



The SAT

HOW TO INCREASE
YOUR SCORE

By Katherine Clarke
Photo by Mariela Naplatanova

The SAT has to be taken by most students in America to get into college and so it must be taken very seriously. There is new data that shows studying for the SAT for 20 hours on SAT Practice from Khan Academy, Princeton Review, or McGraw Hill is associated with an average score gain of 115 points. From most nearly 250,000 test-takers studied, more than 16,000 gained 200 points or more between the PSAT/NMSQT and SAT.

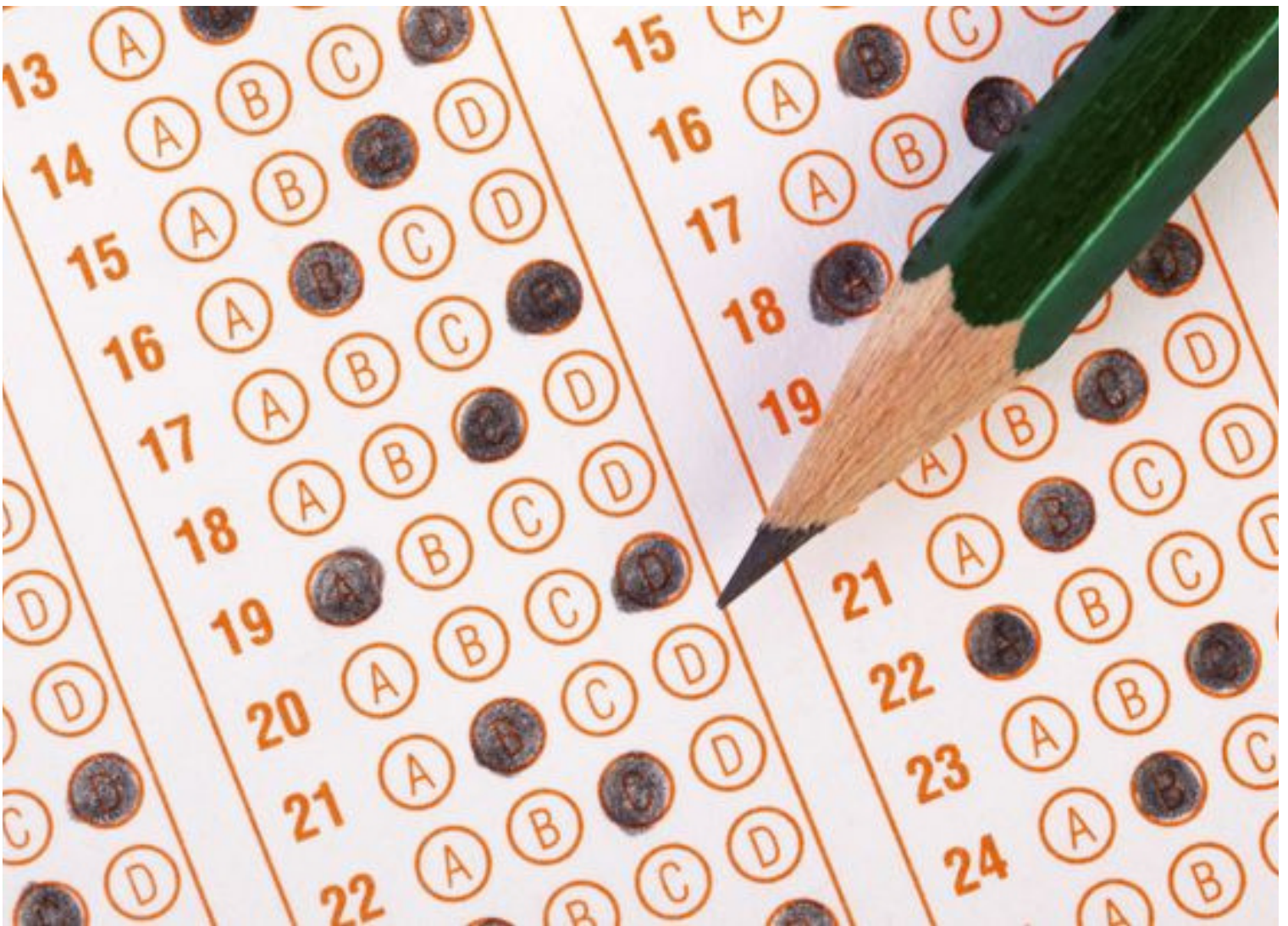
The Statistics

HOW IT WORKS

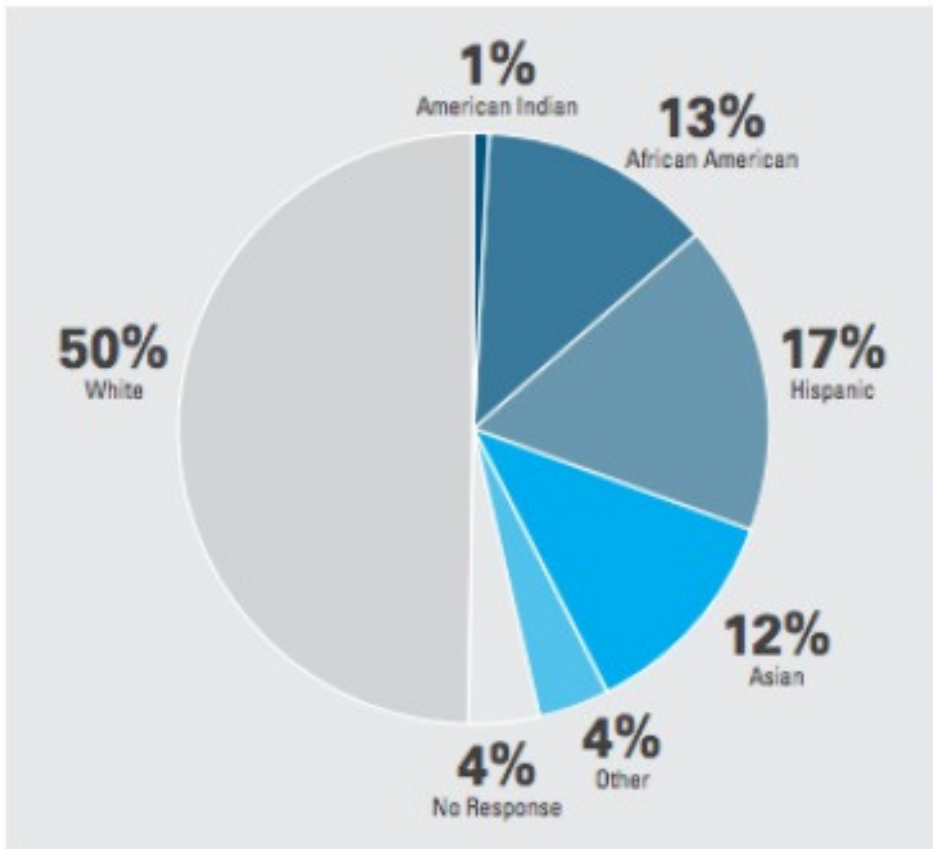
