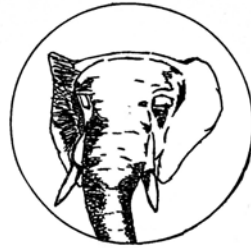


Grammatix, Inc.



presents

Preparing for the New SAT and PSAT

*Advice for the classes of 2006 and
beyond*

By Michael Barrett

The SAT and PSAT are set to change their formats significantly in the next year. Students in the classes of 2006 and beyond must be aware of the material that will appear on the new tests if they want to maximize their scores.

QUICK START: How to Choose a Test Prep Solution for the New SAT and PSAT

The SAT and PSAT are set to change in the coming year, and you need to know how to take advantage of this situation. The rest of this report lays out the details of the new changes and tells you exactly what to expect. But first, if you're pressed for time, we want to give you a couple of quick facts—as well as some “red flags” to look out for.

FACT: No one outside of the College Board will see a complete sample test for the new SAT until the fall of 2004.

The College Board has published a few sample questions from the new SAT, but they won't be releasing complete sample tests in the new format until the fall of 2004. And remember: the only effective way to prepare for a high score on a standardized test is to practice with *real* sample tests published by the *same* company that writes the test!

FACT: The new PSAT will be easier to prepare for than the old PSAT.

Every question type on the new PSAT has already appeared on the old PSAT, so there's nothing new to prepare for—the changes to the PSAT only involve *removing* certain question types. (For more on the changes to the PSAT, see [page 6 of this report](#).) So preparing for the new PSAT will actually be *less* work than preparing for the old one.

RED FLAG: AVOID people who claim they've already seen the new SAT!

Some groups are already claiming to have seen the new SAT, and in some cases they're even giving you “sample tests” to use. But the official practice tests won't be out until the fall of 2004.

RED FLAG: AVOID companies that are recycling their old SAT II stuff!

Because the Writing section of the new SAT will bear a lot of similarities to the SAT II Writing test, and because the SAT II Writing test will no longer be administered once the new SAT comes out, a lot of companies are just recycling their material from the old test.

But the new SAT's Writing section will NOT be exactly like the old SAT II Writing test! Among other things, the time limits for the writing exercises on the two tests are different, and the published scoring guides for the essays are different. All of these signs indicate that the College Board is taking this opportunity to change the way it grades writing. Don't make the mistake of prepping for the new SAT with old guides.

RED FLAG: AVOID companies that don't offer individual support!

With the changes being made to the SAT and PSAT, the coming two or three years will be even more confusing than usual for college-bound high school students and their families. You'll want a test prep solution that will answer all your questions, whatever they may be—from actually taking the test to figuring out your admissions strategy.

General Overview of the Coming Changes

Largely in response to demands made by state university systems and other groups, the College Board has made changes to the format of the SAT that will take effect in March 2005. These changes will come too late to affect the testing and admissions strategies of students in the classes of 2005 and before, but students who will graduate after 2005 must be aware of the challenges (and advantages) offered by the new SAT.

The PSAT will also be changing to reflect the new SAT. Because the PSAT is not administered to high school seniors, the new PSAT will appear in October of 2004. This way, the juniors who take the new PSAT in 2004 will be prepared to take the new SAT as seniors in the spring of 2005 and beyond.

In general, the changes to the two tests are intended to improve the way they reflect a student's writing ability and knowledge of more advanced mathematical concepts.



The new changes to the SAT and PSAT will NOT make them less “coachable” than they were before! Both tests will still be standardized, which means both will still have hidden rules and patterns that will make taking the tests easier for students who know what to look for.

Now let's take a more detailed look at the way these two tests will change!

Changes to the New SAT

In the spring of 2005, the SAT will go from its current two-section format to a new three-section format. Those three sections will be:

- Writing
- Critical Reading
- Mathematics



Each of the new sections will be scored on a 200 – 800 point scale, just like the two sections on the current SAT. That means that the maximum score on the new SAT will be 2400, not just 1600!

The Writing Section

The Writing Section of the new SAT will be the only all-new section on the test. It will last 60 minutes, and contain two types of questions:

- Multiple-choice grammar questions (35 minutes)
- One student-produced essay question (25 minutes)

Multiple-choice grammar questions

Students will have 35 minutes to answer the multiple-choice grammar questions on the new Writing section. These questions will be the same as those that currently appear on the PSAT. (For a complete approach to these types of questions, please see Bonus Appendix B in your [New Complete SAT and PSAT Value Pack](#).)

Student-produced essay question

The new SAT will also give students an essay question that they will have to answer in 25 minutes. This essay question is expected to be similar to the essay that currently appears on the SAT II Writing test.



Even though the new Writing section is expected to be similar to the current SAT II Writing test, **it's too early to say for certain that you can use the same strategies on both tests.** When the College Board releases sample essays in the fall of 2004, Grammatix will analyze them and tell you how to write a high-scoring essay with confidence.



Don't just look at the published scoring guides to try to guess how the new essays will be graded! Just like with every other type of SAT question, there are hidden rules and patterns that high-scoring essays must follow! (See the [end of this report](#) for ways to keep up-to-date with the new essay section.)

