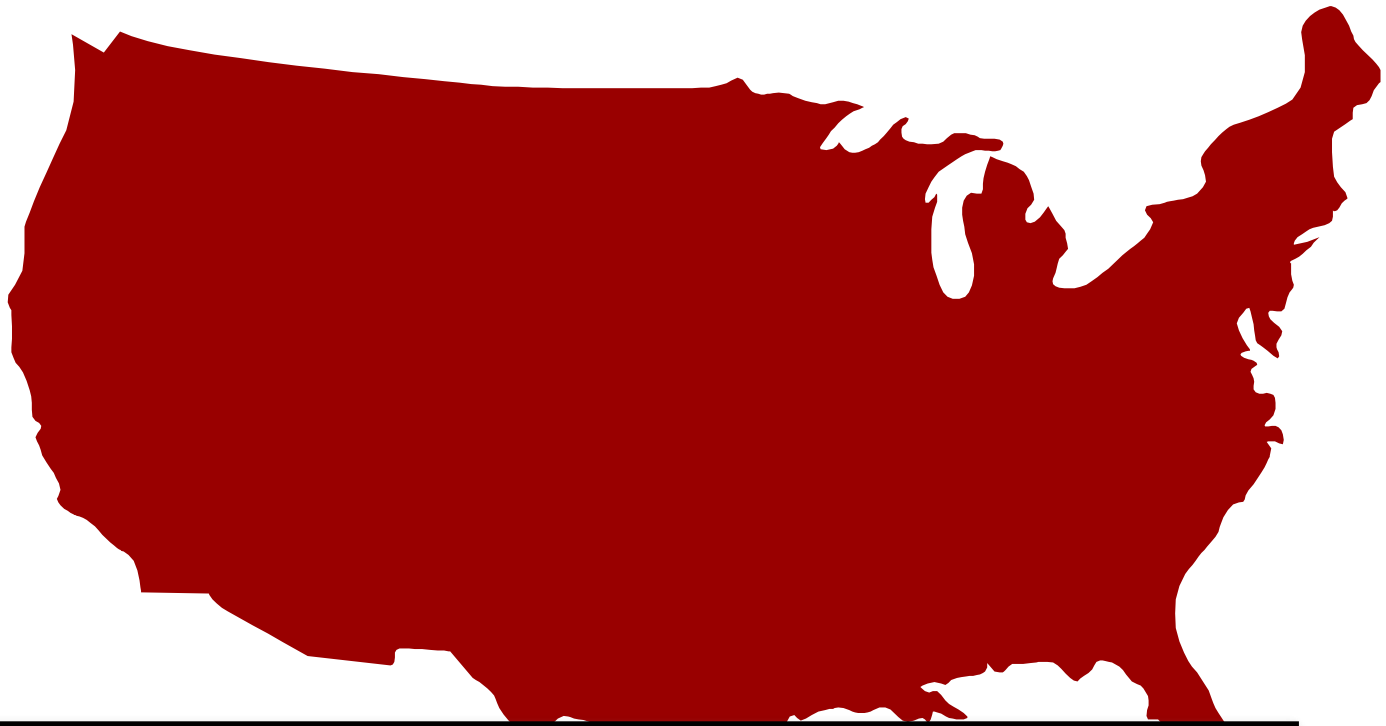
*National Center for Education Statistics, 2018

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS TESTS

THE SAT AND ACT



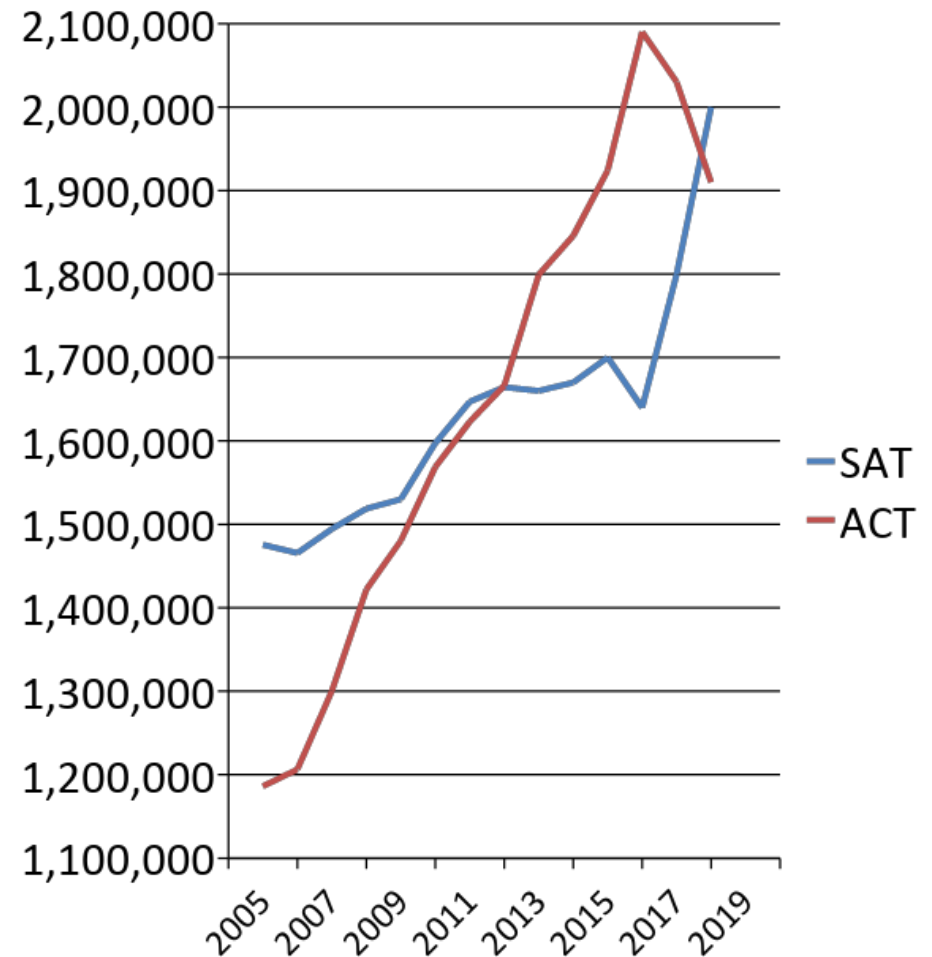
Today the SAT and ACT are universally accepted