There is also data to back up that in addition to the 115-point average score increase associated with 20 hours of practice, shorter practice periods also correlate with meaningful score gains. For example, 6 to 8 hours of practice on Official SAT Practice is associated with an average 90-point increase.



16,000
students saw
gains of
200 points
or more.



SAT Participation Among Underrepresented Minority Students



46% The largest percentage of SAT takers from minority backgrounds ever, up from 40% in 2009.

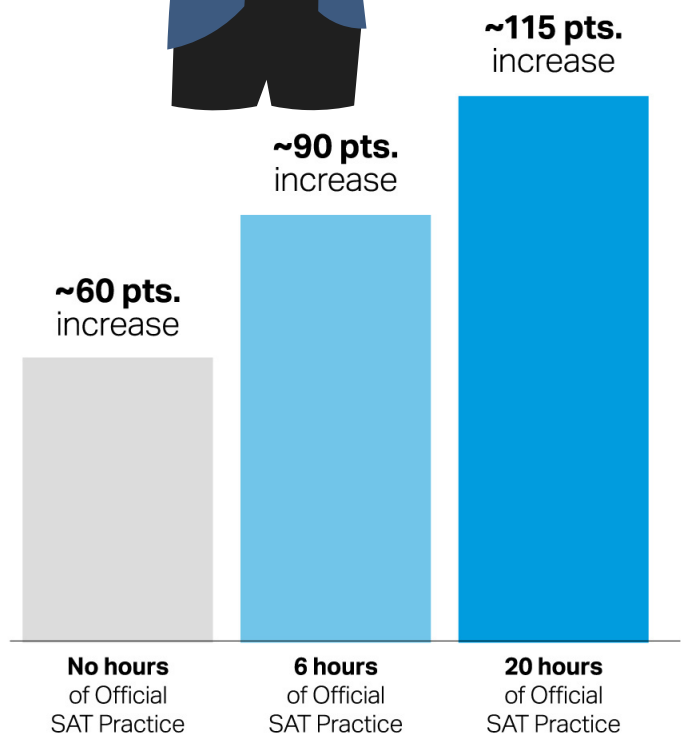
30% The largest percentage of SAT takers typically underrepresented in higher education, up from 27% in 2009.

