



# THE ROAD AHEAD

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## Navigating College Admission Tests

**Adam Ingersoll**  
Co-Founder & Principal  
Compass Education Group



*"Try and tell me what's bothering you—use your S.A.T. words."*

# Unprecedented Pressure?

*New York Times,*  
“High School Seniors’ Agony”  
**Written in 1957**

“Competition for college admission has created an unprecedented time of intense worry.”

“Getting into college has never been so competitive.”

“Standards have shot up. Parents who got into top notch colleges with average grades and good overall qualifications cannot understand why their kids can’t.”

# Flexibility ↔ Complexity

## FREQUENT QUESTIONS ABOUT TESTING

### PRACTICAL

- Do I need to take admission tests?
- Should I take the SAT, ACT, or both?
- Is the SAT or ACT essay necessary?
- Are Subject Tests required?
- Does the ACT replace Subject Tests?

### TACTICAL

- If optional, should I submit my scores?
- When should I begin/end my testing & prep?
- How many times should I test?
- Which colleges require reporting **all** scores?
- Do colleges combine scores across dates?

***Easier than ever to apply . . . . . harder than ever to predict.***

# TESTING TURMOIL

A RECENT RETROSPECTIVE

*Jun '15:* SAT test misprint

*July '15:* SAT section from June thrown out

*Fall '15:* ACT & SAT score reporting delays

*Fall '15:* ACT essay scoring issues (ongoing)

*Fall '15:* Widespread reports of cheating on SAT overseas

*Nov '15:* Addl. SAT practice tests through Khan canceled

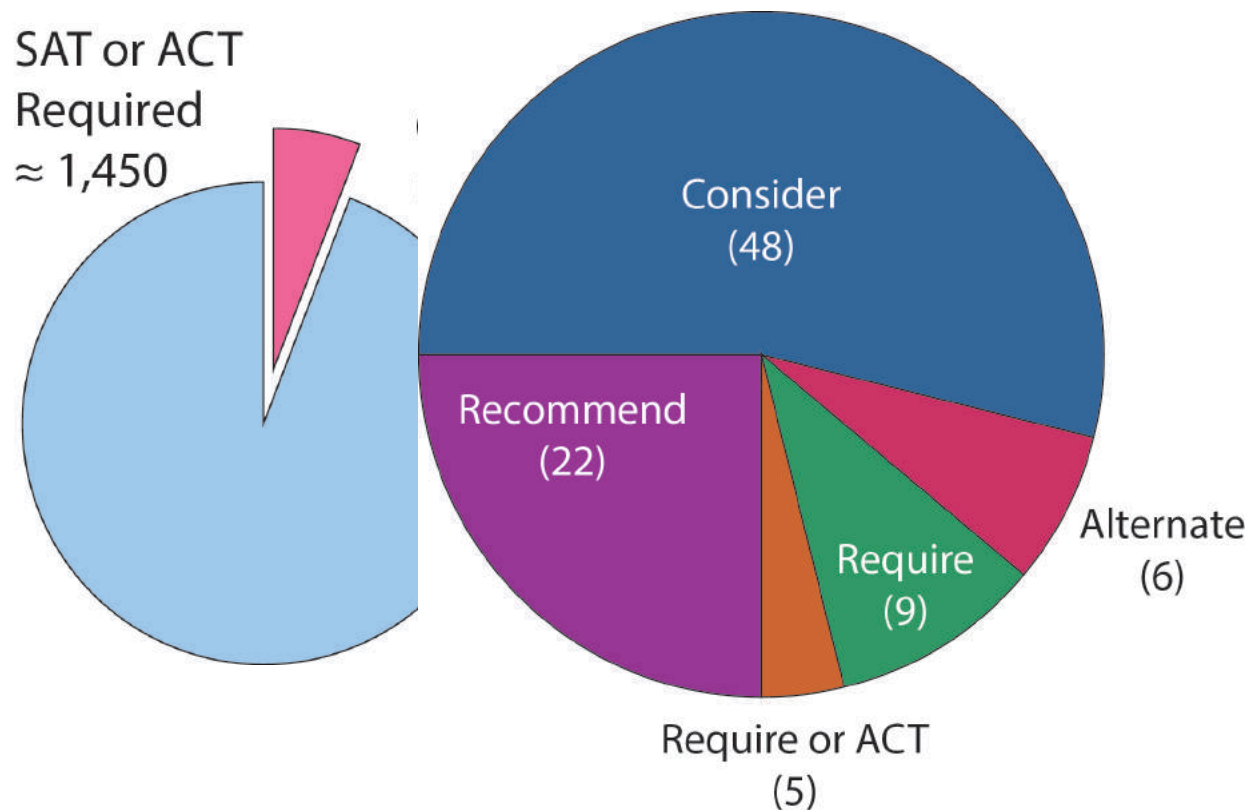
*Dec '15:* PSAT score reporting delay

*Mar '16:* New SAT debuts, 10 week wait for scores

*Jul '16:* Reuters uncovers international ACT cheating scandal in program owned by ACT, Inc

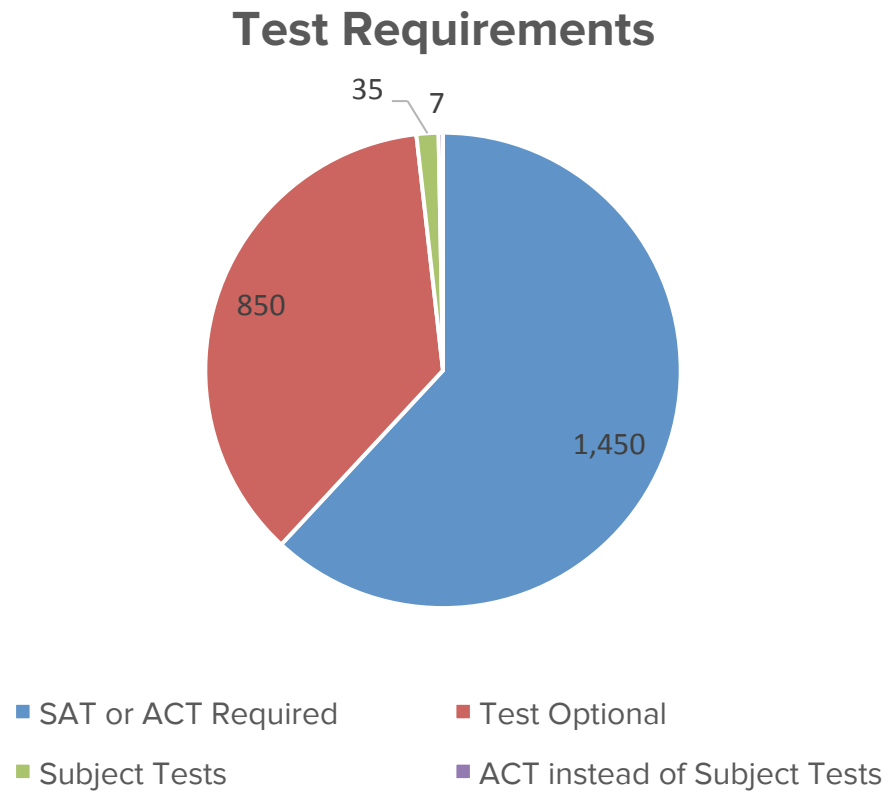
*Aug '16:* Ex-College Board employee's home raided by FBI

# Test Requirements



See **pages 58–63**  
of *Compass Guide*

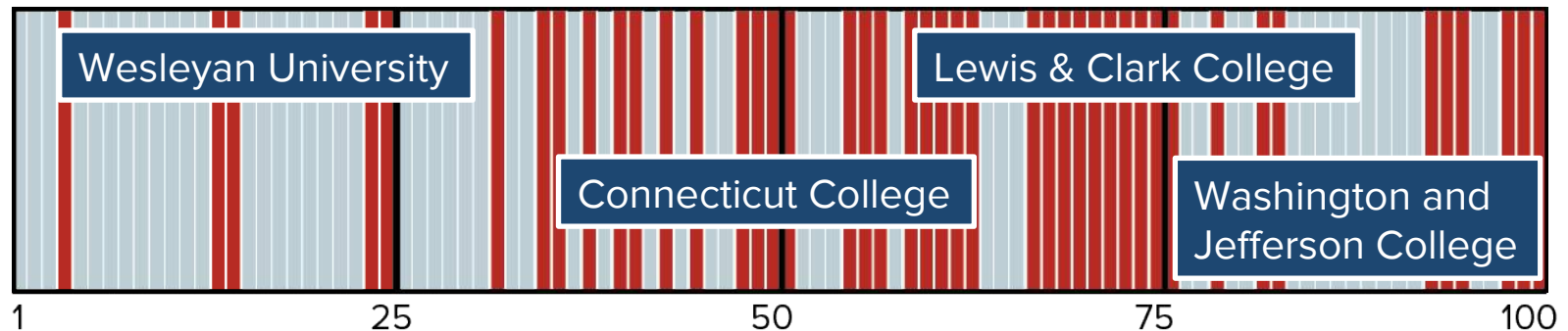
# Test Requirements



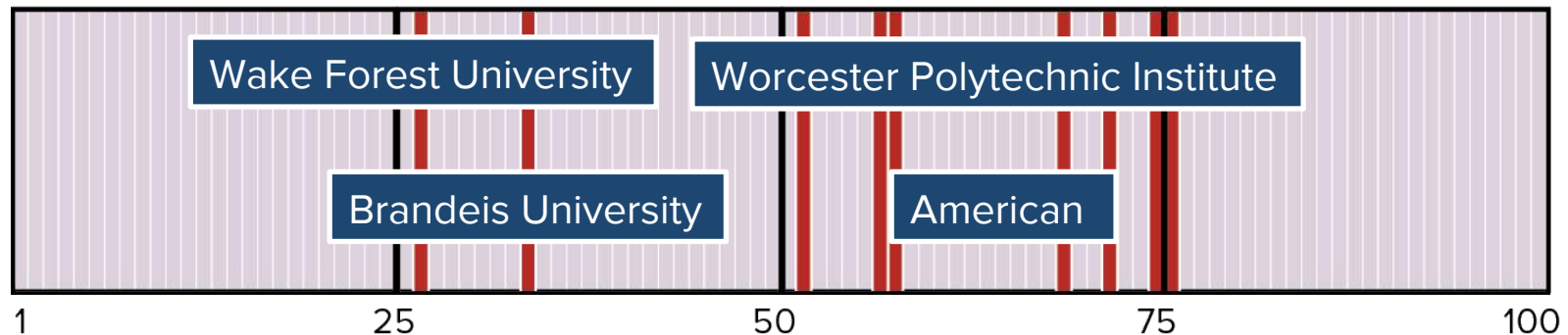
See **pages 4-6** of *Compass Guide*

# Test-Optional

## Liberal Arts Colleges



## National Universities



# Test-Optional: The Cynical Perspective

*“Why Test-Optional Colleges are Too Good to Be True”*

**TeenLife.com, May 2016**

*“Even though colleges tell students submitting scores is optional, it signals the college that the student has something to hide. Colleges typically assume these students have low test scores.”*

**Suzanne Shaffer, IEC**

*“...applicants to ODU and elsewhere who don't submit scores will be particularly scrutinized for other evidence of potential for success.”*

**Jane H. Dane, VP Enrollment Management**



**Marten Roorda** @MartenRoorda · May 24

Great piece by @SuzanneShaffer on why test-optional colleges are too good to be true: [bit.ly/25jO0h0](https://bit.ly/25jO0h0)