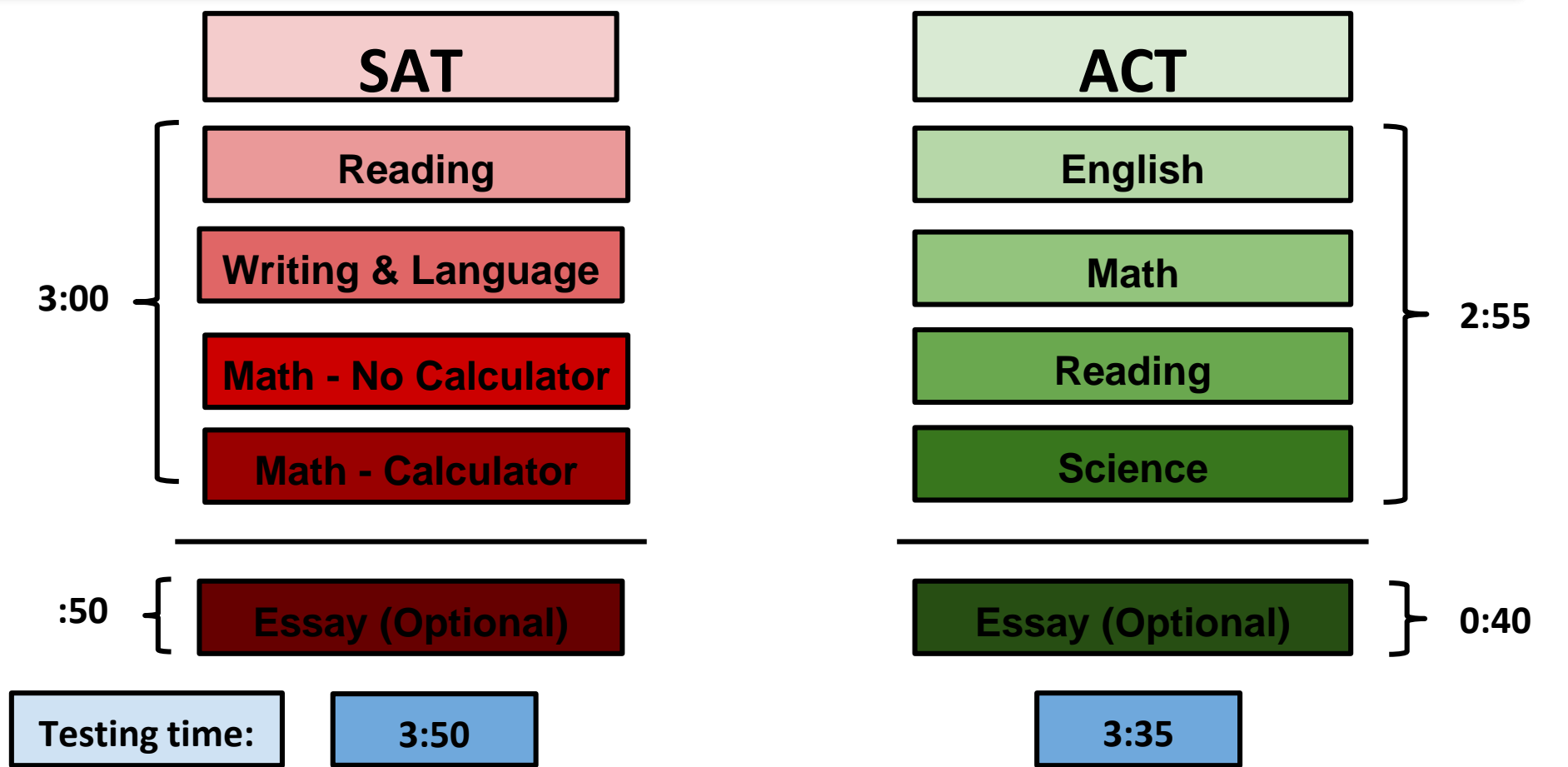
Colleges will accept either test without prejudice.

For the first time in 7 years, the SAT leads the testing landscape

	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	1,698,521	1,924,436	-225,915
2016	1,637,589	2,090,342	-391,821
2017	1,715,481	2,030,038	-314,557
2018	2,136,539	1,914,817	221,722



Structurally, the two tests appear nearly identical



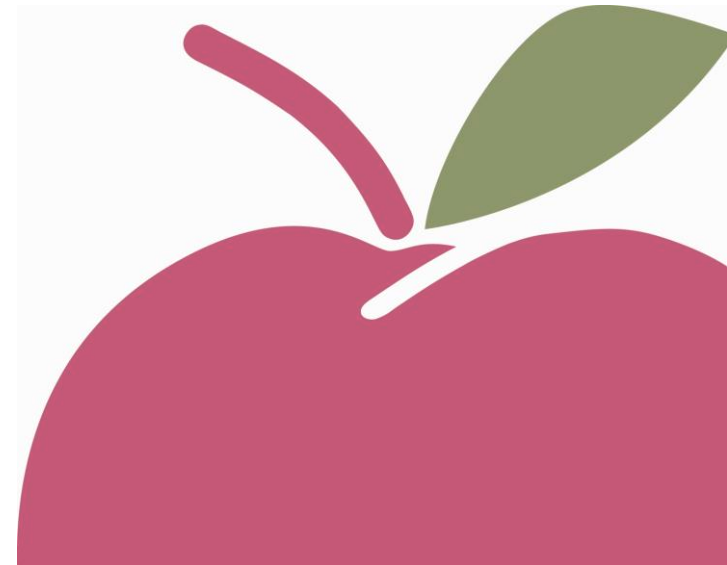
The amount of time per question is a profound difference.

Seconds Per Question			
Section	ACT	SAT	% Diff.
Writing	36.0	47.7	33 %
Reading	52.5	75.0	43 %
Math	60.0	84.2	40 %
Science	52.5	N/A	N/A

The SAT has a more forgiving timing structure, which can benefit some students, but as we'll see, it's also a more complicated test.

THE SAT

DIGGING DEEPER



Digging Deeper: SAT Reading

1

1

Reading Test

65 MINUTES, 52 QUESTIONS

Turn to Section 1 of your answer sheet to answer the questions in this section.

DIRECTIONS

Each passage or pair of passages below is followed by a number of questions. After reading each passage or pair, choose the best answer to each question based on what is stated or implied in the passage or passages and in any accompanying graphics (such as a table or graph).