15.6% IN 2013 ▲ Up from 14.8% of African American SAT takers in the class of 2012 who met the benchmark.

23.5% IN 2013 ▲ Up from 22.8% of Hispanic SAT takers in the class of 2012 who met the benchmark.



A College Board spokesman said there is a change in the effect of some test prep on student SAT performance in part because the newly redesigned SAT (since March 2016) is now more more related to what students learn in school. The questions are now more closely related to what you might learn in english or geometry to accurately asses student's learning abilities at school. They do this to determine how well of a student they will be in college.

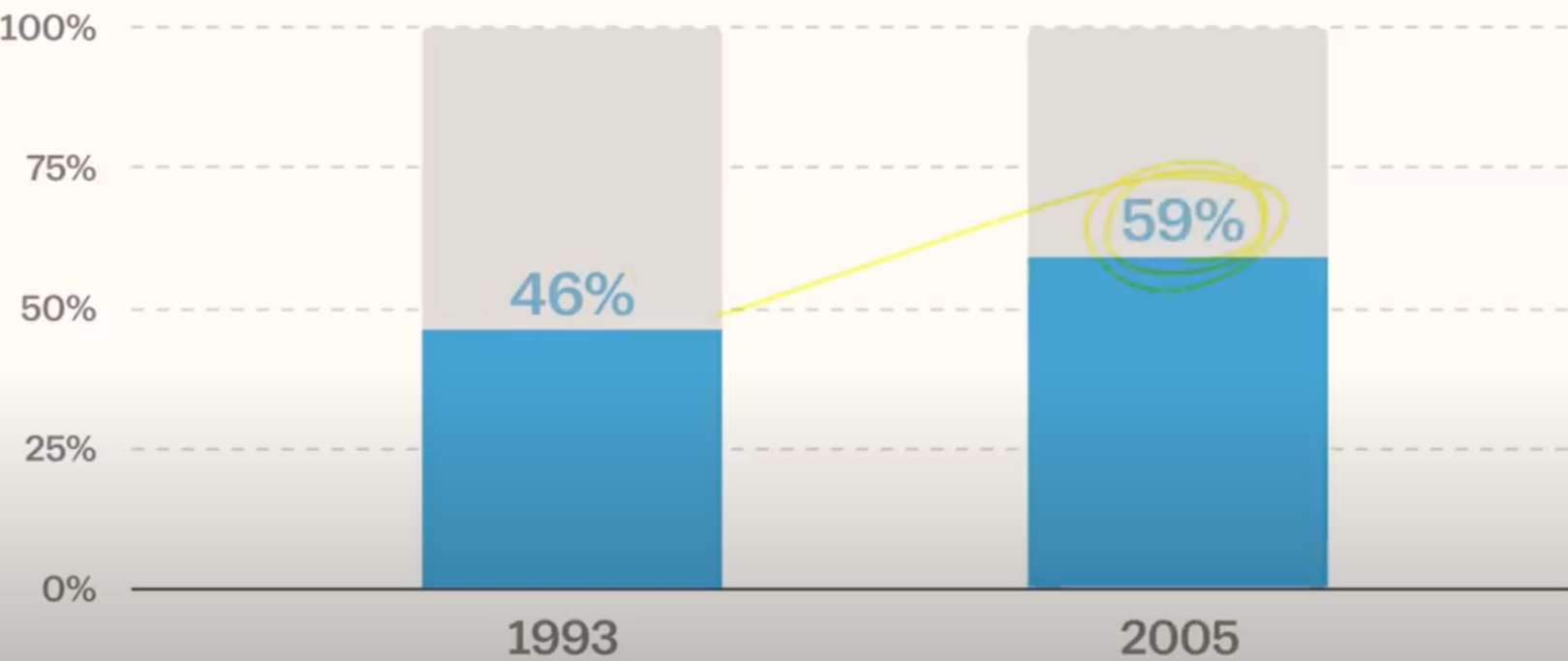


Colleges

That's why there is test prep, it is an overpriced industry that claims to raise your score using various tips and tricks and practice provided. But will any of this actually guarantee the score many are hoping to achieve? With thousands of dollars going into tutoring and test-prep companies would it be just better to study on your own?