# Holistic Review

**GPA**

**Rigor**

**Test Scores**

***Recommendation Letters***

***Personal Essay***

***Interview***

***AP/IB Scores***

***Legacy Status***

***Demonstrated interest***

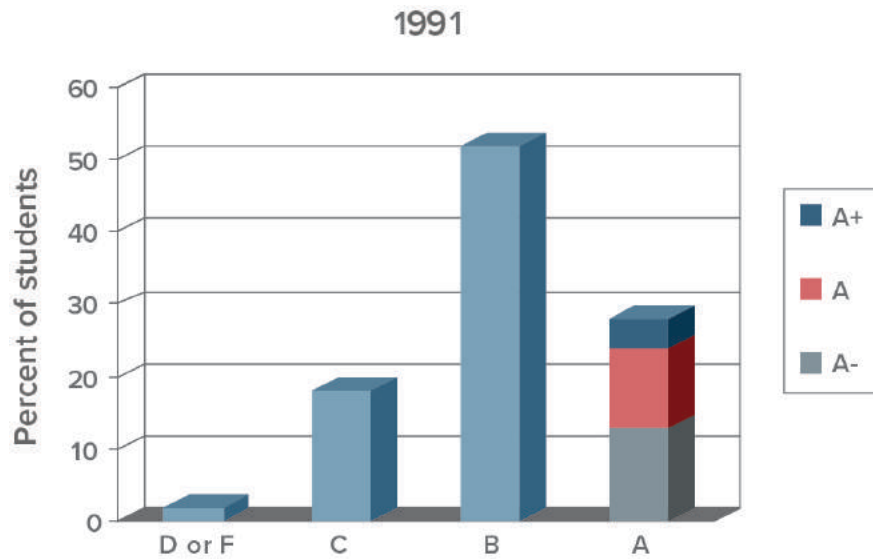
***Extracurriculars***

***Work / Internships***

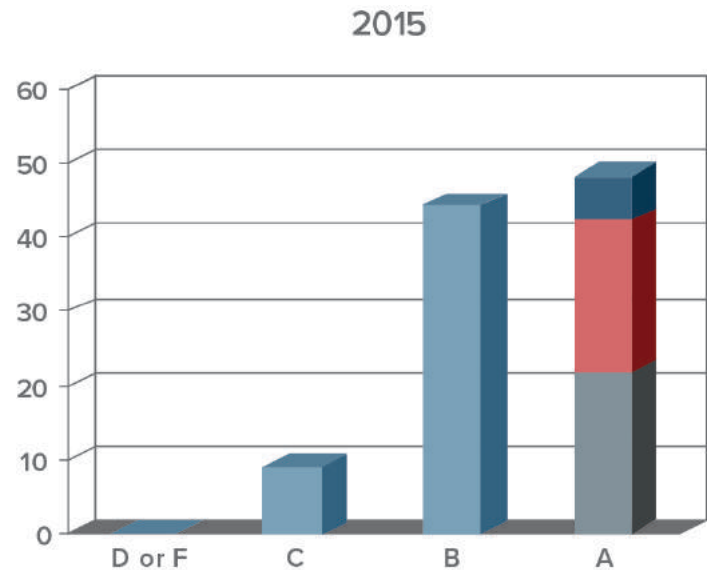
***Class Rank***

***Financial Need***

# Grade Inflation

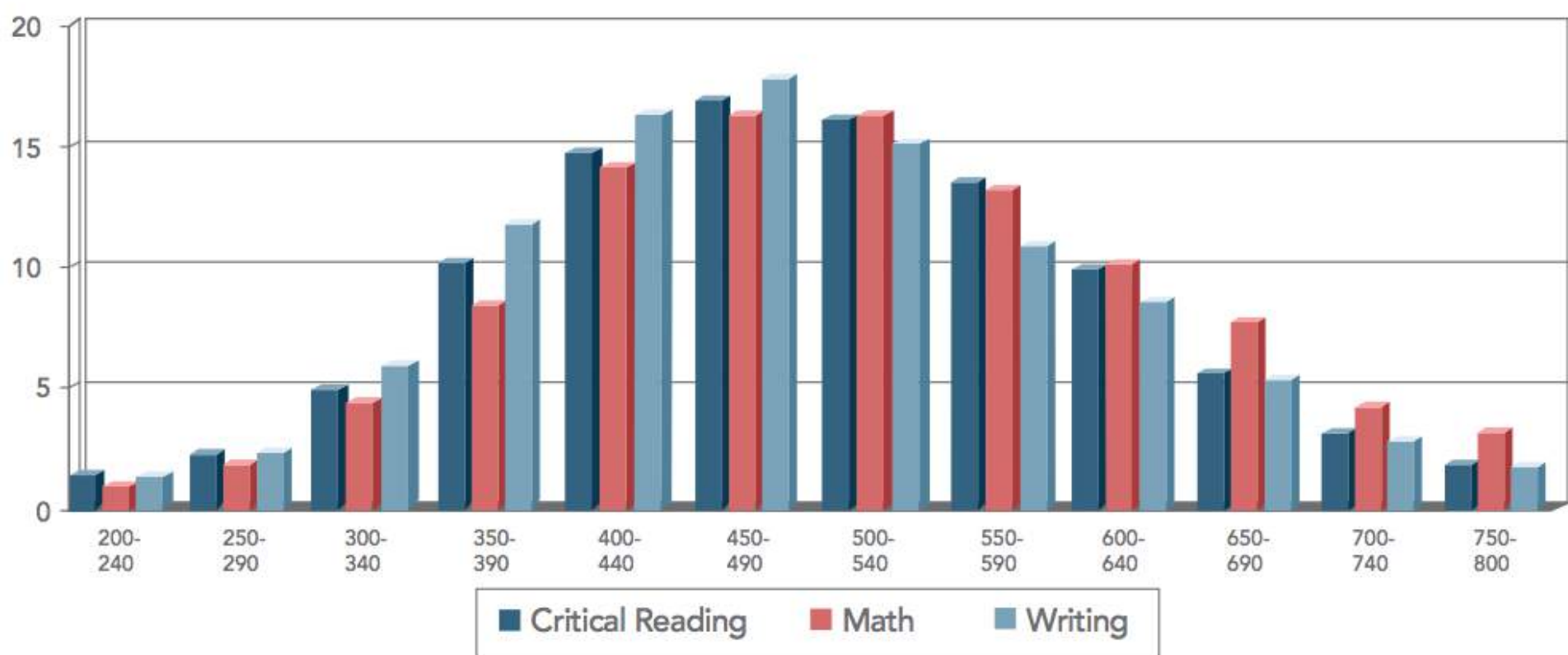


Source: College Board



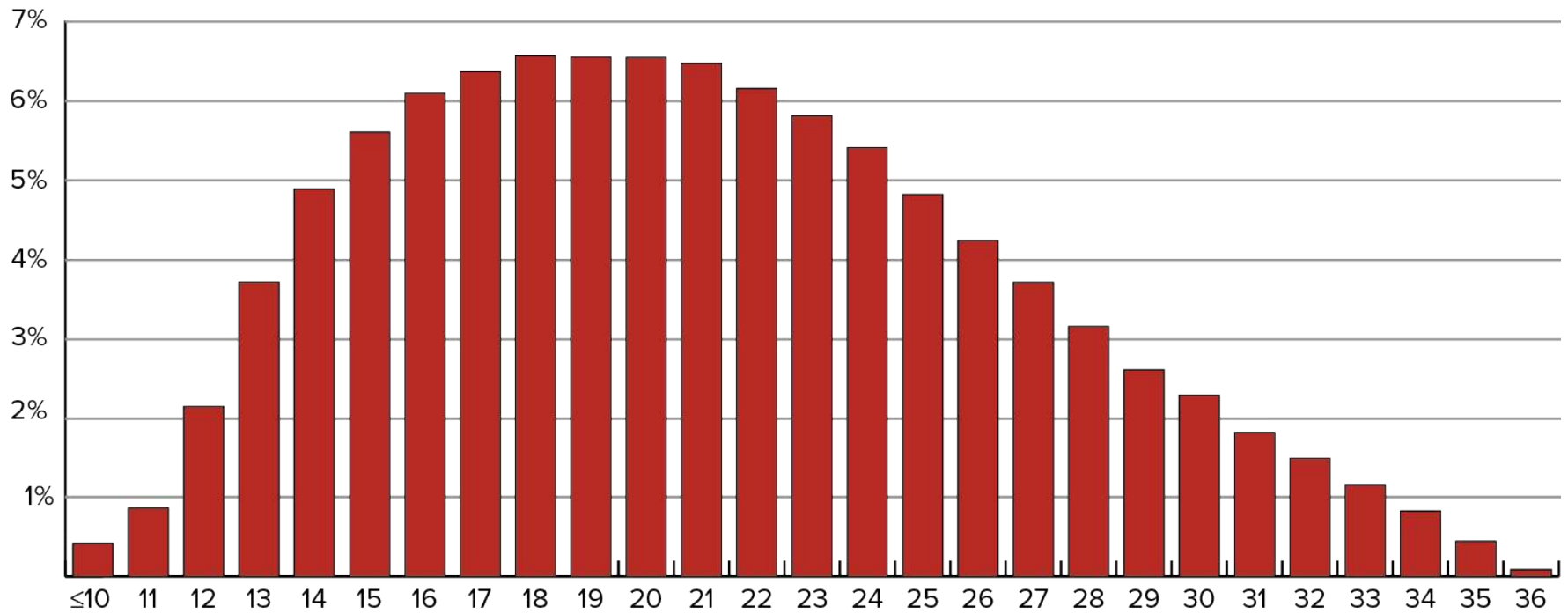
# Standardized Tests Resist Inflation

SAT (2015)




# ACT Score Distribution

Class of 2016



# Research your colleges . . .

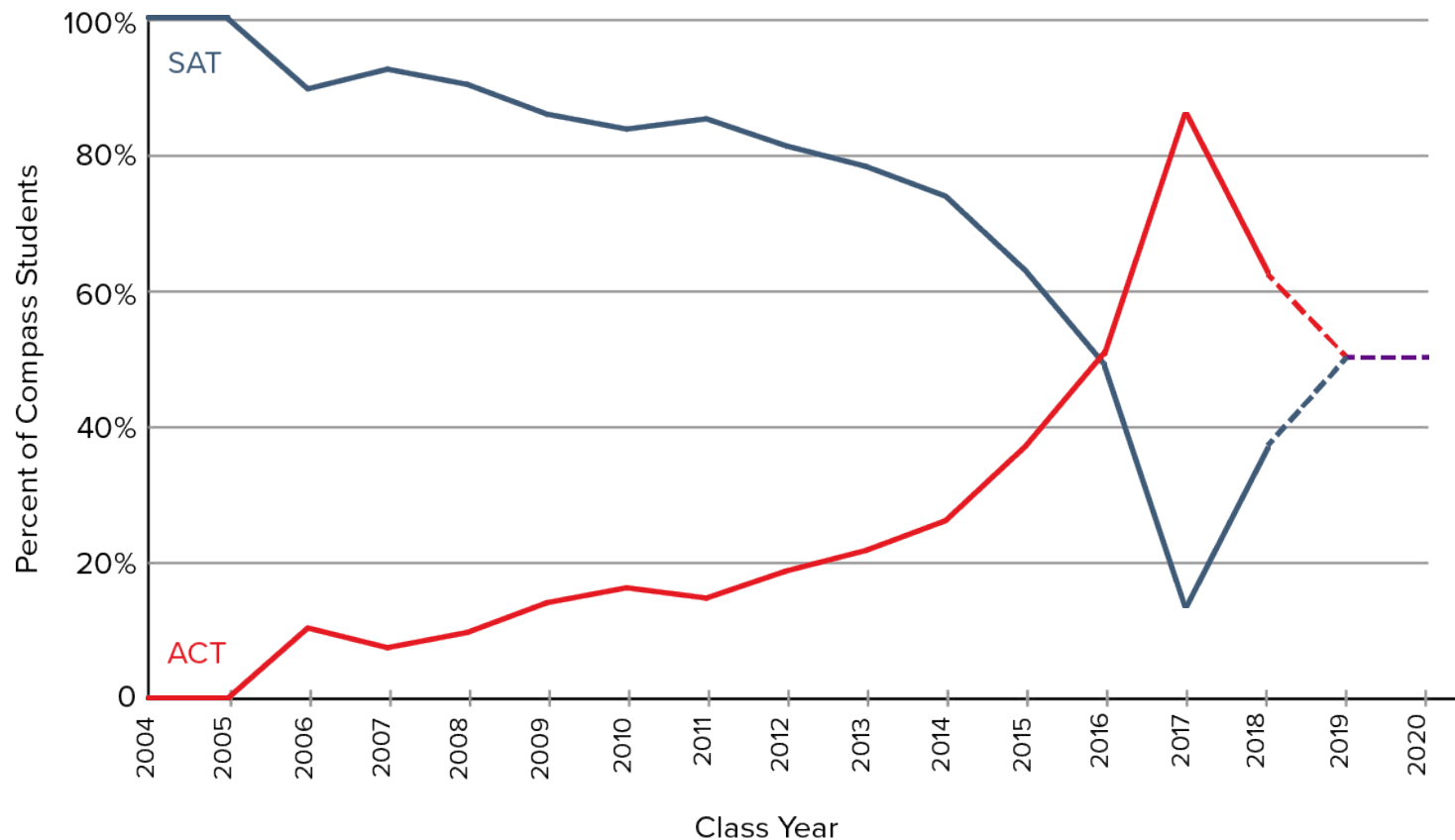
- 
- ✓ Are you test-optional / flexible?
  - ✓ Do You Super-Score?
  - ✓ Score Choice?
  - ✓ Essay Requirements?
  - ✓ Subject Test Policies?
  - ✓ Fall Testing / Early Decision Deadlines?

