

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**To Take the ACT or Not To Take the ACT – That is the Question!**

**March 22, 2006 Doylestown, PA** – Many times parents will ask us if their kids should take the ACT. Our answer is a resounding YES! It makes good sense to take the ACT for a number of reasons. First, students often score very well on this measure. Second, the scores do not have to be reported to the student's school to become part of the permanent file, so if the test goes less well than expected, the scores stay with the student alone. Thirdly, the ACT tests students on math, verbal, and science rather than simply math and verbal. It also provides students with the opportunity to take a standardized test in a proctored environment, so it is good practice for the stress of the SAT.

The ACT, otherwise known as the ACT Assessment test, is a measure used by many colleges and universities to assess candidates. It is in fact more widely accepted than the SAT and is generally considered a more forgiving test. The forgiving element is derived from the scoring process, though the actual structure and length of the test are also welcome differences. The scoring on the ACT is based on accrued points from correct answers; students are not penalized for incorrect answers (wrong answers on the SAT result in a ¼ point deduction from the student's raw score). Students neither gain nor lose any points on the ACT for incorrect answers; they should bubble in an answer for every question with the "letter of the day," which generally results in an extra point or two to add to the raw score.

The scoring on this test is quite different than that of the SAT. The range is 0 – 36, with most kids scoring around 20, which is the rough equivalent of a 500 on the SAT. The structure of the test is more balanced in terms of material for students, since unlike the SAT, which is around 70% verbal, the ACT has only two verbal sections, one math section, one science section, and an optional essay. The essay was added to the ACT to make it comparable to the current SAT I.

**Side-by-Side Comparison of the SAT versus ACT**

	<b>SAT</b>	<b>ACT</b>
<b>Running Time</b>	3 hours 45 minutes	3 hours 25 minutes
<b>Sections</b>	10 Total	5 Total
<b>Sections Include:</b>	3 Critical Reading 3 Math 3 Writing Skills (2 Multiple Choice and 1 Essay) 1 Equating Section	1 English 1 Math 1 Reading Comprehension 1 Science 1 Essay
<b>Essay</b>	Yes – 25 minutes	Yes – 30 minutes (optional)
<b>Scoring Range</b>	200 – 800 per section 2400 Total Points	1 – 36 per section 1 – 36 Composite score
<b>Cost</b>	\$41.50	\$43.00 (includes fee for optional essay)
<b>Dates Offered</b>	7 times per academic year	6 times per academic year

Overall, we recommend that students take the ACT as well as the SAT I. More information on the ACT can be found online at the ACT website.

*SMARTPREP'S Susan Testani and Jennifer Kloss, co-owners of the Doylestown-based SAT prep company, take the SAT with area students during the seven administrations of the SAT throughout the academic year. This ensures that Testani and Kloss have their fingers on the pulse of the test so they can give their students an extra edge. SMARTPREP classes are held at the historic Waterwheel Inn in Doylestown.*

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