Colleges giving "considerable importance" to SAT

National Association for College Admission Counseling



Personally I believe it is beneficial to get a tutor to work one on one with and then study by yourself. You can get guided in the right directions by an instructor and then practice to improve your score. This option will also be much cheaper than paying thousands for an online bootcamp. Princeton review for example charges \$1599 for a guarantee of 1400+.

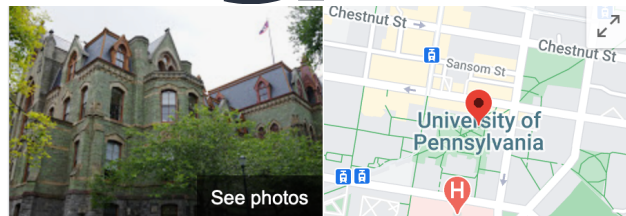
Reading and Writing 700-760, Math 720-790

2018-19

The SAT is one of the requirements and measurements that they can use to determine if you would be able to handle the course load. For example, Ivies are seen as the more elite universities because of their low acceptance rates and high SAT's of over 1500. If a student wants to get into a prestigious college they will have to score well on the SAT to be able to compete with the rest of the students. By having such a high SAT the universities are able to see which students took the time to study and care about learning.



Reading and Writing 690-760, Math 730-790 (2018-19)



University of Pennsylvania

Sources include: IPEDS

Feedback

Reading and Writing 720-770, Math 780-800

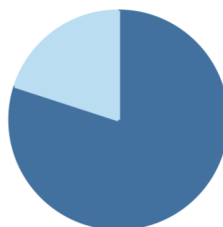
The Industry

Test prep is a \$4 billion-plus-per-year industry. Kaplan Test Prep and Admissions for example is the nation's largest; they earned more than \$2 billion in revenues in 2008. Other companies like Princeton and McGill also have unbelievable profits. These type of companies are using student's anxiety and necessity for a good score to profit off of them. All of these companies publish their own books that mock the SAT exam to study from but it is all still different from the real thing.



Class of 2020

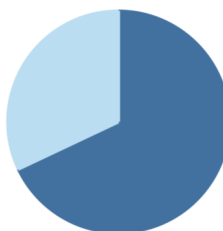
SAT Takers ¹	57,755
High School Graduates ²	72,534
SAT Participation Rate	80%



80% of graduates in the class of 2020 took the SAT during high school

Class of 2021

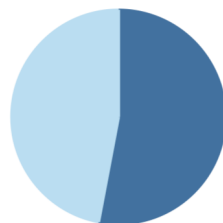
PSAT/NMSQT Takers ³	53,369
11th-Grade Enrollment ²	78,406
Participation Rate	68%



68% of 11th graders took the PSAT/NMSQT last fall

Class of 2022

PSAT/NMSQT or PSAT 10 Taker..	42,269
10th-Grade Enrollment ²	80,319
Participation Rate	53%



53% of 10th graders took the PSAT/NMSQT or PSAT 10 in 2019-20

The Problems

A lot of issues arise with the SAT being the national test for all Americans. Many cheating scandals where people would pay for their child's scores to be corrected beforehand had come to light. As well as an abuse of power for tutoring companies that charge way too much for preparation of the SAT. Low income students also don't have the luxury of retaking the SAT multiple times because the price of one test is \$65. Taking it multiple times has statistically shown that it increases your score. CollegeBoard's high charges for test taking is another way they abuse the system since they are a monopoly of test taking for college, they made profits of \$62,000,000! Low income students don't have as many resources to study from like tutoring and books which significantly affects the difference between high income scores and low income scores.