# ACT, SAT, or Both?

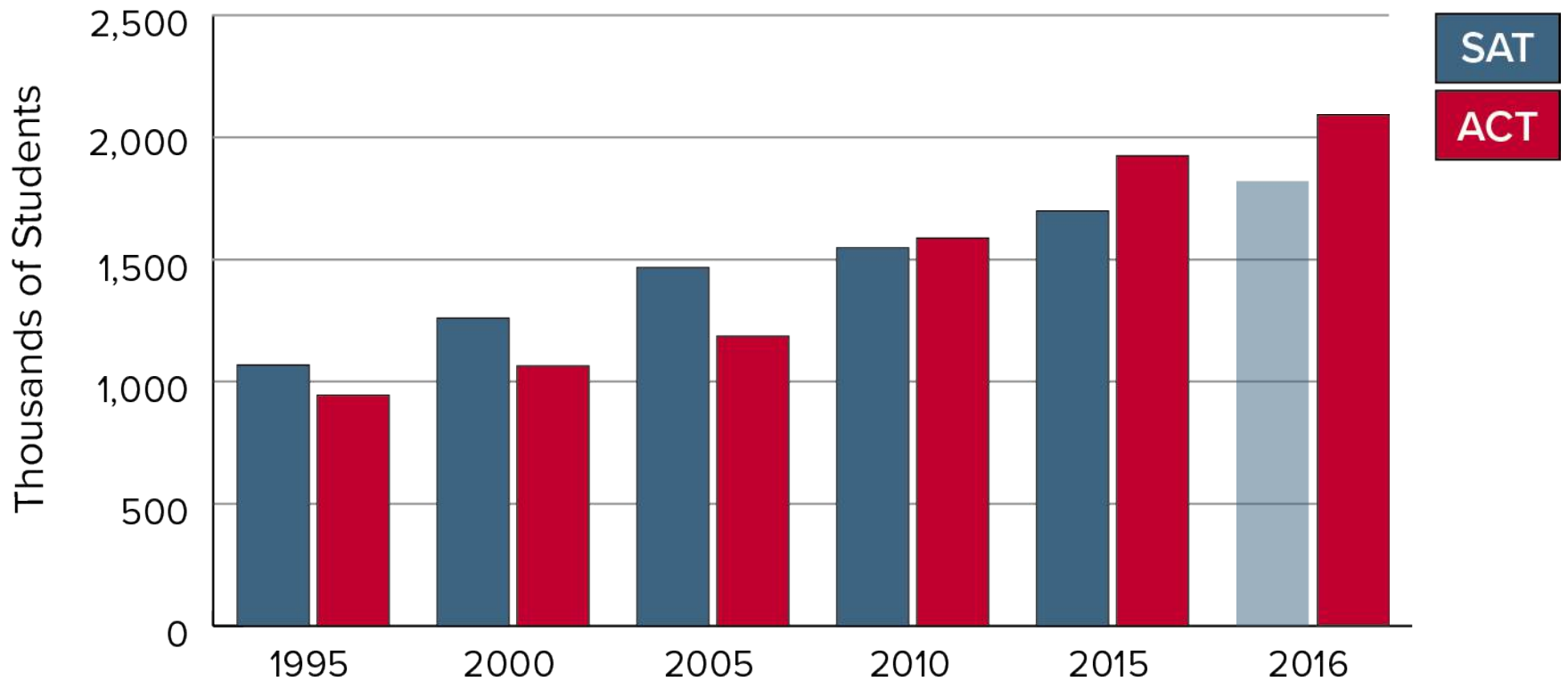


*"We were originally thinking SAT, but then Noah's admissions advisor told us left-handed students born on Tuesdays do better on the ACT."*

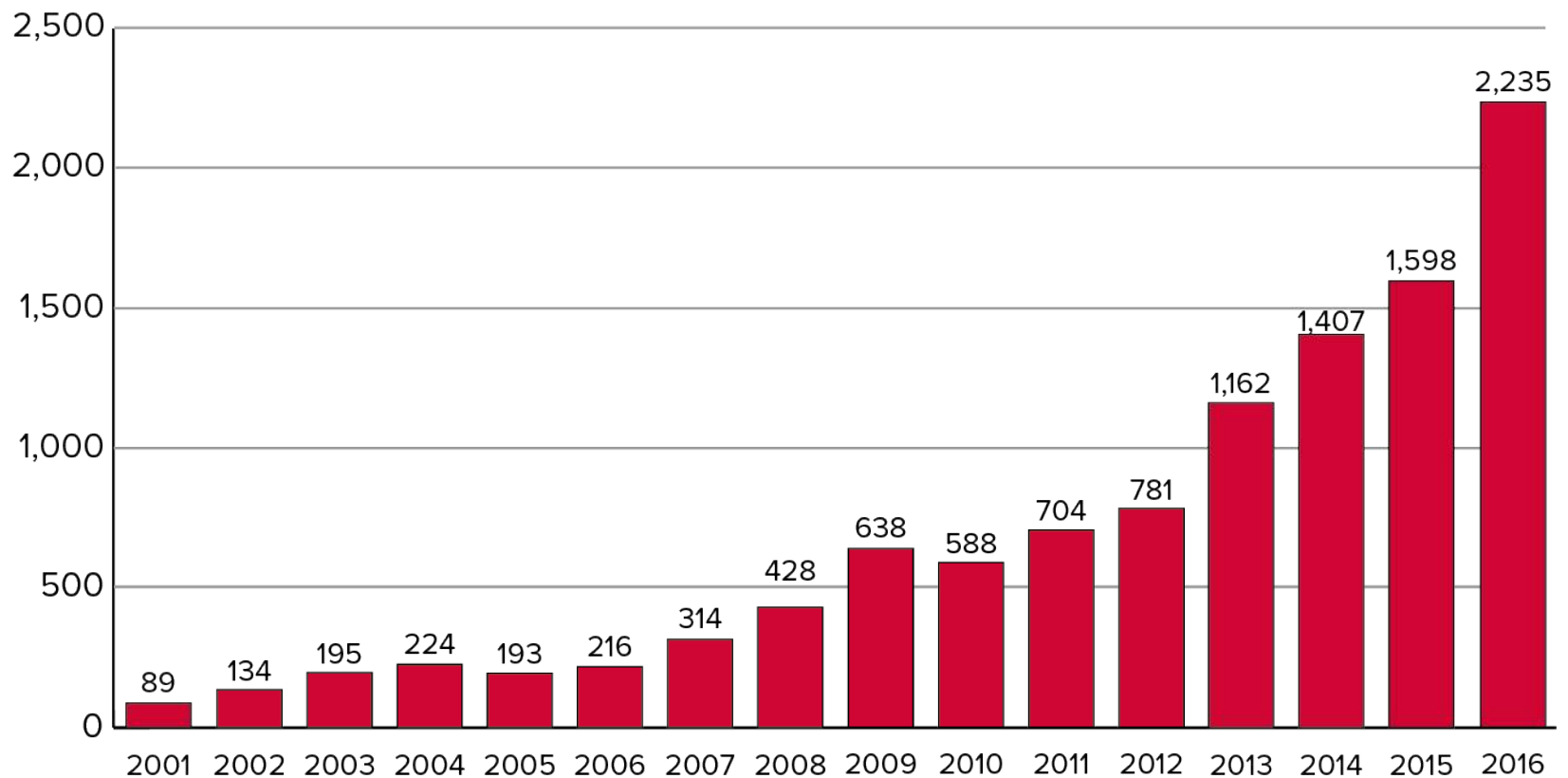
# SAT vs. ACT Trends at Compass



# ACT's Record Growth



# Increase in ACT 36s



# Seniors: Compromised Choices

## “Old SAT”

Was offered for the last time in January 2016

Accelerated timeline has been problematic for some students

Was recommended only for students with high initial scores

## “New SAT”

Practice tests limited and in “beta” form

Preliminary scales are speculative, so accurate comparisons are difficult

March scores delayed until mid-May

## ACT

Deep reserve of practice tests available

Prep materials and offerings are well-established

All test dates available with prompt reporting of scores

# *Juniors/Sophs: Clearer Choices*

  
“Old SAT”

Discontinued as of  
January 20

SAT

Several “live” tests now  
available, and practice  
test library is growing

Scaling is finalized but  
concordance to ACT is  
“synthetic” & confusing

All test dates available w/  
new August date, but  
score reporting is slow

ACT

Deep reserve of practice  
tests available but  
growing stale

Prep curricula and  
methods slightly more  
mature than new SAT

All test dates available  
with prompt reporting  
of scores

“How can you tell them apart?”



# Who Favors the SAT and Why?

- ▲ PSAT/practice test scores clearly stronger than ACT
- ▲ SAT pacing and structure feels more comfortable
- ▲ Dread of ACT Science can't be overcome
- ▲ Will need SAT for National Merit Scholarship
- ▲ Unavoidable conflicts with ACT dates
- ▲ Special accommodations granted by SAT but not ACT
- ▲ Believer in “no stone left unturned” approach

# PSAT Score Interpretation

Your Evidence-Based  
Reading and Writing Score

**510** | 160 to 760

Your Nationally  
Representative **63rd** Sample  
Percentile



**You are on track for college readiness.**

Stay on track and continue your progress. Start now with your free, personalized recommendations waiting for you on [khanacademy.org/sat](https://khanacademy.org/sat).

Your Total Score

**1110** | 320 to 1520

Your Nationally  
Representative **81st** Sample  
Percentile

Keep in mind,  
the PSAT/NMSQT<sup>®</sup>  
and SAT are on  
the same scale.

Your score shows you how you would have scored that day on the SAT<sup>®</sup>. How well you do depends on what you do next!

Your Math Score

**600** | 160 to 760

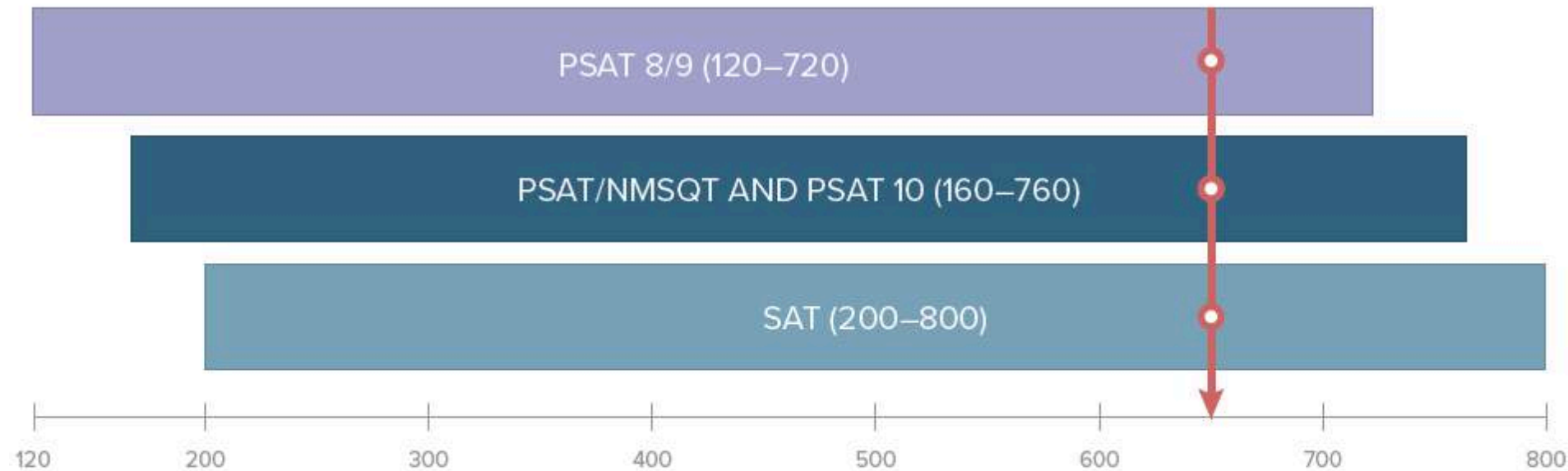
Your Nationally  
Representative **90th** Sample  
Percentile



**You are on track for college readiness.**

Stay on track and continue your progress. Start now with your free, personalized recommendations waiting for you on [khanacademy.org/sat](https://khanacademy.org/sat).

# Vertical Alignment

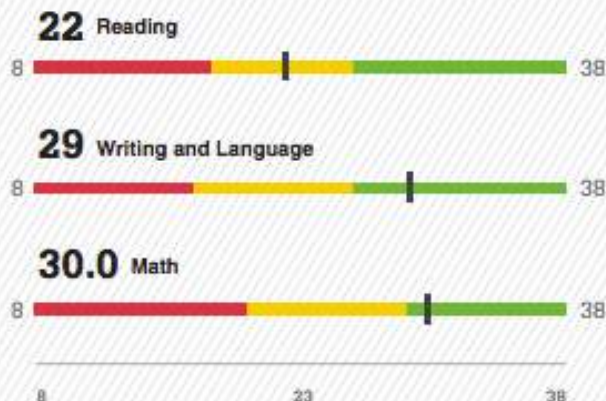


A score of 650 on the PSAT 8/9 would predict that a student would have scored a 650 on the PSAT 10 or the SAT had the student taken those exams at the same time.

See **page 28** of *Compass Guide*

# PSAT Score Interpretation

## Test Scores 8 to 38 range\*



## Cross-Test Scores 8 to 38 range

- 28** Analysis in History/ Social Studies
- 21** Analysis in Science

When you take tests more than once, your scores may differ slightly upon each testing occasion. This expected variation is considered your score range and reflects the range your scores will likely fall in upon retesting. For the PSAT/NMSQT® these ranges are approximately:

Total: Your score  $\pm$  40 points.

Section: Your score  $\pm$  30 points.

Test Scores and Cross-Test Scores: Your score  $\pm$  3 points.

