

SAT Preparation for Students

A. Linwood Holton Governor's School

Proposed Agenda for 9:00 am – 2:00 pm SAT Workshop

Writing and Language: 9:00 – 10:25

Success on this portion of the SAT heavily relies on the test-taker having a strong knowledge of grammar mechanics and style. This portion will focus on the content pieces most frequently seen on the test, including:

- Semicolons/colons
- 's and s'
- Who/whom
- Affect/effect
- Punctuating appositive phrases

Break: 10:25 – 10:35

Math: 10:35 – 12:00

We will begin by discussing effective processes for taking a standardized math test, and we will follow that with strategies for mastering the hardest algebra questions on the test (“What can I do?,” “equivalent,” etc.). We will also work through some of the content pieces the SAT loves the most, including:

- Systems of equations
- All things quadratics
- Exponent rules

Lunch: 12:00 – 12:30

Reading: 12:30 – 2:00

Reading tests are process-based (i.e. it's all about *how* you do it, not “what you know”). This portion of the day will be devoted to teaching strategies that maximize a student's effectiveness on a reading test. Topics will include:

- Order of passages
- Order of questions
- Read the passage or questions first?
- Question/evidence follow-up combination

Sequence of Evening Classes

1. Writing and Language: Flow of Ideas

The College Board loves to use the Writing and Language Test to assess a student's ability to determine how ideas should best be expressed from sentence to sentence, paragraph to paragraph, etc. Given that, this class will focus on this concept as it is tested in its many forms, including:

- Transition words at the start of a sentence (however, although, due to, nevertheless, thus, etc.)
- "Which choice most effectively combines the two sentences?"
- "Where should sentence # be placed in the paragraph?"

2. Math: Geometry/Trigonometry

This class will focus on the Geometry/Trigonometry concepts that are routinely tested, and the topics will include:

- The equation for graphing a circle
- Radians
- Basic trig functions
- $\sin x = \cos (90 - x)$

Additionally, we will discuss:

- Exponential growth/decay
- Using graphs/data tables to answer questions, etc.

3. Reading: Mastering Historical (i.e. hard-to-read) Texts

The "old" texts (i.e. the texts from the 1700s and 1800s) typically prove to be the most difficult ones for students on the SAT; therefore, we will devote this class to utilizing highly effective strategies to correctly answer questions about these texts, even if the students do not fully understand the text itself.

4. Writing and Language: Passages Paired with Graphs and Data Tables

Graphs and data tables are included in select passages on both the SAT's Writing and Language Test as well as the SAT's Reading Test. This class will focus on correctly interpreting these graphs and data tables as well as answering the types of questions typically associated with such graphs/tables.

5. Math: Probability and Statistics

The Prob and Stat questions are found en masse on the Calculator portion of the SAT, and students' difficulties with these questions tend to originate from one of two sources: lack of content knowledge or using an ineffective reading strategy (or none at all) on these problems. Given that, we will focus on how to properly read/analyze the language of Prob and Stat questions as well as cover the content, which includes:

- Standard deviation
- Box plots
- Median (tricky)
- Word problems

6. Reading: Mastering the Paired Passages

If there is one type of reading that students loathe, it is paired passages. In all actuality, these are far easier than most students realize IF they approach them with the proper strategies and mindset. Given that, this class will be devoted to doing just that.