Questions 1-10 are based on the following passage.

This passage is adapted from Louisa May Alcott, *Work: A Story of Experience*. Originally published in 1873. In the story, Christie has just told her Aunt Betsey her plans to leave home.

Having kissed the old lady, Christie swept her work away, and sat down to write the letter which was the first step toward freedom. When it was done, she drew nearer, to her friendly confidante the fire, and till late in the night sat thinking tenderly of the past, bravely of the present, hopefully of the future. Twenty-one to-morrow; and her inheritance a head, a heart, a pair of hands; also the dower of most New England girls, intelligence, courage, and common sense, many practical gifts, and, hidden under the reserve that soon melts in a genial atmosphere, much romance and enthusiasm, and the spirit which can rise to heroism when the great moment comes.

Christie was one of that large class of women who, moderately endowed with talents, earnest and true-hearted, are driven by necessity, temperament, or principle out into the world to find support, happiness, and homes for themselves. Many turn back discouraged; more accept shadow for substance, and discover their mistake too late; the weakest lose their purpose and themselves; but the strongest struggle on, and, after danger and defeat, earn at last the best success this world can give us, the possession of a brave and cheerful spirit, rich in self-knowledge, self-control, self-help. This was the real desire of Christie's heart; this was to be her lesson and reward, and to this happy end she was slowly yet surely brought by the long discipline of life and labor.

Sitting alone there in the night, she tried to strengthen herself with all the good and helpful memories she could recall, before she went away to find her place in the great unknown world. She thought of her mother, so like herself, who had borne the commonplace life of home till she could bear it no longer. Then had gone away to teach, as most country girls are forced to do. Had met, loved, and married a poor gentleman, and, after a few years of genuine happiness, untroubled even by much care and poverty, had followed him out of the world, leaving her little child to the protection of her brother.

Christie looked back over the long, lonely years she had spent in the old farm-house, plodding to school and church, and doing her tasks with kind Aunt Betsey while a child; and slowly growing into girlhood, with a world of romance locked up in a heart hungry for love and a larger, nobler life.

She had tried to appease this hunger in many ways, but found little help. Her father's old books were all she could command, and these she wore out with much reading. Inheriting his refined tastes, she found nothing to attract her in the society of the commonplace and often coarse people about her. She tried to like the buxom girls whose one ambition was to "get married," and whose only subjects of conversation were "smart bonnets" and "nice dresses." She tried to believe that the admiration and regard of the bluff young farmers was worth striving for; but when one well-to-do neighbor laid his acres at her feet, she found it impossible to accept for her life's companion a man whose soul was wrapped up in prize cattle and big turnips.

The Reading section on the SAT is a marathon! It's the longest section and comes right at the beginning.

Be prepared for dense passages!

Source: Applerouth's Guide to the SAT, 2nd Ed.

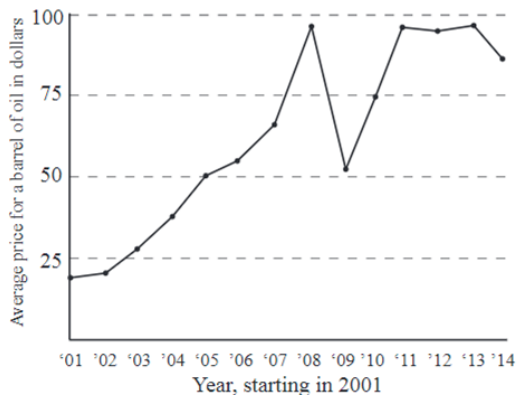
Digging Deeper: SAT Reading Genres

Students will see several types of passages, including:

Literature (typically an excerpt of a longer work)

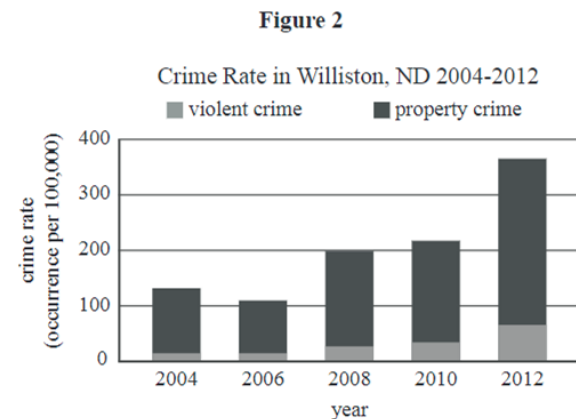
Social sciences/history (typically two of these)

Science (typically two of these as well)



Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration

Students will definitely see graphs and charts in this section!



Source: Applerouth's Guide to the SAT, 2nd Ed.

Digging Deeper: SAT Writing and Language

The Writing and Language test features two types of questions: **Grammar** and **Rhetorical Skills**

2

2

The first true description of yogurt was provided around 1000 A.D. by a Turkish author named Mahmud of Kashgar. **6** Not only to include an entry for yogurt, one of the first encyclopedias was written by him, firmly establishing its place in Turkish history.

7 Iranians enjoy sour kefir yogurt in dishes such as ashe-mast, a warm soup made from yogurt, lentils and spinach. In Eastern European and Balkan countries such as Albania, Bulgaria and Serbia, yogurt is served as a cold soup seasoned with cucumbers and dill—a light and refreshing dish. A similar dish, tzatziki, is a popular condiment in Greece, served alongside pita sandwiches and grilled meat. In South Asia, a yogurt-based sauce called raita—made with cucumbers, onions, mint, and cumin—makes a delicious complement to spicy curries. **8**

6

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) Not only did he create one of the first encyclopedias, he also included an entry for yogurt.
- C) One of the first encyclopedias was created by him, but it included an entry for yogurt.
- D) Not only did it have an entry for yogurt, but he also wrote one of the first encyclopedias.

7

Which of the following sentences would most effectively transition between the two paragraphs?

- A) In the ensuing centuries, yogurt's popularity has remained strong in cuisines throughout the world.
- B) Americans typically expect yogurt to be served sweet, but this is not the case everywhere.
- C) In many recipes, yogurt is accompanied by cucumber.
- D) In modern times, refrigeration technology affects the way people consume dairy products.

8

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

Curries of many varieties are popular throughout this region.

Should the writer make this addition here?