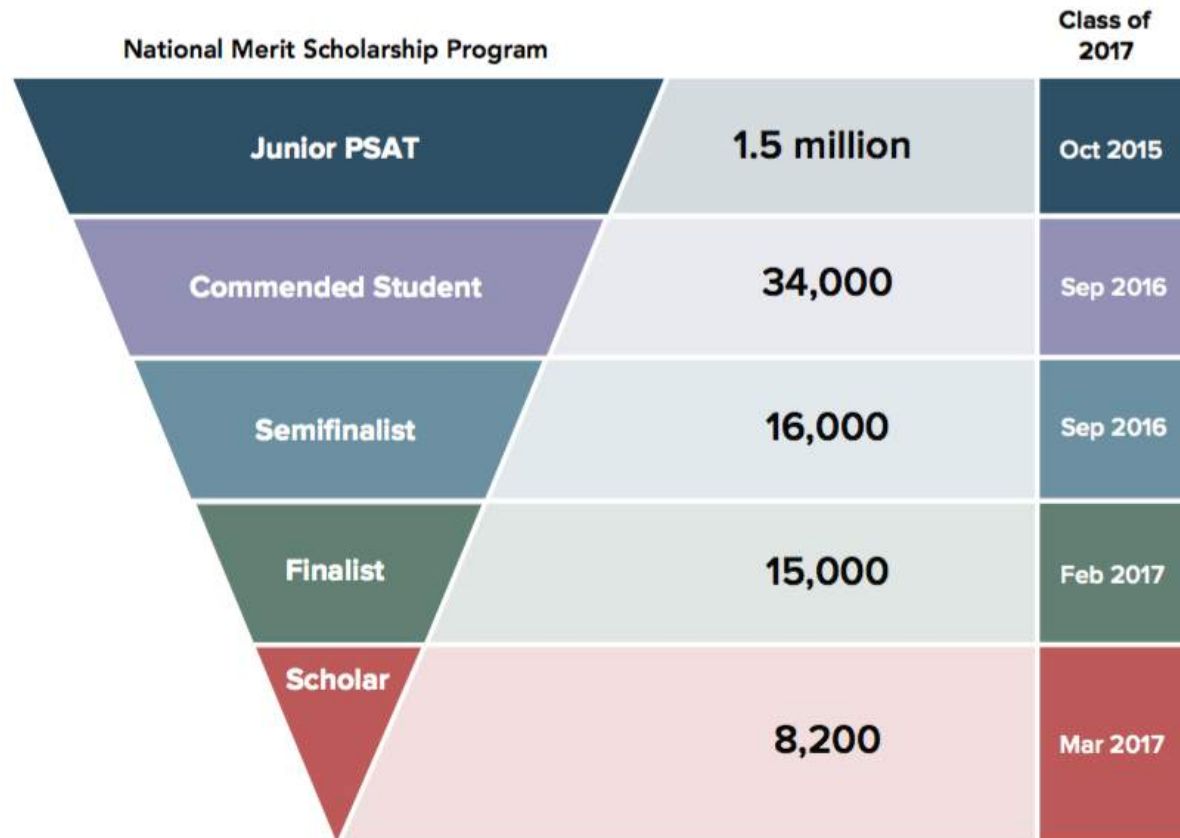
Subscores: Your score  $\pm$  2 points.

Remember that you will receive scores in the same areas when you take the SAT.

## Subscores 1 to 15 range\*



# National Merit Funnel



More information can be found at [nationalmerit.org](http://nationalmerit.org)

See **page 16** of *Compass Guide*

# National Merit Selection Index

Two students receive the same total score: 1450

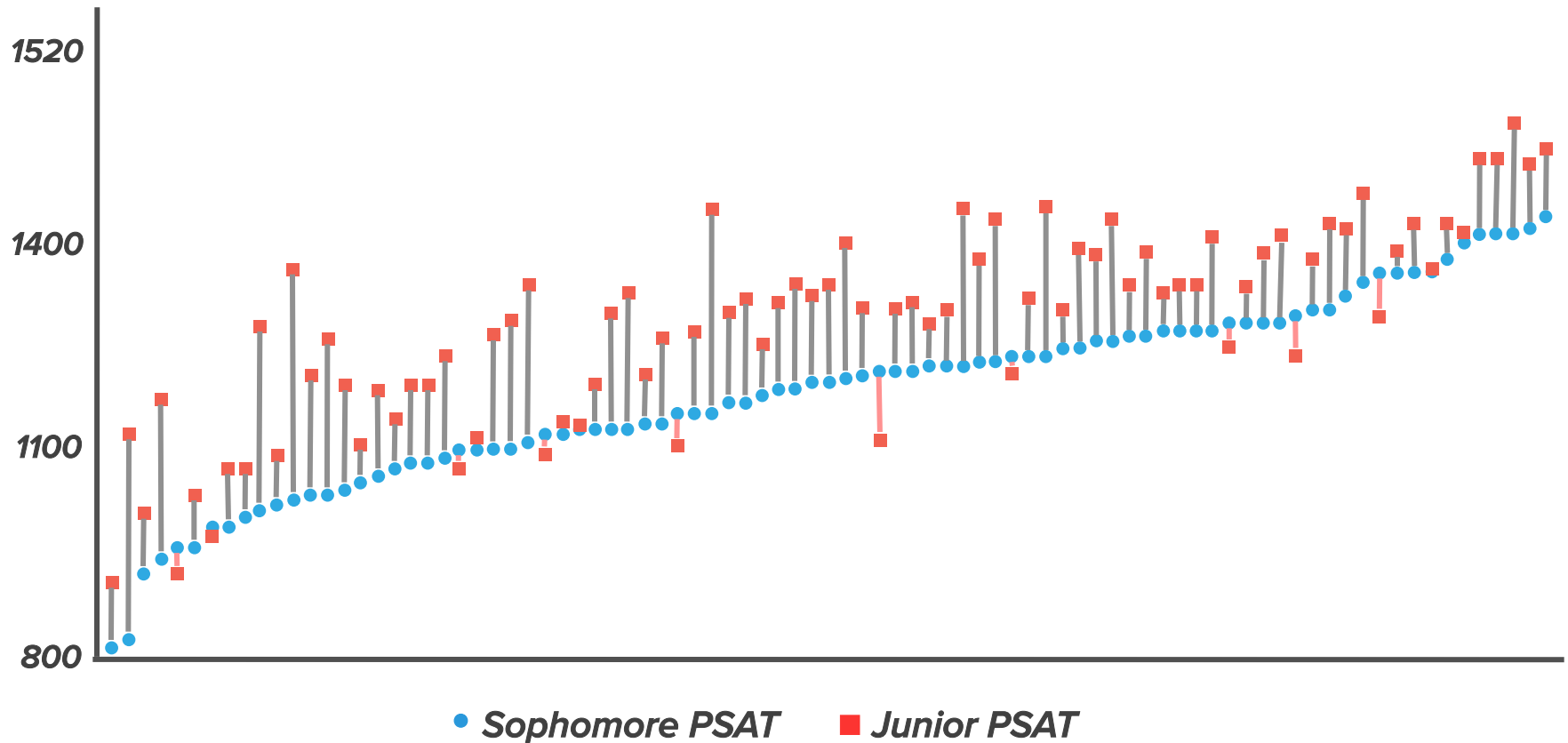
	STUDENT A	STUDENT B
Reading & Writing	740	710
	74	71
Math	+ 710	+ 740
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	Semifinalist in NY 219	216 Commended Scholar

To Quickly Calculate National Merit Selection Index:

1. Drop the zeros.
2. Double Reading & Writing Score.
3. Add together.

# PSAT Results – Sample Class

## *Score Change Sophomore to Junior Year*



# Comparing Test Structure

## New PSAT

4 Sections; 2 Hours and 45 Minutes

Reading 60 min	Writing and Language 35 min	Math without Calculator 25 min	Math with Calculator 45 min
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## New SAT

4 Sections + Essay; 3 Hours and 50 Minutes

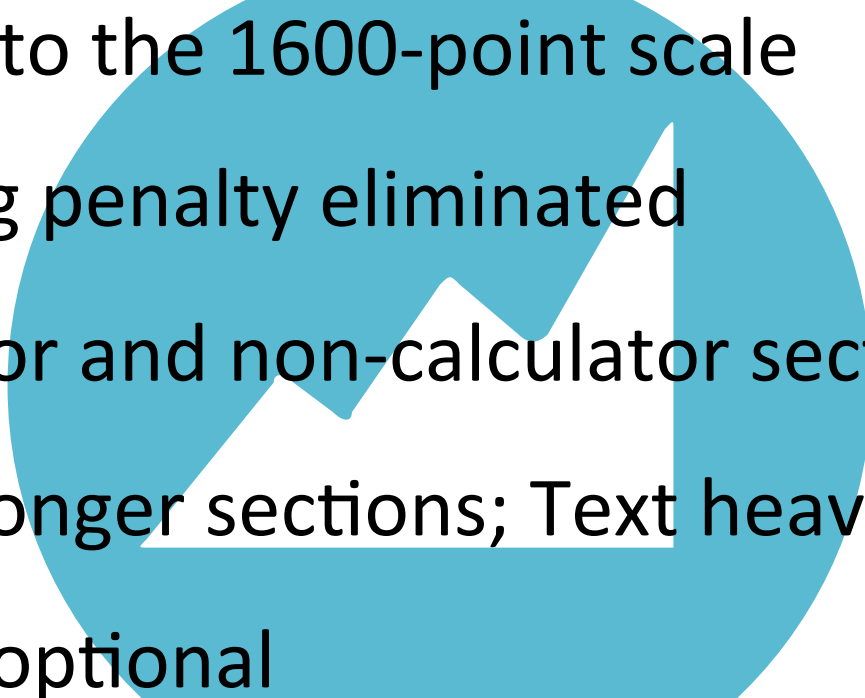
Reading 65 min	Writing and Language 35 min	Math without Calculator 25 min	Math with Calculator 55 min	Optional Essay 50 min
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## ACT

4 Sections + Essay; 3 Hours and 35 Minutes

English 45 min	Math 60 min	Reading 35 min	Science 35 min	Optional Essay 40 min
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# Structural Highlights of New SAT

- 
- ✓ Returns to the 1600-point scale
  - ✓ Guessing penalty eliminated
  - ✓ Calculator and non-calculator sections
  - ✓ Fewer, longer sections; Text heavy
  - ✓ Essay is optional

# New SAT Reading: 2-part questions



## Evidence-Based Responses

- 45 ...But we have not come here to laugh, or to talk of fashions—men's and women's. We are here, on the bridge, to ask ourselves certain questions. **And they are very important questions, and we have very little time in which to answer them.**
- 50 The questions that we have to ask and to answer about that procession during this moment of transition are so important that they may well change the lives of all men and women for ever. **For we have to ask ourselves, here and now, do we wish to join that procession, or don't we? On what terms shall we join that procession? Above all, where is it leading us, the procession of educated men?** The moment is short; it may last five years; ten years, or perhaps only a matter of a few months longer. . . . But, you will object, you have no time to think; you have your battles to fight, your rent to pay, your bazaars to organize. That excuse shall not serve you, Madam.
- 60

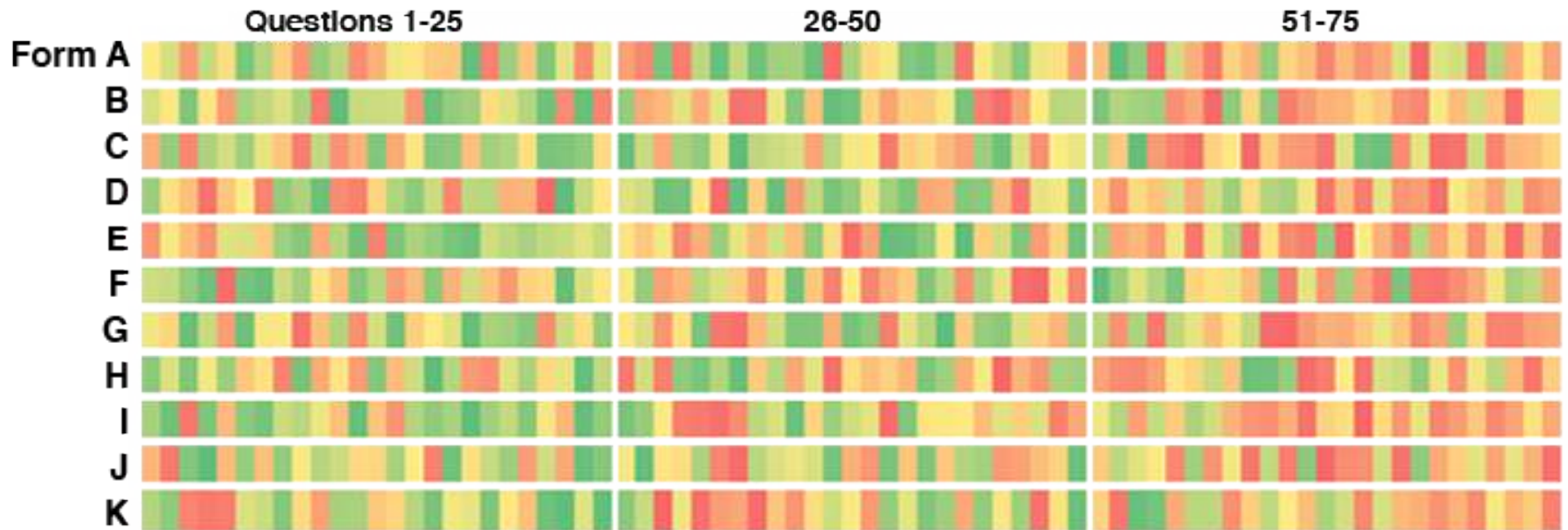
1. Woolf characterizes the questions **in lines 53-57 ("For we . . . men")** as both

- A) controversial and threatening.
- B) weighty and unanswerable.
- ☒ C) momentous and pressing.
- D) provocative and mysterious.

2. Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A) Lines 46-47 ("We . . . questions")
- B) Lines 48-49 ("And . . . them")**
- C) Line 57 ("The moment . . . short")
- D) Line 62 ("That . . . Madam")

# ACT English Difficulty Distribution



Data reflects performance of several thousand ACT takers on 11 different tests.

See **page 43** of *Compass Guide*



# Writing and Language: SAT and/or ACT

## Standard English Conventions

The importance of bees **13** highlights the potentially disastrous affects of an emerging, unexplained crisis: entire colonies of honeybees are dying off without warning.

13

- A) NO CHANGE
- ☒ B) **highlights** the potentially disastrous **effects**
- C) | **highlight** the potentially disastrous **effects**
- D) **highlight** the potentially disastrous **affects**

# SAT vs. ACT Math: Subtle Differences Remain

Pre-Algebra	Old SAT	New SAT	ACT
Number Properties	●	●	●
Venn Diagrams	●	✗	●
Imaginary Numbers	✗	●	●
Sequences	●	✗	●

Algebra	Old SAT	New SAT	ACT
Inequalities	●	●	●
Quadratics	●	●	●
Zeros	●	●	●
Variation	●	✗	●

Geometry	Old SAT	New SAT	ACT
Similar Triangles	●	●	●
Perimeter	●	●	●
Visualization	●	✗	●
Trigonometry	✗	●	●

Data Analysis	Old SAT	New SAT	ACT
Two-way Tables	●	●	✗
Scatterplots	●	●	●
Data Graphics	●	●	●
Sampling	✗	●	✗

See **pages 46-47** of Compass Guide

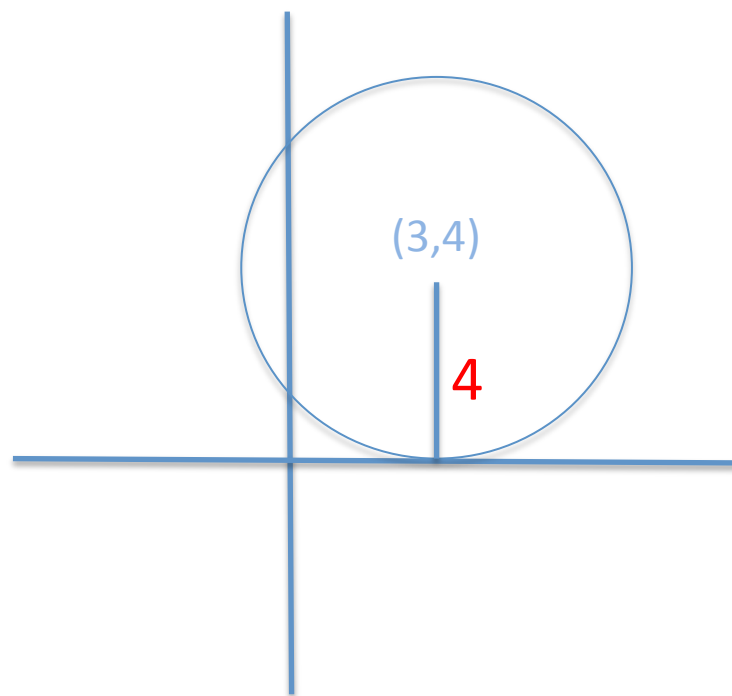
# ACT & New SAT Math: “Achievement”

$$(x - h)^2 + (y - k)^2 = r^2$$

Center:  $(h, k)$

Which of the following is an equation of a circle with its center at  $(3, 4)$  and tangent to the  $x$ -axis in the standard  $(x, y)$  coordinate plane?

- ☒ A.  $(x - 3)^2 + (y - 4)^2 = 16$
- B.  $(x - 4)^2 + (y - 3)^2 = 16$
- ☒ C.  $(x - 4)^2 + (y - 3)^2 = 9$
- ☒ D.  $(x - 3)^2 + (y - 4)^2 = 9$
- E.  $(x + 4)^2 + (y + 3)^2 = 16$





## Sample Question: Math

### Heart of Algebra

If  $\frac{1}{2}x + \frac{1}{3}y = 4$ , what is the value of  $3x + 2y$ ?

Clue: focus on what the question asks for,  
NOT on solving for  $x$  and  $y$ .

$$6\left(\frac{1}{2}x + \frac{1}{3}y\right) = (4)6$$

$$3x + 2y = 24$$

Answer: 24

# ACT Math: Structure & Pacing

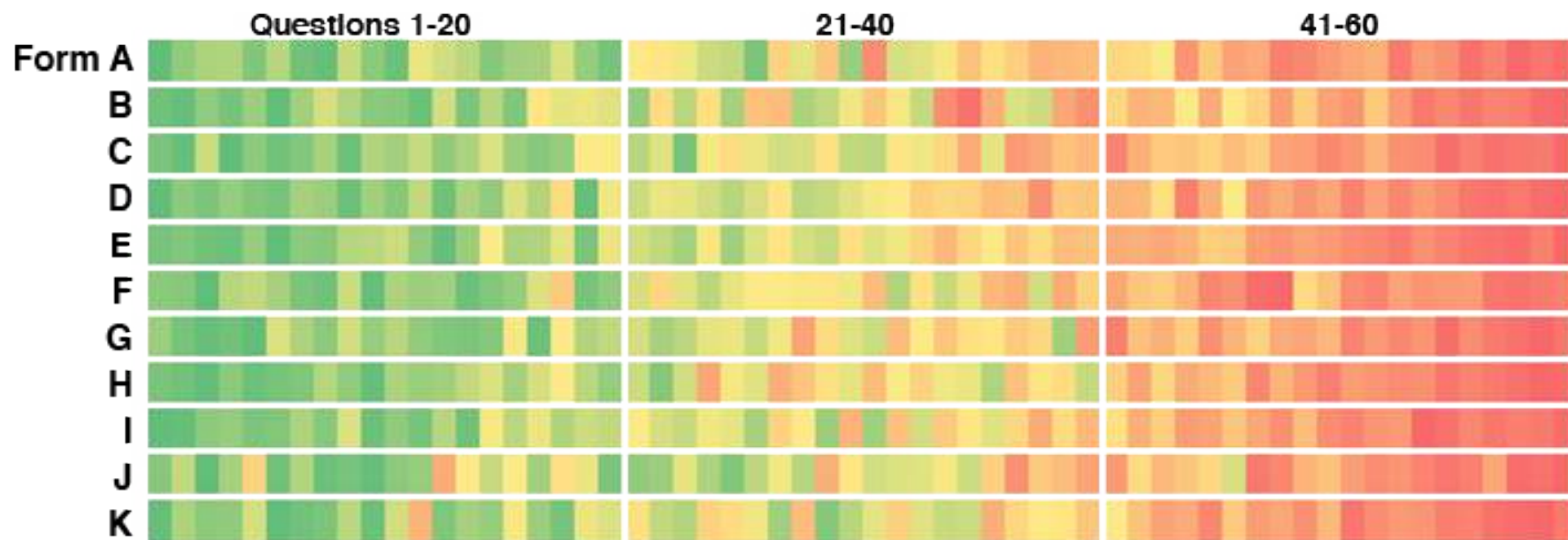
## Structure:

- 60 questions in 60 minutes
- Content breakdown
  - 23% Pre-Algebra
  - 17% Elementary Algebra
  - 15% Intermediate Algebra
  - 15% Coordinate Geometry
  - 23% Plane Geometry
  - 7% Trigonometry

## Pacing Concerns:

- Average 1 minute per question\*
- Difficulty escalates steadily throughout
- Problems at the end are much harder but worth same points
- Rushing and cherry-picking can be dangerous

# ACT Math: Difficulty Distribution

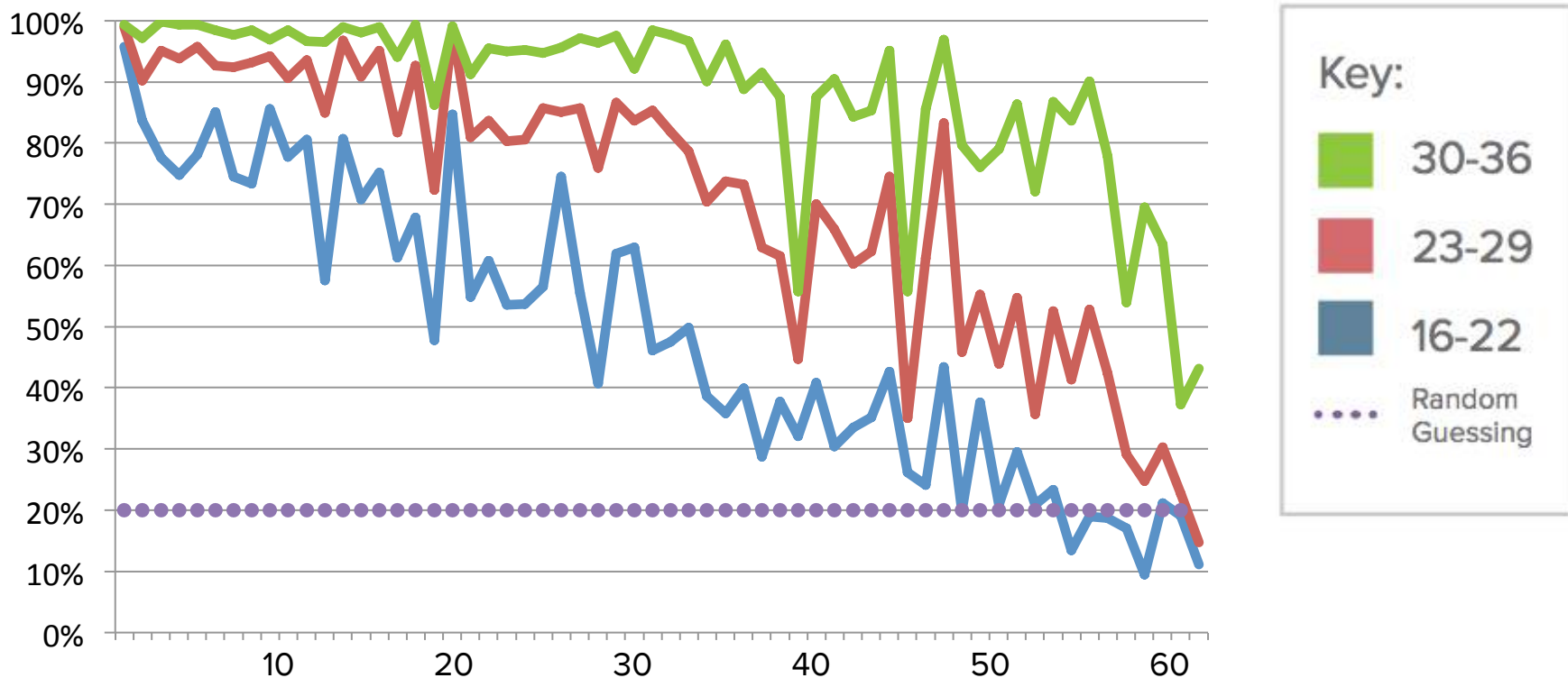


Data reflects performance of several thousand first-time ACT takers on eleven different tests.

See Compass Guide **page 45**

# ACT Math: Where to Invest Effort

**Percentage of Possible Points  
(By Student Score Range)**



# ACT Science: Structure & Pacing

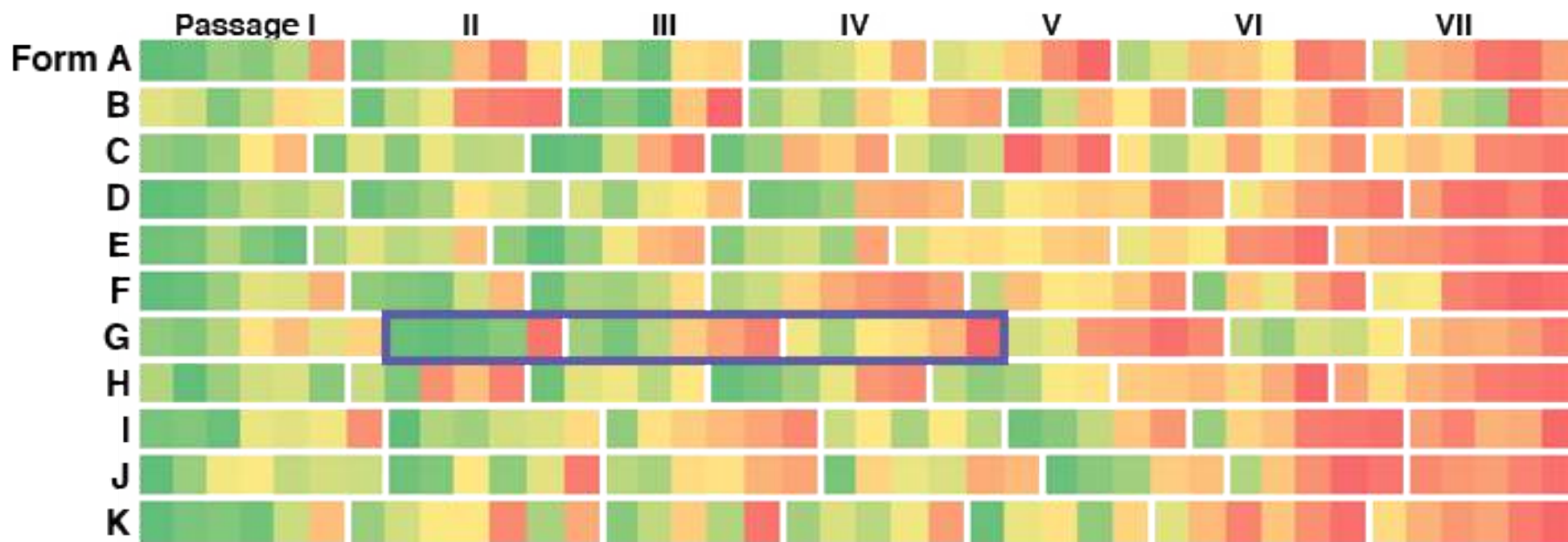
## Structure:

- 40 questions in 35 minutes
- 6-7 passages
- 5-8 questions per passage
- 3 passage types
  - Data Representation
  - Research Summaries
  - Conflicting Viewpoints

## Pacing Concerns:

- Average 5-6 minutes per passage\*
- Difficulty escalates within passages and from earlier to later passages
- Time management can be very tricky
- Cherry-picking can be effective if done correctly

# ACT Science: Difficulty Distribution



Data reflects performance of several thousand first-time ACT takers on eleven different tests.