Assessment/ Grade level	ERW Section Score	Math Section Score
SAT	480	530
Grade 11	460	510
Grade 10	430	480
Grade 9	410	450
Grade 8	390	430

The Summary

Overall, the whole SAT testing system has many flaws and causes many students to stress while making large amounts of profit. Some universities have made the executive decision to stop requiring it because of these reasons. But for now students just have to try their best to get a good score with the resources they have to get into college.



Subscores | 1-15

14
Command of Evidence

14
Words in Context

14
Expression of Ideas

13
Heart of Algebra

13
Problem Solving and Data Analysis

13
Passport to Advanced Math

Section Scores

710 | 200-800
Your Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Score

97th Nationally Representative Sample Percentile
95th SAT User Percentile

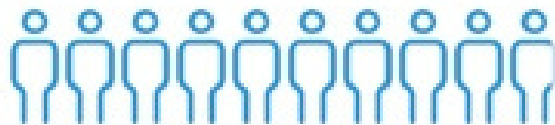

You've met the benchmark!

710 | 200-800
Your Math Score

96th Nationally Representative Sample Percentile
92nd SAT User Percentile


You've met the benchmark!

You are in the **98th** percentile 



You scored higher than or equal to 98% of students.

Personally, I was able to get into the 95th percentile with my first test, but that is because I had the opportunity and resources to study for a while before I took it. Actually, because education is so prioritized in Massachusetts compared to other states the average SAT score for this state is one of the highest. Since it is my first time taking it though, I still have a chance to improve.

SAT with Essay

December 5, 2020
11th Grade

Your Total Score

1420 | 400 to 1600

Your Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Score

710 | 200 to 800

Your Math Score

710 | 200 to 800



PSAT/NMSQT

October 16, 2019
10th Grade

Your Total Score

1170 | 320 to 1520

Your Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Score

590 | 160 to 760

Your Math Score

580 | 160 to 760



35 | 10-40
Reading

36 | 10-40
Writing and Language

35.5 | 10-40
Math

Cross-Test Scores | 10-40

34
Analysis in History/Social Studies

37
Analysis in Science

Subscores | 1-15

14
Command of Evidence

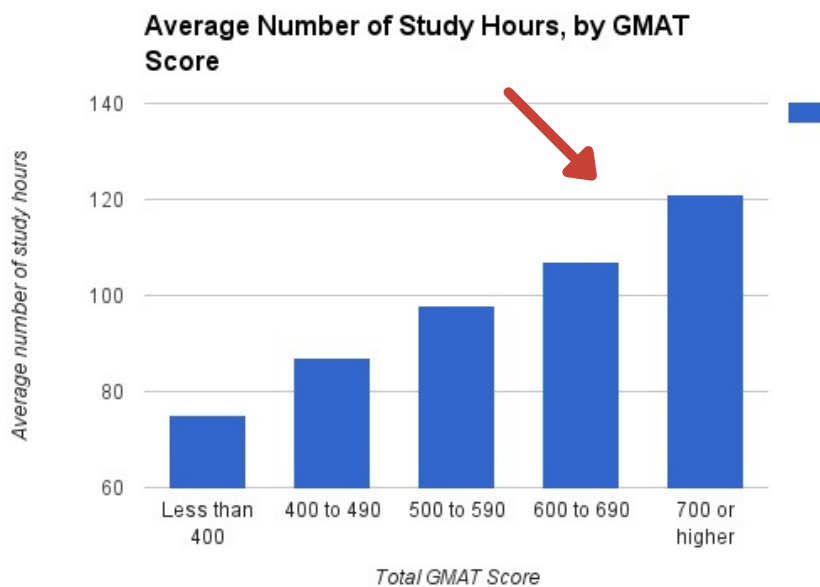
14
Words in Context

14
Expression of Ideas

12
Standard English Conventions

My Results

In the end I ended up improving my score by about 200 points since the last time that I took the test like this (PSAT vs SAT). I had studied prior for a year before legacy so that definitely contributes. But in the span of the last couple of months I was able to improve my score by 80 points! At the beginning of the school year I took a full practice test and got 1340 and on the actual test I ended up getting 1420. The amount of hour I spent on studying in the last 3-4 months is about 24 hours and when comparing it to the chart it is a pretty accurate score increase. Therefore, it is worth it to study in order to increase your score, you just have to have the motivation to do so.



It made all the difference between the 690 and 700 cusp and put me in the 95th percentile!