- A) Yes, because it highlights the global role yogurt has played in cuisine.
- B) Yes, because it explains yogurt's popularity in South Asia.
- C) No, because it interrupts the flow of the passage with irrelevant information.
- D) No, because it contradicts the previous sentence's claim about curry.

Digging Deeper: SAT Math

There are two SAT math sections, one where students are not allowed to use a calculator.

1

Which of the following statements is true about the equation $y = (x - 3)^2$?

- A) y is always less than 3.
- B) y is always greater than 3.
- C) y is always greater than -2 .
- D) y is always greater than x .

The SAT math sections are full of functions and algebra! Students will need to be comfortable manipulating algebraic expressions.

Digging Deeper: SAT Math Problems

Being able to solve math on the SAT is often subordinate to being able to generate an equation or interpret a constant or variable

12

x	$f(x)$
-5	0
-1	36
0	0
1	6
2	0

The function f is defined by a polynomial. Some values of x and $f(x)$ are shown in the table above. Which of the following could define f ?

- A) $(x - 5)(x + 2)$
- B) $(x + 5)^2(x - 2)^3$
- C) $x^2(x + 5)(x - 2)^2$
- D) $x(x + 5)(x - 2)$

Questions like this one test students' "math fluency," rather than their ability to get the right sum or product.

Digging Deeper: SAT Essay

As you read the passage below, consider how Stewart Topor 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.

Adapted from Stewart Topor, “Stop buying into the ‘busyness’ narrative, and start using the time you have.”

- 1 We’ve all heard the news: Americans are busier than ever, perhaps the busiest people in human history. We’re over-scheduled, over-booked and overworked, spending every waking hour rushing from appointment to appointment, rarely getting a moment’s peace or a full night’s sleep. Ask a friend how they’re doing lately, and the typical answer is: “Busy.” Or occasionally, “Slammed.” Sometimes, “Everything’s crazy over here.”

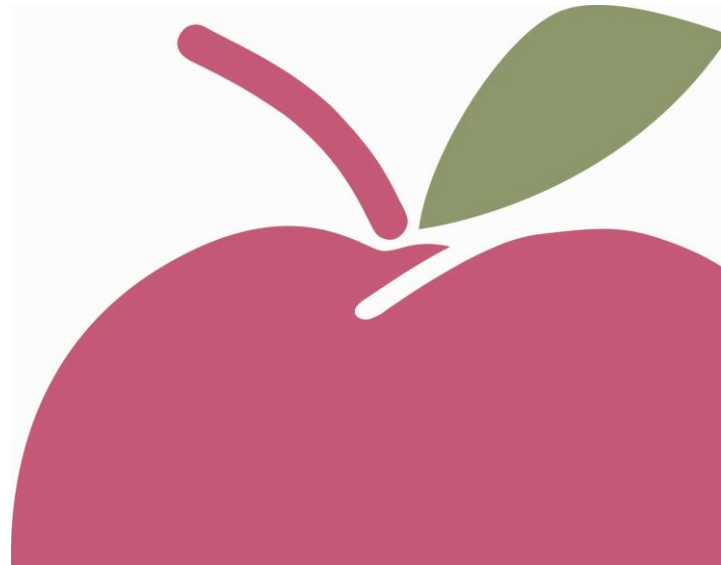
If the SAT essay seems familiar, that’s because it is! College Board has modified free response questions from its AP Language and AP Literature exams for the SAT Essay.

Students are given a passage and asked to write an analysis of how the author makes his or her argument. It’s not about whether you agree with the author or not - it’s about recognizing rhetorical techniques.

Source: Applerouth’s Guide to the SAT, 2nd Ed.

THE ACT

DIGGING DEEPER



Digging Deeper: ACT English

Just like the SAT Writing and Language test, the ACT English test features two types of questions: **Grammar** and **Rhetorical Skills**

1 ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ 1

ENGLISH TEST 45 Minutes—75 Questions

DIRECTIONS: In the five passages that follow, certain words and phrases are underlined and numbered. In the right-hand column, you will find alternatives for the underlined part. In most cases, you are to choose the one that best expresses the idea, makes the statement appropriate for standard written English, or is worded most consistently with the style and tone of the passage as a whole. If you think the original version is best, choose "NO CHANGE." In some cases you will find in the right-hand column a question about the underlined part. You are to choose the best answer to the question.

You will also find questions about a section of the passage, or about the passage as a whole. These questions do not refer to an underlined portion of the passage, but rather are identified by a number or numbers in a box.

For each question, choose the alternative you consider best and fill in the corresponding oval on your answer document. For many of the questions, you must read several sentences beyond the question to determine the answer. Be sure that you have read far enough ahead each time you choose an alternative.

PASSAGE 1

Alternate Histories, Parallel Worlds

Jonas Russ was an American author and feminist, whose writings received some of the highest awards in the field. Upon her passing in 2011, Having won the hearts and minds of countless readers, Russ was deeply mourned by the science fiction community she helped shape. But she was not always regarded with such high acclaim.

Raised in New York City in the thirties and forties, Russ grew up in a time when being a female writer was still quite unusual. Despite this obstacle, she pursued her passion with both imagination and determination. As a child and teenager, many notebooks had been filled with handwritten stories and poems. Later, she studied at Cornell University, where she learned from the famous Russian novelist Vladimir Nabokov. She went on to earn an MFA in drama from Yale. In her studies, both personal and academic, she never ceased to maintain a connection to her humble beginnings.

[1] It was not until the late 1960s that her writing attracted notice from the public. [2] In science fiction, her

1. A. NO CHANGE
B. 2011; having
C. 2011; She
D. 2011; having

2. F. NO CHANGE
G. Her family raising her
H. Being raised
J. Having been raised

3. A. NO CHANGE
B. she filled many notebooks
C. she fills many notebooks
D. many notebooks are filled

4. Given that all the choices are true, which one best summarizes this paragraph's description of how Russ "pursued her passion with both imagination and determination"?
F. NO CHANGE
G. encounter innumerable barriers to success in science fiction.
H. explore new creative paths and persist through challenges.
J. surprise her many acquaintances.

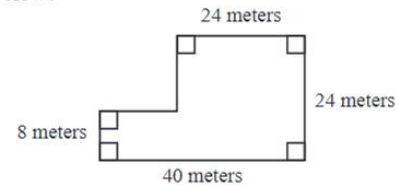
Digging Deeper: ACT Math

The ACT Math section is a grab-bag full of varied math concepts, ranging from arithmetic to trigonometry.