See **page 47** of *Compass Guide*

# ACT Science Example

A *bomb calorimeter* is used to determine the amount of heat released when a substance is burned in oxygen (Figure 1). The heat, measured in kilojoules (kJ), is calculated from the change in temperature of the water in the bomb calorimeter. Table 1 shows the amounts of heat released when different foods were burned in a bomb calorimeter. Table 2 shows the amounts of heat released when different amounts of sucrose (table sugar) were burned. Table 3 shows the amounts of heat released when various chemical compounds were burned.

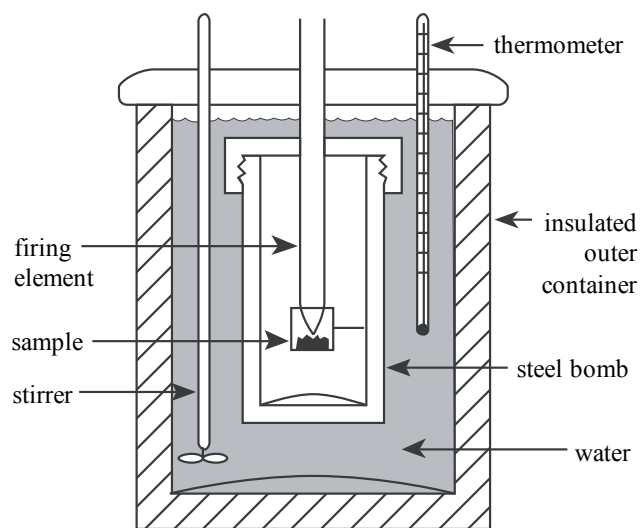


Figure 1

Table 1			
Food	Mass (g)	Change in water temperature (°C)	Heat released (kJ)
Bread	1.0	8.3	10.0
Cheese	1.0	14.1	17.0
Egg	1.0	5.6	6.7
Potato	1.0	2.7	3.2

Table 2	
Amount of sucrose (g)	Heat released (kJ)
0.1	1.6
0.5	8.0
1.0	16.0
2.0	32.1
4.0	64.0

Table 3			
Chemical compound	Molecular formula	Mass (g)	Heat released (kJ)
Methanol	CH <sub>3</sub> OH	0.5	11.4
Ethanol	C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>5</sub> OH	0.5	14.9
Benzene	C <sub>6</sub> H <sub>6</sub>	0.5	21.0
Octane	C <sub>8</sub> H <sub>18</sub>	0.5	23.9

# ACT Science Example

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Octane	C <sub>8</sub> H <sub>18</sub>	0.5	23.9

# ACT Science Example

Based on the data in Table 2, one can conclude that when the mass of sucrose is decreased by one-half, the amount of heat released when it is burned in a bomb calorimeter will:

- A. increase by one-half.
- ☒ B. decrease by one-half.
- C. increase by one-fourth.
- D. decrease by one-fourth.

Table 2	
Amount of sucrose (g)	Heat released (kJ)
0.1	1.6
0.5	8.0
1.0	16.0
2.0	32.1
4.0	64.0

# What Do Test Scores Reflect?

*Content  
Knowledge*

*Command of  
Strategies*

*Optimal Time  
Management*

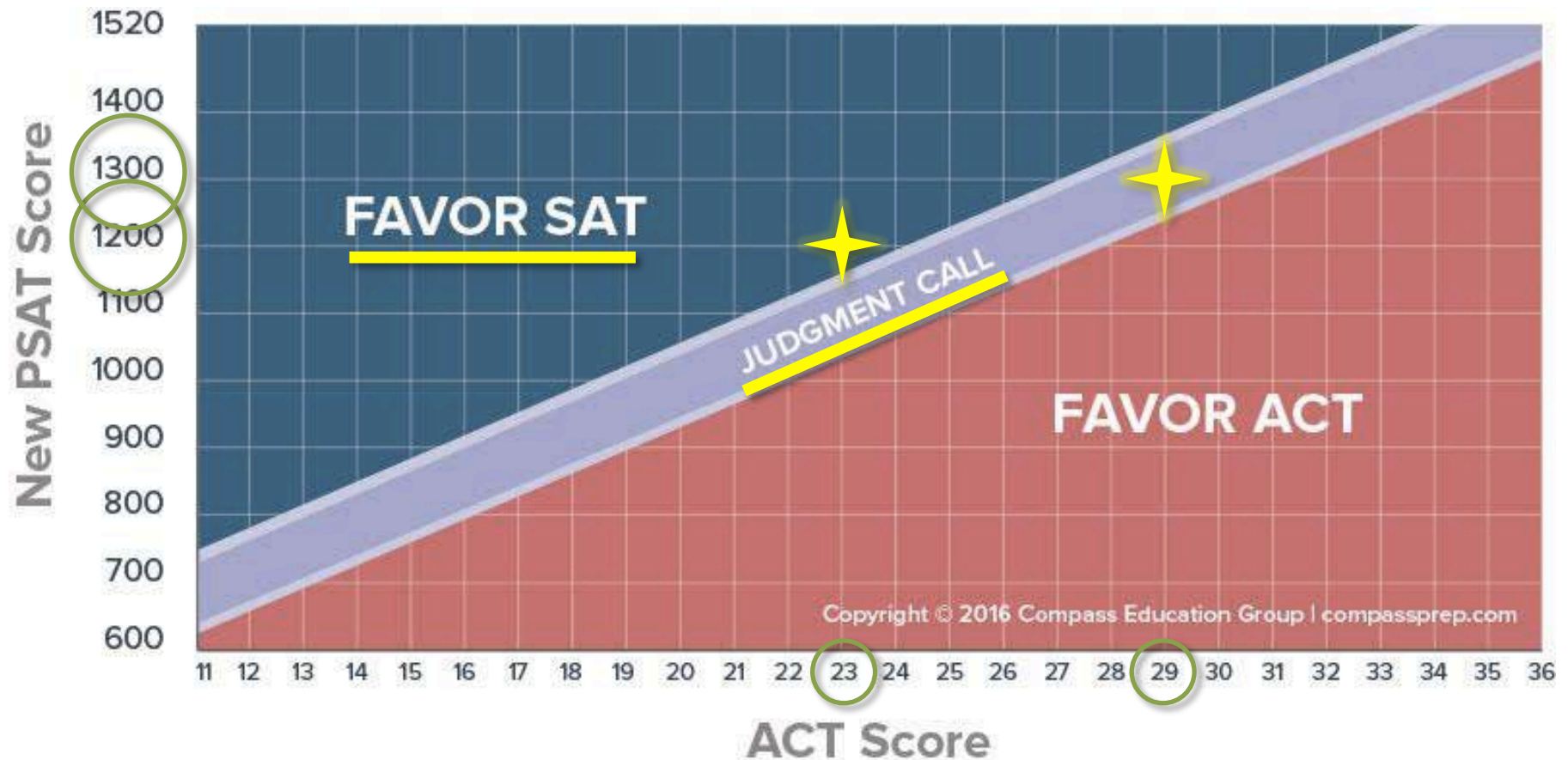
*Emotional  
Control*

# Concordance: New SAT to ACT

New SAT EBRW + M	ACT Composite
1600	36
1570	35
1540	34
1500	33
1470	32
1430	31
1400	30
1360	29
1320	28
1290	27
1260	26
1220	25
1180	24
1140	23

*Favor ACT*

# P/SAT vs ACT Comparison



# SAT and/or ACT Essay: Required?

## Yes, Still Will

Caltech  
Claremont McKenna  
Dartmouth  
Duke  
Harvard  
Michigan  
Princeton  
Stanford  
UC's  
Yale

## No, Not Anymore

Columbia  
Cornell  
Johns Hopkins  
MIT  
Northwestern  
NYU  
Penn  
Swarthmore  
Tufts  
USC

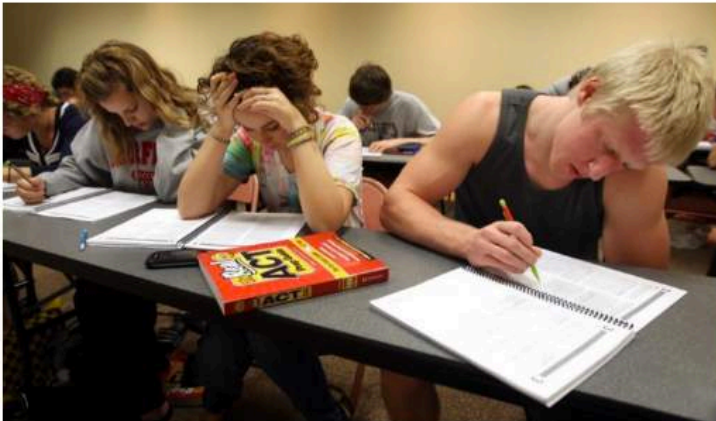
# ACT Essay: Comparing Old to New

## The Washington Post

Grade Point

**ACT essay scores are inexplicably low, causing uproar among college-bound students**

By Nick Anderson February 12



”

*“Counselors across the country are complaining that many of their top students, who routinely earn marks higher than 30 on other parts of the ACT, are getting writing scores in the low-to-mid 20s.”*

*“One Rhode Island student took the ACT in September, getting a 19 on the writing section and 30’s on the rest of the test... the student asked for a re-score and was rewarded with a huge bump, to 31.”*

# ACT Essay Scoring Internal Problems

## ➤ *ACT statement:*

*“Initial differences in the percent of exact agreement between raters is evident for the first two administrations of the new writing test, but this has been offset by the increase in adjacent agreement. **Again, as raters become more familiar and experienced in scoring with the new domain based rubrics, these issues will be mitigated.**”*

...aka, ‘our bad.’



# New ACT Essay

## (Debuted September 2015)

### *Issue: Privacy*

**Technology is changing our ideas about privacy.** Our social media posts help us connect to friends, families, and people across the globe, but they also supply a steady stream of information to advertisers and, potentially, to governments, employers, and law enforcement agencies. Smartphone apps track our locations, buying habits, and Internet searches; that data can be both used to improve services and sold to companies to better target marketing. We're increasingly willing to share our opinions, images, and relationships online and to turn to the Internet to run searches on others. **As sharing our lives with a global audience increasingly becomes the norm, it's important to consider how our connected lifestyle is changing the value we place upon privacy.**

#### Perspective One

Social media and smartphone apps help us navigate the world and our relationships with greater knowledge and insight. The only people who should be worried about losing privacy are those who have something to hide.

#### Perspective Two

When we lose our sense of private lives, we lose part of ourselves. Being on public display hinders introspection and a sense of our independent identities. When nothing is private, nothing is personal.

#### Perspective Three

Our desire for privacy is often rooted in embarrassment about common human issues like illness. Letting go of old ideas about privacy would break down barriers and help create a more open and empathetic society.

## Features

- ✓ 40 minutes
- ✓ Optional\*
- ✓ Based on a contemporary social issue
- ✓ Emphasis on **analysis of ideas**
- ✓ Students instructed to analyze and evaluate perspective, provide their own, and discuss relationships among the perspectives
- ✓ **Scored in 4 areas:** *Ideas and Analysis; Development and Support; Organization; and Language Use*
- ✓ **2 readers** assign scores of **1-6** in each domain; all four domains are **averaged** to create a composite Essay score: **1-12**

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### Scoring Trends

- ✓ **On average, students score a composite of 6, 7, or 8.**
- ✓ Test has incredibly **LOW reliability**
- ✓ **Less than .6% of essays receive a perfect score**
- ✓ **Retest?** Most students should **not retake** the ACT simply for an improved Essay score

# ACT Essay: Comparing Old to New

Old Essay	New Essay
2	1
3	7
4	10
5	12
6	16
7	19
8	23
9	30
10	32
11	34
12	36

## *Considerations*

- 1-36 scale exaggerated differences in essay quality
  - Old 7-9 was comparable to new 19-30
- Essay still has low *reliability*
- Standard Error of Measurement (SEM) is **4**
  - Thus the average score of 20 meant that student had a 2/3 chance of falling between 16 and 24 (27<sup>th</sup>-88<sup>th</sup> percentile!)