The Critical Reading Section

The Critical Reading section will be very similar to the current Verbal section. The biggest difference is that analogies will be completely removed from the test. In addition, shorter critical reading passages will also appear alongside the longer passages found on the current test. The Critical Reading section will consist of two 25-minute sub-sections and one 20-minute sub-section.



IMPORTANT! The same strategies that currently apply to longer reading passages will continue to apply to the shorter passages on the new SAT. Of course, as the College Board releases more information about the test in the fall of 2004, Grammatix clients will continue to receive free product updates with the best strategies for EVERY question type on the new SAT. (See [the end of this report](#) for more.)

The Mathematics Section

The Mathematics Section of the new SAT will be very similar to the Math section on the current test. The biggest difference is that there will be no related-quantity questions on the new SAT at all.

In addition, the College Board claims that the new SAT will test a wider range of advanced mathematical concepts. But as top scorers know, the SAT math section is really a *logic test* that occasionally makes use of certain mathematical concepts—which means that a smart, strategic approach to SAT math doesn't really focus on which textbook concepts are being tested anyway. (For a review of why the current SAT Math section isn't really a math test, check out the math section of your [New Complete SAT and PSAT Value Pack](#).)



IMPORTANT! Because the [New Complete SAT and PSAT Value Pack](#) focuses on ways to beat the SAT and PSAT with minimal math knowledge, the strategies in the Value Pack will still be applicable to the Mathematics section of the new SAT. To learn how you can receive free updates for the new SAT that will keep you current as the College Board releases more information, see [the end of this report](#).

Changes to the New PSAT

In the fall of 2004, the PSAT will change to reflect the upcoming changes on the SAT.



The PSAT already uses a three-section format similar to the one that the new SAT will use.

Changes similar to the New SAT

Like the new SAT, the new PSAT will get rid of analogy questions and related-quantity questions. The PSAT already has grammar questions like the ones that will appear on the new SAT, and those will stay. The new PSAT will also add shorter Critical Reading Questions, just like the new SAT.

Things that will make the New PSAT unique

Even though the PSAT will still have a section called the Writing section, there will NOT be a student-produced essay on the new PSAT—the Writing section will still ONLY have the same grammar questions that it has right now. (To learn how to beat all PSAT grammar questions, see Bonus Appendix B in your [New Complete SAT and PSAT Value Pack](#).)

In addition, the Mathematics section of the new PSAT will not attempt to introduce higher-level math concepts.

Where to go from here

If you're graduating after 2005, you'll need to stay up-to-date on the new SAT and PSAT. You should also be aware of the way these new tests will change your admissions strategy.

Using the Complete SAT and PSAT Value Pack to Prepare for the New Tests

The current version of your [New Complete SAT and PSAT Value Pack](#) still gives you **EVERYTHING** you need for the new PSAT, which will appear in the fall of 2004.

The Value Pack also covers **MOST** of what you'll need for the new SAT in the spring of 2005—the only thing missing is a strategy for the student-produced essay, because no reliable information on the essay has been released by the College Board yet.

Of course, as the College Board releases more information, Grammatix clients will receive free strategy updates on top of their normal product upgrades. For more on that, see [the end of this report](#).



You won't need to start preparing for the new SAT until the fall of 2004. Want proof? The College Board itself isn't even releasing its new prep materials until then. So don't worry if everyone you know is already getting worried about the new format—you can't prepare effectively without real tests from the College Board.

Find out what your target schools think

Before you worry about the new test formats, contact the admissions departments of your target schools and see what they think. You just may get an answer like this one, which came straight from an admissions officer at Notre Dame:

I know that a lot of students are worried about the new SAT and how it will affect their applications. We will accept both the old and the new scores for several years and it will be several years before we will even take the writing sample into consideration in our application review. I hope this helps calm some worries!

Sincerely,
[name withheld]
Admissions Counselor
University of Notre Dame
220 Main Building
Notre Dame, IN 46556



Always go straight to the admissions departments of your target schools when you have questions about their testing requirements! Many web sites, even the College Board's, list outdated and inaccurate information. When you really want to know, the only reliable way is to go to the source!

Preparing for the New SAT and PSAT

Here's how to Get Free Updates to This Value Pack

Here's how to Stay Updated

Grammatix clients will continue to receive new updates on the changes made to the SAT and PSAT as the College Board releases more information about the tests.

These updates will, of course, be free of charge to our clients.

Our advice for the new test won't just stop with the best advice for every question type. The new SAT and PSAT also present new strategic possibilities in your overall approach to admissions, and we'll be showing you how to turn the situation to your advantage.

So to make sure you stay up-to-date with the latest news and strategies for the new SAT and PSAT, please consider the [New Complete SAT and PSAT Value Pack](#).

Still Have Questions?

I welcome any questions you might have about the SAT or PSAT. Please send them directly to me at my personal email address: mbarrett@grammatix.com. I'll always get back to you as soon as possible.