It's the longest section on the ACT.

40. At Westmore High School, if a student is not more than 5 feet tall, that student cannot participate in the annual three-legged race. If Emily participated in the three-legged race at Westmore High School, then which of the following conclusions can be logically reached?
- F. Emily is at least 6 feet tall.
G. Emily is more than 5 feet tall.
H. Emily is exactly 5 feet tall.
J. Emily is less than 5 feet tall.
K. Emily is at most 4 feet tall.

41. What is the area, in square meters, of the figure shown below?



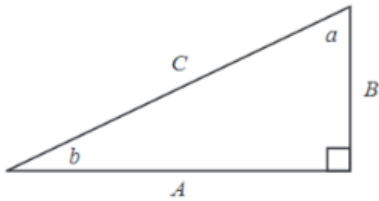
- A. 96
B. 128
C. 704
D. 720
E. 960

42. For the inequality $8(x + 3) > 2(x - 3)$, which of the following is NOT a possible value for x ?
- F. -5
G. -3
H. -1
J. 3
K. 5

Source: Applerouth's Guide to the ACT, 4th Ed.

Digging Deeper: ACT Math Problems

29. In the figure below, what is $\tan a$?



- A. $\frac{A}{B}$
- B. $\frac{A}{C}$
- C. $\frac{B}{C}$
- D. $\frac{B}{A}$
- E. $\frac{C}{A}$

30. B is an irrational number. If $|B^2 - 24| - 8 = 0$, what is the value of B ?

- F. 4
- G. $2\sqrt{2}$
- H. $4\sqrt{2}$
- J. $2\sqrt{4}$
- K. $2\sqrt{6}$

Although there are word problems on the ACT, they are far shorter than on the SAT, and students are more likely to see diagrams and geometric figures on the ACT.

The ACT doesn't give students any formulas, so they'll have to remember their special right triangles, SOHCATOA, and geometry formulas!

Digging Deeper: ACT vs. SAT Math Content Areas

Test	Algebra	Geometry	Arithmetic/ Data Analysis	Trigonometry
ACT	46%	23%	24%	7%
SAT	62%	6%	30%	2%

As you can see, the math content is much more evenly distributed on the ACT than it is on the SAT, which relies heavily on Algebra.

*Using SAT categories, which are slightly different from ACT math categories

Digging Deeper: ACT Reading

The ACT Reading test
is a sprint through 4
passages and 40
questions!

3

3

READING TEST

35 Minutes—40 Questions

DIRECTIONS: There are four passages in this test. Each passage is followed by several questions. After reading a passage, choose the best answer to the question and fill in the corresponding oval on your answer document. You may refer to the passages as often as necessary.

Passage I

PROSE FICTION

A poet once wrote something about April being the cruellest month. This is untrue, of course, but as the poet in question had never been to North Carolina in the dead of August, we can forgive him. There is an atmosphere that hangs heavy in August—it's hard to describe, but imagine the stench of decay overlaid with the sickly-sweet scent of jasmine and honeysuckle. The bees are moving so slowly, they're in danger of dropping out of the air, and it's too hot to work and too hot to sleep and too hot to do anything other than sulk. August is the summer's last gasp, a sweltering, suffocating temper tantrum where the hazy sun burns too brightly in protest against a sky darkening with afternoon stormclouds, where the leaves have turned to a fleshy olive-green because even they've given up. There is a hum in the air in August, and it might just be the cicadas in the trees, but for all intents and purposes, it sounds like a funeral march.

And it was in the midst of that sickening stomachache of a month that I came home.

Well, perhaps "came home" is a bit of an overstatement, as I was merely driving through the town I'd grown up in on my way to a conference in the next state. I hadn't been back to the tiny town in years, not since my graduation. There had never been a compelling reason to return: my friends had shot out of town like cannonballs as soon as we'd thrown our caps. My parents didn't even live there anymore; they'd moved to Raleigh when my father's small pharmacy folded.

While I was loading my stuffed suitcases into the trunk of my old sedan, I rehearsed the entire scene in my mind. I had expected to feel nostalgic, to be moved by the sight of

it badly needed a new coat of paint. Driving past the gravel lot, the only emotion I felt was annoyance at the construction trucks blocking one of the road's two lanes, forcing the cars into an ant's march in the heavy air. The entire experience was unsettling: I could clearly remember the long days I spent running wild through the sleepy downtown, but it didn't feel like the same place. I knew every line and shade of every tree in the town square, but it was as if I'd watched a movie about a little girl who grew up in a little town and had little adventures. Suddenly, I felt as if I couldn't leave quickly enough.

The grocery store, which had stood in the same building for sixty years, was boarded up. A sign in the front directed shoppers to its new location closer to the highway and advertised a new multi-use development opening next year.

I didn't even slow down.

As I pulled into a brand-new gas station on the far side of town, I breathed a sigh of relief for the comforting unfamiliarity of it. I stepped inside, the frigid air conditioning a welcome contrast to the steamy outdoors. The middle-aged woman behind the cash register nodded at me in silent acknowledgment. *An out-of-towner*, her face said.

Grabbing a bag of salt and vinegar potato chips and a bottle of some kind of soda - I'm not sure I even read the label, to be perfectly honest - I laid them on the counter and pulled out my wallet.

The woman rang up my purchases slowly. "You headed somewhere exciting?"

"A conference in Nashville," I answered. "I just thought I'd drive through - I grew up here, you know."

Digging Deeper: ACT Reading Genres

One nice thing about the ACT Reading test is that students will always see the same four genres, in the same order:

Prose Fiction

Social Sciences

Humanities

Natural Sciences

The first passage students see will be an excerpt of a longer literary work.