# SAT Essay

## (Debuted March 2016)

As you read the passage below, consider how **Paul Bogard** uses:

- evidence, such as facts or examples, to support claims
- reasoning to develop ideas to connect claims and evidence
- stylistic or persuasive elements, such as word choice or appeals to emotion, to add power to the ideas expressed

[650-750 word Source Text]

### Assignment:

Write an essay in which you explain how **Paul Bogard** builds an argument to persuade **his** audience that **natural darkness should be preserved**. In your essay, analyze how **Bogard** uses one or more of the features listed in the box above (or features of your own choice) to strengthen the logic and persuasiveness of his argument. Be sure that your analysis focuses on the most relevant features of the passage.

Your essay should not explain whether you agree with **Bogard's** claims, but rather explain how **Bogard** builds an argument to persuade his audience.

### Features

- ✓ 50 minutes
- ✓ Optional\*
- ✓ Based on a high-quality, previously published essay and prompt
- ✓ Emphasis on rhetorical analysis
- ✓ Students instructed to avoid including personal opinion
- ✓ **Scored in 3 areas:** Reading, Analysis, and Writing; 2 readers give score of **1-4**

# SAT Essay

## (Debuted March 2016)

As you read the passage below, consider how **Paul Bogard** uses:

- evidence, such as facts or examples, to support claims
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- stylistic or persuasive elements, such as word choice or appeals to emotion, to add power to the ideas expressed

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### Assignment:

Write an essay in which you explain how **Paul Bogard** builds an argument to persuade **his** audience that **natural darkness should be preserved**. In your essay, analyze how **Bogard** uses one or more of the features listed in the box above (or features of your own choice) to strengthen the logic and persuasiveness of his argument. Be sure that your analysis focuses on the most relevant features of the passage.

Your essay should not explain whether you agree with **Bogard's** claims, but rather explain how **Bogard** builds an argument to persuade his audience.

### Scoring Trends

- ✓ Scores are totaled and kept separate:
  - ✓ **Reading: 6 (3 + 3)**
  - ✓ **Analysis: 5 (3 + 2)**
  - ✓ **Writing: 6 (3 + 3)**
- ✓ **Average: 5, 4, 5**
  - ✓ 90% of students score a 4-6 in each area
  - ✓ Analysis scores tend to be more conservative
- ✓ **Retest?** Strong test-takers **who score 2 points below national avg.** in each area should consider retesting

# 2006: 44 COLLEGES REQUIRE THE SAT SUBJECT TESTS

AMHERST	COLUMBIA	HAVERFORD	UC DAVIS	UVA
BARNARD	CONNECTICUT COLLEGE	HOLY CROSS	UC IRVINE	VASSAR
BOSTON COLLEGE	CORNELL	MIT	UCLA	WASHINGTON & LEE
BOSTON UNIVERSITY	DARTMOUTH	POMONA	UC MERCED	WELLESLEY
BRANDEIS	DUKE	PRINCETON	UC RIVERSIDE	WESLEYAN
BROWN	FRANKLIN OLIN	RICE	UC SAN DIEGO	WILLIAMS
BRYN MAWR	GEORGETOWN	SWARTHMORE	UC SANTA BARBARA	WPI
CALTECH	HARVARD	TULANE	UC SANTA CRUZ	YALE
CARNEGIE MELLON	HARVEY MUDD	UC BERKELEY	UPENN	

# 2016: 5 COLLEGES REQUIRE THE SAT SUBJECT TESTS

	CORNELL	MIT		
CALTECH				
CARNEGIE MELLON	HARVEY MUDD			

# Schools that Require, “Recommend” or “Consider” Subject Tests

Amherst	Emory	Pomona	Olin
Babson	Franklin Olin	Occidental	Pomona
Barnard	George Washington	Pomona	Tufts
Bates	Georgetown	Pratt Institute	Union
Boston College	Hamilton	Princeton	U of Delaware
Boston University	Harvard	Reed	U of Georgia
Bowdoin	Haverford	Rice	UNC
Brandeis	Holy Cross	RPI	U of Rochester
Brown	Ithaca	Scripps	UPenn
Bryn Mawr	Johns Hopkins	Smith	USC
Bucknell	Kenyon	Stanford	UVA
Carleton	Lafayette	Stevens Institute	Vanderbilt
Case Western	Macalester	Swarthmore	Vassar
Claremont McKenna	Miami (FL)	Tulane	Wake Forest
Colby	Michigan	UC Berkeley	Washington & Lee
Colorado College	Middlebury	UC Irvine	Wash U St. Louis
Columbia	Mills	UCLA	Wellesley
Connecticut College	Northwestern	UC Riverside	Wesleyan
Cooper Union	Notre Dame	UC San Diego	William & Mary
Dartmouth	NYU	UC Santa Barbara	Williams
Davidson	Oberlin	UC Santa Cruz	WPI
Duke	Olin	Oberlin	Yale

# Subject Tests: Status Quo

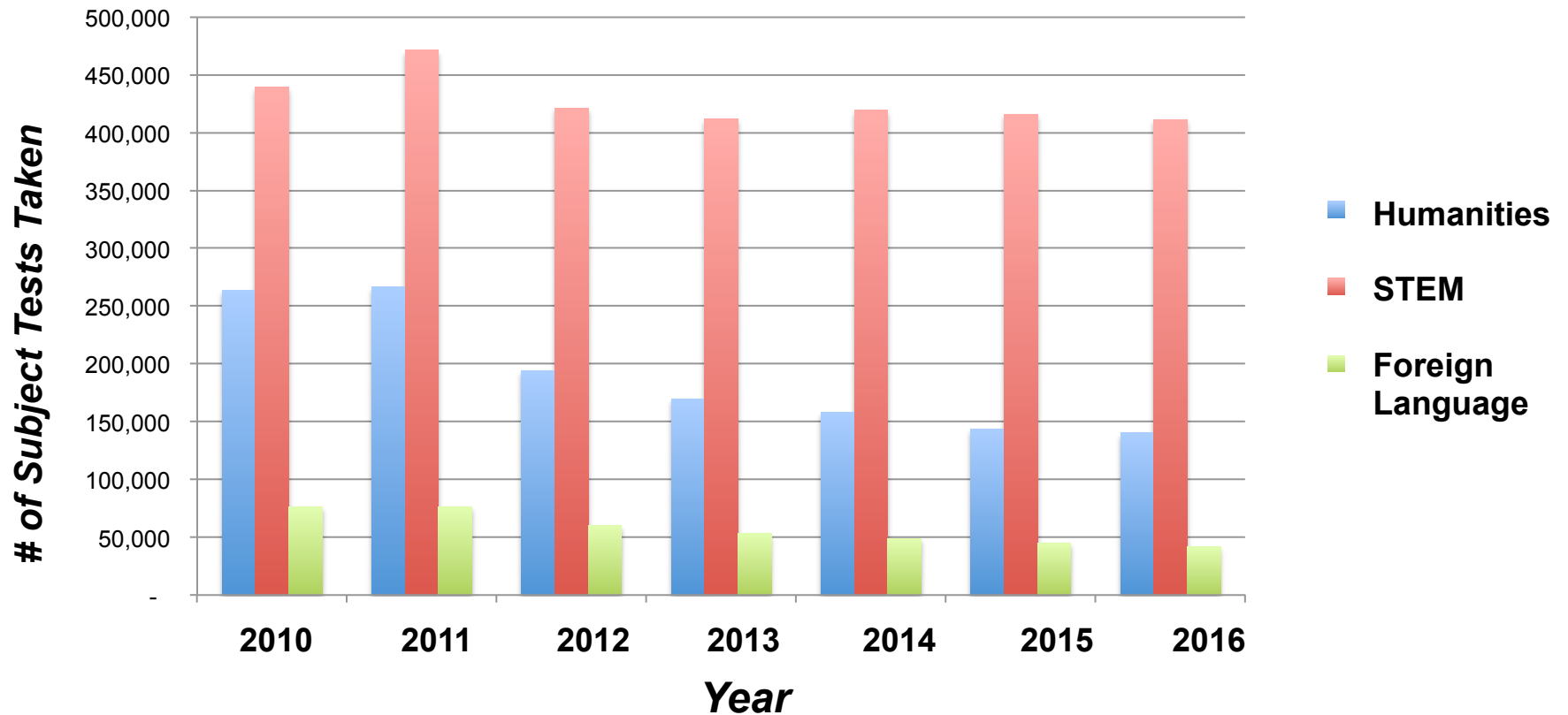
- ▲ No recent Redesign
- ▲ 200-800 scale; 1 hour per test (up to 3 in one day)
- ▲ **“Guessing Penalty”** is still in effect
- ▲ “Softer” scale but “Tougher” testing pool
- ▲ Cannot take SAT and Subject Tests on same date
- ▲ [www.subject-tests.com](http://www.subject-tests.com) (Policies by college)



# Subject Tests: Options

- ▲ Literature
- ▲ U.S. History or World History
- ▲ Math Level 2 or Math Level 1
- ▲ Biology (E/M), Chemistry, and Physics
- ▲ French, Chinese, German, Spanish, Modern Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Latin

# Subject Test Trends: 2010-2016



# What's a Good Subject Test Score?

## ***Rule #1: Ignore Percentiles***

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**70K** students take the US History ST

**1.9 MILLION** students take the ACT

**1.7 MILLION** students take the SAT

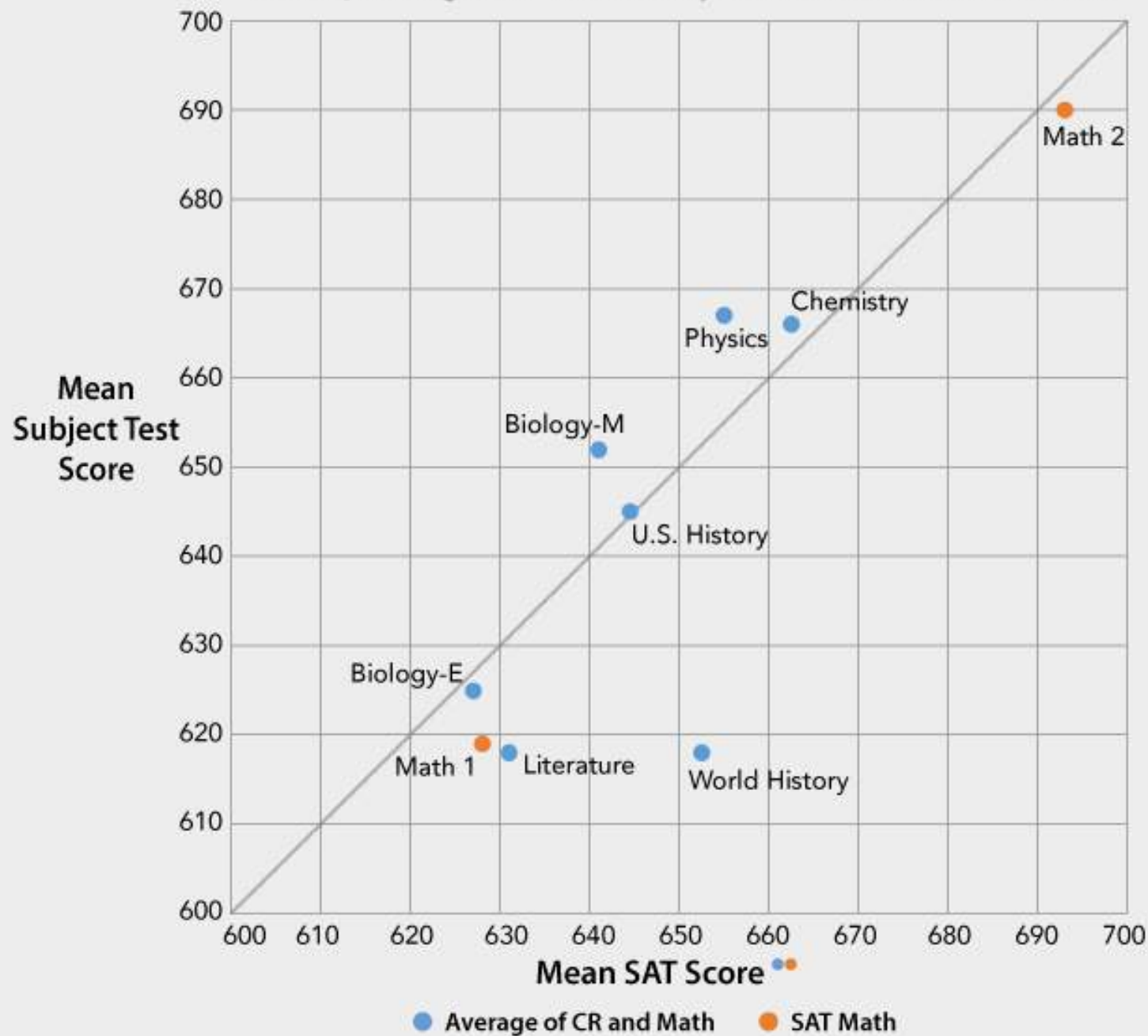
Differences in size and composition of testing populations make percentiles *incomparable*.

