

SMARTPREP

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PRESS RELEASE

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So It Begins...

March 12, 2005, Doylestown, PA – The highly anticipated New Format SAT rolled out today, and students all over the country welcomed the March test with trepidation. For the first time since 1994 the SAT presented students with a new format and those filing into testing centers today surely were feeling more than the usual uncertainty. The new SAT presents a wealth of challenges, notably an essay question, higher level math, grammar and usage questions, and a longer testing period overall. For many, these changes represent a welcome departure from the old format SAT, however, for others, these changes herald a test of increased difficulty.

Much like administrations of the past several years, roughly forty percent of the math questions could be solved either by working answer choices through the problem or inserting a random value for those word problems containing variables. Challenging topics new to the math side included functions and their graphs, tricky algebra with variables in the exponents, and complex quadratic equations where the use of factoring or FOILing comes into play. New topics comprised about 15% of the test, while geometry problems were much less frequent as compared to the old versions of the test: out of 54 math questions, only two were considered tricky geometry, a pleasant surprise for most students.

The most significant change to the verbal sections of the test is the addition of the Writing Skills Component. This new section of the test, worth a possible 200 – 800 points of the overall 2400 of the new test, is composed of a timed essay and grammar and usage questions. The essay prompt for this administration was “Is the rule of the majority – in government or other circumstances – a poor guide?” This prompt provided students with four different approaches, depending on whether they agreed or disagreed with the prompt and if they chose to explore the majority or the minority perspective. An especially effective method of attacking the essay lies in the standard five paragraph essay, with a well-defined introductory paragraph. While there is no specific formula for a “correct” approach, this time-honored style tends to work very effectively for this essay format.

The Critical Reading Sections of the test were peppered with a mix of long, short, and mid-length passages, as well as a manageable selection of Sentence Completion questions. The Analogies questions are now ancient history, so many students breathed a collective sigh of relief. The passages were extremely techniquable today, and could be readily handled by addressing the line reference questions first and reading the passages as one might research information. The passages spanned a dual passage concerning cloning, a discussion of theater architecture, and a narrative concerning an older woman among others.

The most important piece of information demonstrated by the test today is that the SAT remains a techniquable test for which one can easily prep!

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. All SMARTPREP classes are held at Delaware Valley College in Doylestown, PA.

SMARTPREP'S Spring SAT Prep Courses at Delaware Valley College

May 7 Test Wednesdays 6:30pm – 9:30pm / Saturdays 9am – noon

April 6, 9, 13, 16, 20, 23, 27, 30* May 4

June 4 Test Tuesdays 6:30pm – 9:30pm / Saturdays 9am – noon

May 3, 7, 10, 14, 17, 21, 24, 28*, 31

Tuition: \$850 *mock test dates

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