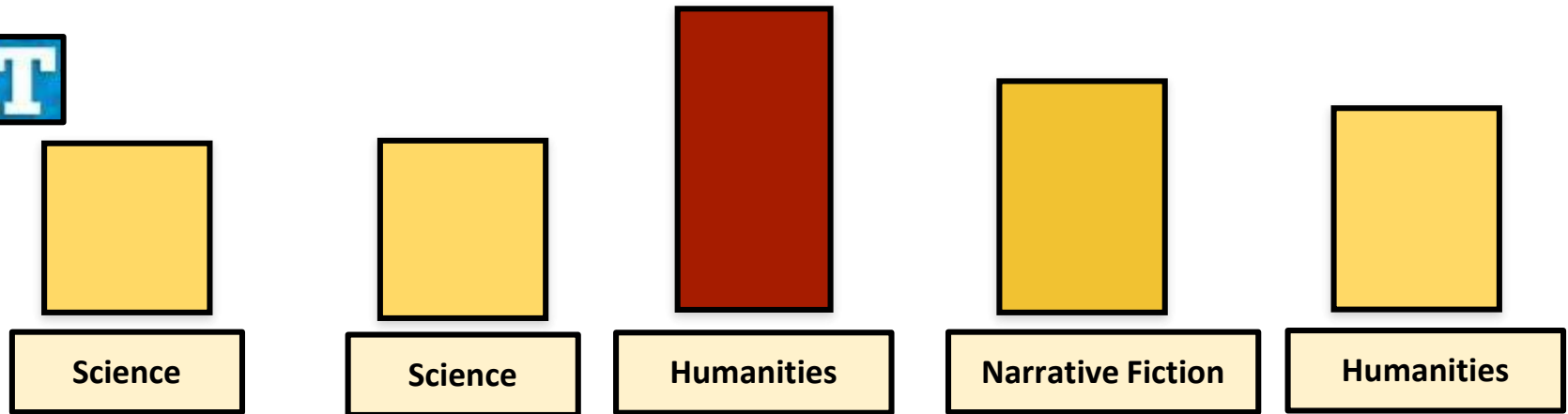
Next will be a piece from a wide range of studies, including psychology, economics, archaeology, and politics.

The Humanities passage is about the arts and artists - it might be a biography of an artist or a description of a movement.

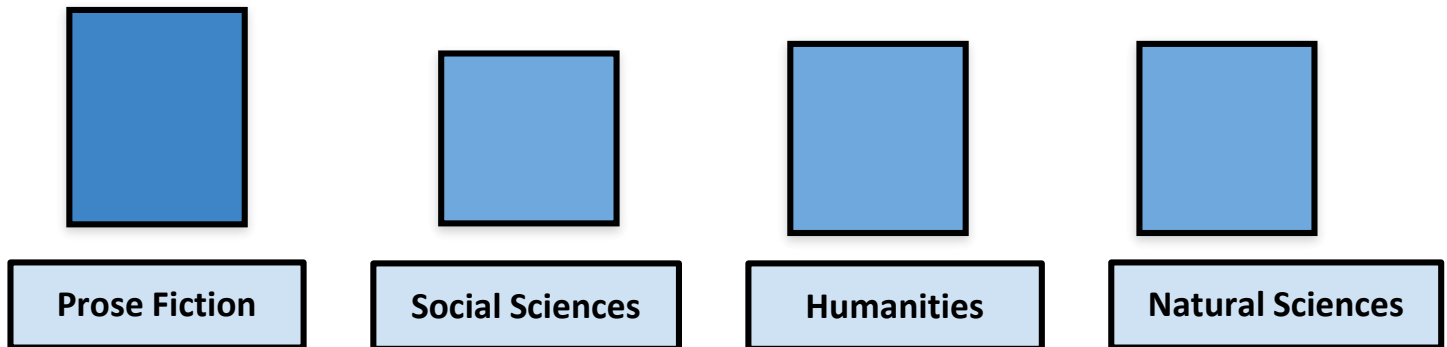
Finally, students will see a passage from some branch of natural science, like biology, physics or chemistry.

Digging Deeper: SAT vs ACT Reading

SAT



The ACT



Although the ACT forces students to go faster, the difficulty level is more consistent. Students should be prepared for the spikes in difficulty on the SAT.

Digging Deeper: ACT Science

Questions 1–6 relate to the following passage.

Cyanobacteria are a group of aquatic bacteria that capture light from the sun and convert it into chemical energy that can be used as food. This process is summarized by the following equation:

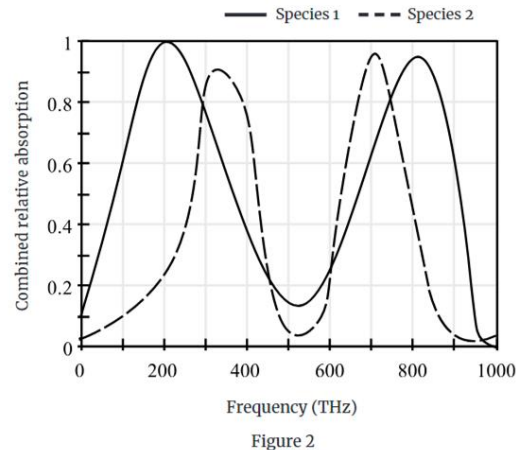


Table 1 lists frequency ranges for visible light and the color commonly associated with each range.

Table 1	
Color	Frequency (THz)
Red	405 – 480
Orange	480 – 510
Yellow	510 – 530
Green	530 – 600
Cyan	600 – 620
Blue	620 – 680
Violet	680 – 790

Bacteriochlorophylls are pigments that capture light energy. Figure 1 shows the relative absorption of light by bacteriochlorophyll *a* (*BChl a*), bacteriochlorophyll *b* (*BChl b*), and bacteriochlorophyll *c* (*BChl c*) across the light frequency from 0 THz to 1000 THz.

Figure 2 shows two different species of cyanobacteria and the combined relative absorption of their *BChl a*, *BChl b*, and *BChl c* pigments across various light frequencies.



The ACT's Science Test is unlike anything on the SAT, which has some science mixed into the Reading, but no dedicated Science section. Students must move quickly through complicated passages full of graphs and charts.

Source: Applerouth's Guide to the ACT, 4th Ed.