## ***Rule #2: Compare Means***

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*SAT scores of test takers help explain why the average (mean) scores of some Subject Tests are much higher than others.*

## Comparing SAT and Subject Test Scores (2015)



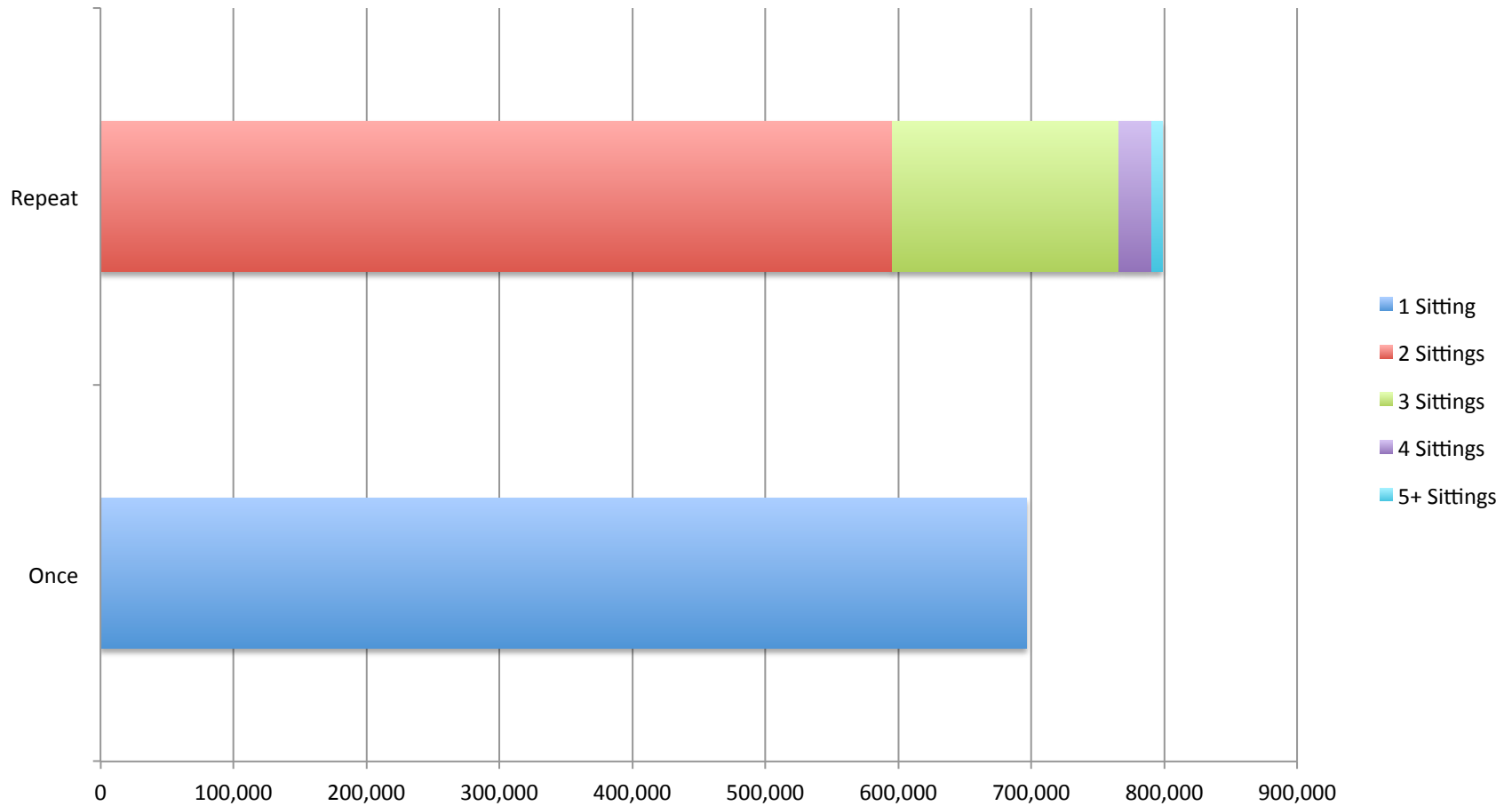
# Super-scoring

April ACT	
English	26
Math	27
Reading	27
Science	23
Composite	26

September ACT	
English	29
Math	25
Reading	24
Science	27
Composite	26

Super-scored ACT	
English	29
Math	27
Reading	27
Science	27
Composite	28

# Repeat Testing





# Score Choice: Procedures

## ▲ SAT

- Student selects which dates to send but cannot send sub-scores only
- Most colleges (especially privates) combine sub-scores from multiple settings into a “super-score”

## ▲ ACT

- Same as SAT, except that fewer colleges officially super-score

## ▲ Subject Tests

- Student selects which individual scores to send, even within test dates

# Score Choice: Policies

Score Choice Restricted	Score Choice Allowed
Yale*	Williams
UCLA*	Wesleyan
UC San Diego*	Wellesley
UC Berkeley*	University of Chicago
Syracuse	Princeton
Stanford	Northwestern
Scripps*	MIT
Rice*	Harvard
Harvey Mudd	Duke
Georgetown	Dartmouth
Cornell*	Brown
Barnard*	Amherst

# 3 Common Timelines for Testing and Preparation

## EARLY      TRADITIONAL      DEFERRED

Maximum use of summer  
before 11<sup>th</sup> grade

May be seeking National  
Merit recognition

Aiming to finish all  
testing by end of  
junior year

Practice in summer before  
11<sup>th</sup> grade is modest

PSAT relevant only as  
a benchmark

Testing peaks in late  
spring of 11<sup>th</sup> grade  
or fall of 12<sup>th</sup> grade

Little concern with testing  
during fall of 11<sup>th</sup> grade

Pushes most practice  
to summer after 11<sup>th</sup> grade

Typically peaks in  
fall of 12<sup>th</sup> grade

# Typical Testing Windows

SAT: < 900  
ACT: < 17 *1 in 3 juniors*

SAT: 900 - 1200  
ACT: 17 - 25 *1 in 2 juniors*

SAT: > 1200  
ACT: > 25 *1 in 6 juniors*



***June of 10<sup>th</sup> Grade***

# Typical Testing Windows

SAT: < 900  
ACT: < 17 *1 in 3 juniors*

SAT: 900 - 1200  
ACT: 17 - 25 *1 in 2 juniors*

SAT: > 1200  
ACT: > 25 *1 in 6 juniors*

***June of 10<sup>th</sup> Grade***

February/March  
11<sup>th</sup> grade



October  
12<sup>th</sup> grade

Test	Begin Prep	First Sitting	Second Sitting
SAT	Late Summer or Fall	March May/June	August October
ACT		February/April June	September October

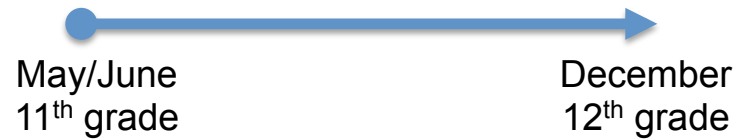
# Typical Testing Windows

**SAT: < 900**  
**ACT: < 17** *1 in 3 juniors*

**SAT: 900 - 1200**  
**ACT: 17 - 25** *1 in 2 juniors*

**SAT: > 1200**  
**ACT: > 25** *1 in 6 juniors*

***June of 10<sup>th</sup> Grade***



Test	Begin Prep	First Sitting	Second Sitting
SAT	Summer or Fall + Winter or Spring Refresher	May June	August/October November
ACT		April June	September/October December

# Typical Testing Windows

SAT: < 900  
ACT: < 17 *1 in 3 juniors*

SAT: 900 - 1200  
ACT: 17 - 25 *1 in 2 juniors*

SAT: > 1200  
ACT: > 25 *1 in 6 juniors*

***June of 10<sup>th</sup> Grade***

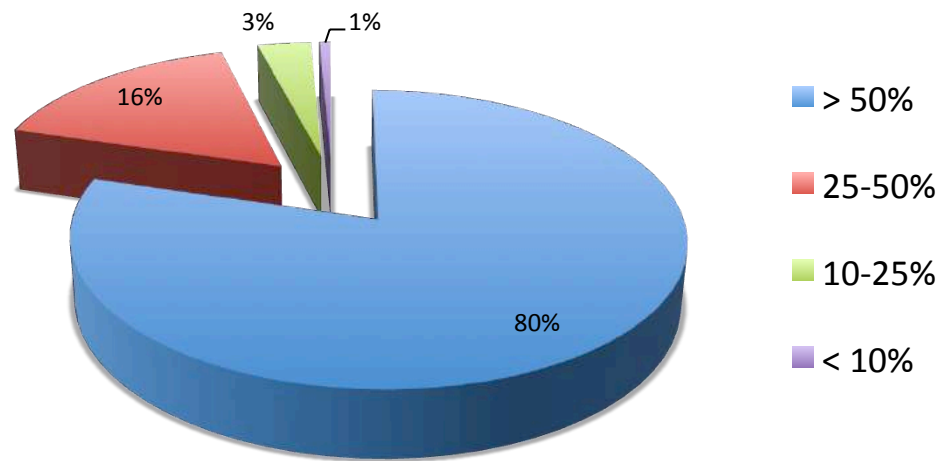
November  
11<sup>th</sup> grade

June  
11<sup>th</sup> grade

Test	Begin Prep	First Sitting	Second Sitting
SAT	Summer or Early Fall	November December	March May/June
ACT		December February	April June

# Selectivity: A Two-Way Street

## Enrollment by Admission Rate



- **Admit Rate: ~ 70%**
- **Yield: ~ 33%**

*Stanford (<5%) denied 70% of applicants with **perfect test scores***

# Individual Support



## How we can help:

- Monthly email newsletter
- Proctored practice tests
- Evaluation by Director
- Private tutoring
  - Via the internet, anywhere in the world
  - In-person at your home in Southern & Northern CA

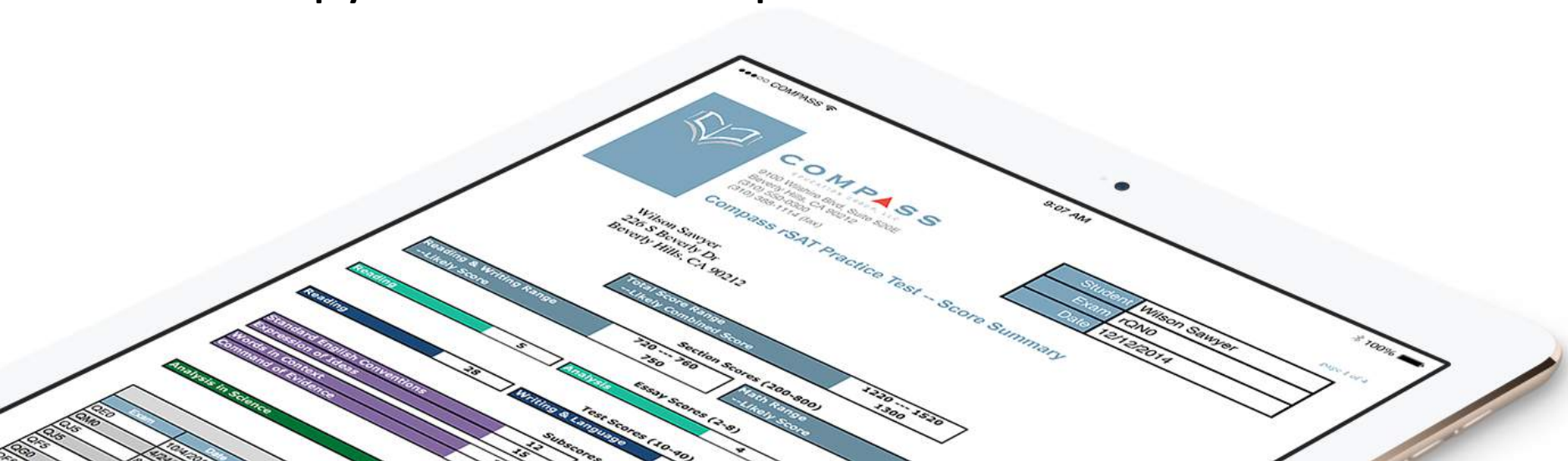
## How to connect with us:

- Fill out follow-up card
- Email [info@compassprep.com](mailto:info@compassprep.com)
- Visit [compassprep.com](http://compassprep.com)
- Call us:
  - (800) 685-6986 National
  - (800) 925-1250 SoCal
  - (800) 620-6250 NorCal

# Practice Tests

- Compass offers diagnostic testing as a complimentary service, either via live proctoring or self-guided
- Sessions with live proctoring offered every weekend
- Consultation to discuss results is optional

- See inside back cover of Guide for details
- Fill out reply card and we'll follow-up with access to the schedule



# Q&A