Digging Deeper: ACT Essay

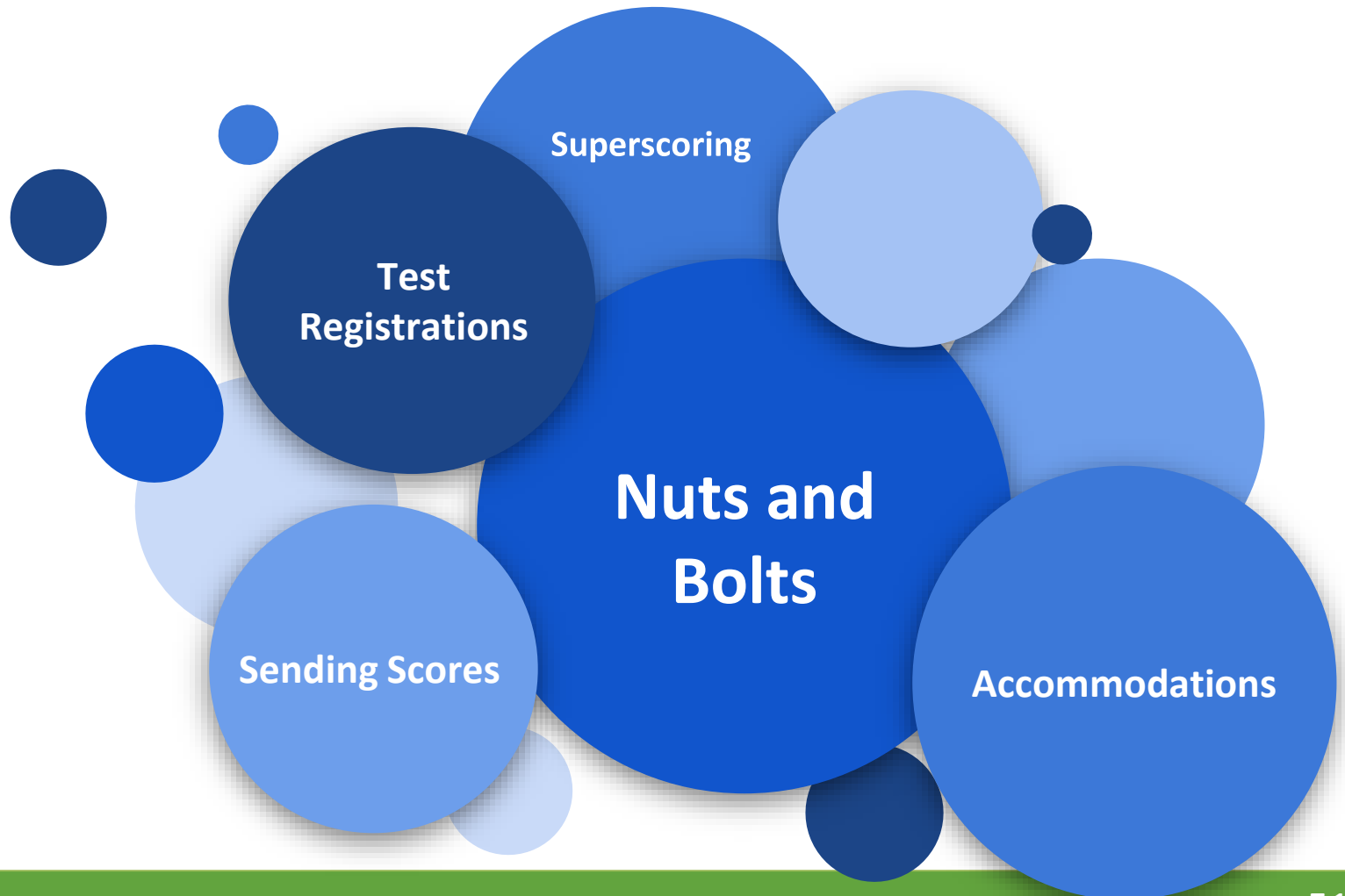
The ACT Essay asks students to read three perspectives on an issue and write their own argument, incorporating each perspective.

Read and carefully consider these perspectives. Each suggests a particular way of thinking about arts in education.

Perspective 1	Perspective 2	Perspective 3
Arts make wonderful hobbies and should be encouraged as extra-curricular activities that occur outside of regular school hours.	Schools must provide a full, well-rounded education, which should include exposure to the arts.	Schools exist to give students the necessary skills to get a job. Arts can be fun, but they distract from the main purpose of school.

Student Essay

How does all of this work?



How to register for the SAT and ACT



Register for the SAT

To register for the SAT, log on to <http://www.collegeboard.org> and click “Register for the SAT.” You will have to create a CollegeBoard account if you do not already have one.

To register for the ACT, log on to <http://www.act.org> and click “Register Now for the ACT.” You will have to create an ACT account if you do not already have one.

Register Now

Helpful registration guidance is provided below:

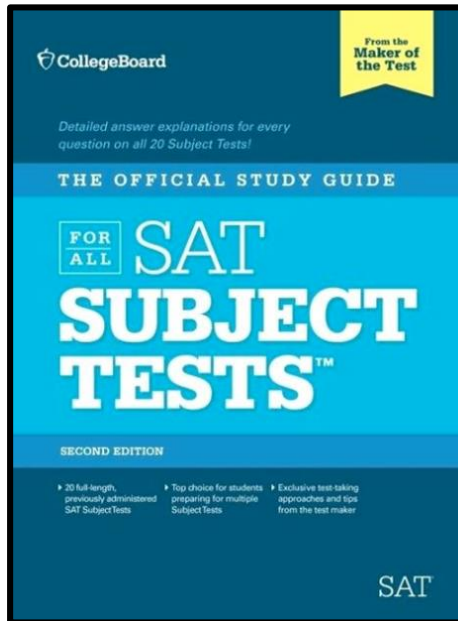
Be sure to allow plenty of time -- registration can take 40 minutes.

 [Register Now for the ACT Test](#)

SAT Subject Tests

The SAT Subject tests are additional standardized tests on a variety of subjects.

Some schools require tests for admission into specific programs (like Math 2 for finance or engineering).



Fewer than 100 colleges use Subject Tests for admission, and some accept the SAT + ACT as a replacement for SAT + SAT Subject Tests.

If the school your student is applying to *recommends* SAT Subject Tests, that really means "Take them!"

If your student needs to take SAT Subject Tests, the best time to take them is May or June of the year they take the subject - the same time as AP Exams!

How to secure accommodations

If your student needs accommodations for either the SAT or ACT, you must work with your student's school guidance counselor or disabilities coordinator to submit the correct paperwork.

If your student plans to take the SAT multiple times with accommodations, you only have to go through the process once - the accommodations follow your student through any SAT, AP exam or PSAT.

However, you have to re-apply for accommodations for every ACT administration your student plans to sit for. Be aware that it can take some time to process, and don't leave registration until the last minute!

Colleges cannot see when a student has taken a test with accommodations - it's the law!

Score Choice

Score choice allows students to choose which scores to submit and which to withhold (e.g., send March and June, withhold May).

Test Date	Verbal	Math	Composite
March	630	670	1300
May	610	630	1240
June	660	650	1310

About 100 colleges (typically highly selective institutions) require students to send all scores.

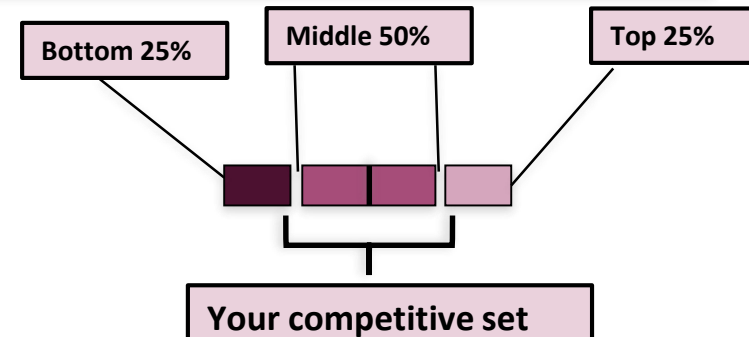
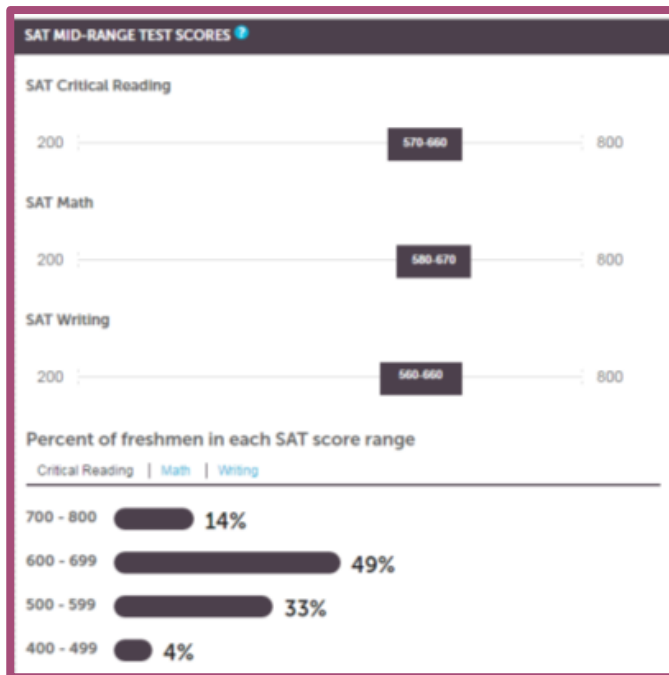
Superscoring

Superscoring allows students to combine top section scores from different test dates to form a new composite score, the only score to be used in the admissions process.

Test Date	Verbal	Math	Composite
March	630	670	1300
May	610	630	1240
June	660	650	1310
Superscore	660	670	1330

The vast majority of schools will superscore the SAT, and many will superscore the ACT. **Always** check with the admissions office of every school your student wants to attend!

Set realistic goals: Find score ranges online



Remember that the bottom quartile is predominately “hooked” applicants (i.e., athletes), not straight academic admits. The median score for unhooked applicants is closer to the right side of the middle 50% range.

Use the College Board site to see how your scores compare to other applicants

Planning: Allow Enough Time to Prep

TEST DATES

United States, US Territories, Puerto Rico, and Canada

2017 | 2018

TEST DATE

REGISTRATION DEADLINES

	Regular Deadline	Late Fee Required**	Photo Upload Deadline
September 9, 2017	August 4	August 5-18	September 1
October 28, 2017	September 22	Sept. 23-Oct. 6	October 20
December 9, 2017	November 3	November 4-17	December 1
February 10, 2018*	January 12	January 13-19	February 2
April 14, 2018	March 9	March 10-23	April 6
June 9, 2018	May 4	May 5-18	June 1
July 14, 2018*	June 15	June 16-22	July 6

Plan on taking the test **2-3** times. This is a process, not a one-shot deal.

Cram jobs almost never work. It's smart to start early!

Momentum: Go in Strong

It's tempting to think that spreading out your testing over the entire year is a good idea, but students can burn out that way. It's better to pick a few test dates to focus on and prepare before each one (10-12 weeks before the first test is a good rough estimate!).

2018 AUGUST						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

www.free-printable-calendar.com

**Practice
test!**

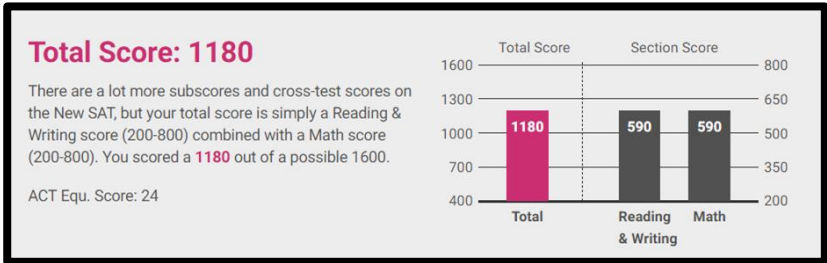
2018 SEPTEMBER						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

www.free-printable-calendar.com

ACT!

You should take a practice test a month before the actual test to get a sense of how you'd do!

Practice: You must take mock tests



These tests mimic the real thing and can tell you a lot about:

Time management and mental fatigue

Reading 30

It looks like you **paced yourself well** on this section. Nice job!

RHE You lost the most points on **Rhetoric** questions.

PASSAGE	CORRECT	INCORRECT	OMIT
Literature	8	2	0
History/S.S.	14	5	2
Science	6	4	0
Science (Comp)	7	4	0
TOTAL	35	15	2

Math 29.5

BAS You lost the most points on **Basic Modeling** questions.

SECTION	CORRECT	INCORRECT	OMIT
No Calculator	12	5	3
Calculator	25	13	0
TOTAL	37	18	3

Wrong answer patterns, guessing efficacy and shaky content mastery

Which Test Should I Try First?



Try a practice of both! Once you have those scores:

Prep to your strength. If they're the same,

Prep to your preference.

If prep is not yielding results, switch to the other test. If you have to switch, remember that 75% of the content transfers.

Our Services

- SAT & ACT prep (online, private, group)
- SAT Subject and AP prep
- HS subject assistance
- Study Skills



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Helping prepare students for higher scores and grades since 2001

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