



Knowledge Skills Behaviors Awareness

# Prepare for the PSAT/NMSQT®: A Step to the Future

PSAT/NMSQT®

# A Brief Overview of the Presentation

- What is the PSAT/NMSQT?
- Skills Tested on the PSAT/NMSQT
- Sample PSAT/NMSQT Questions
- Test Preparation Strategies





Knowledge Skills Behaviors Awareness

# What is the PSAT/NMSQT?

PSAT/NMSQT®

# What is the PSAT/NMSQT®?

- Measures academic skills you'll need for college
- Co-sponsored by the College Board and National Merit Scholarship Corporation
- Serves as an entry point to National Merit Scholarship Corporation competitions and practice for the SAT
- Approximately 3.5 million students participate each year (44% eleventh-graders and 56% tenth-graders or younger)

# Benefits of the PSAT/NMSQT®

- Preparation for the SAT®
- Scholarship and recognition opportunities (11<sup>th</sup> grade)
- College and career planning tools
- Admissions and financial aid information from colleges
- Feedback on academic skills

# What Skills are Tested on the PSAT/NMSQT?

The test assesses the academic skills that you've developed over the years, primarily through your course work.

These skills are considered essential for success in high school and college:

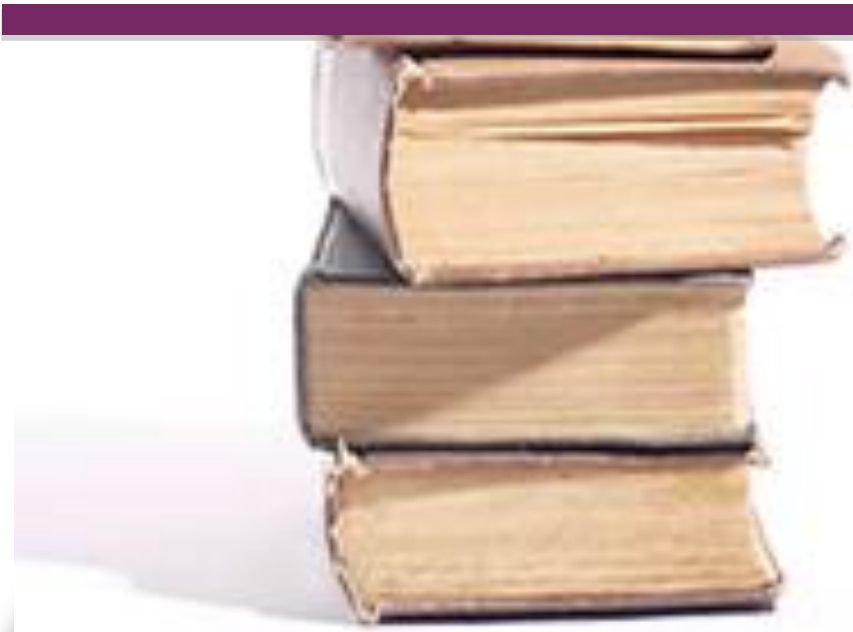
- Critical Reading
- Mathematics
- Writing Skills

# Critical Reading Questions

Use content from:

- humanities
- social studies
- natural sciences
- literature

- 13 Sentence Completions
- 35 Passage-Based Reading Questions (100- to 800-word passages)



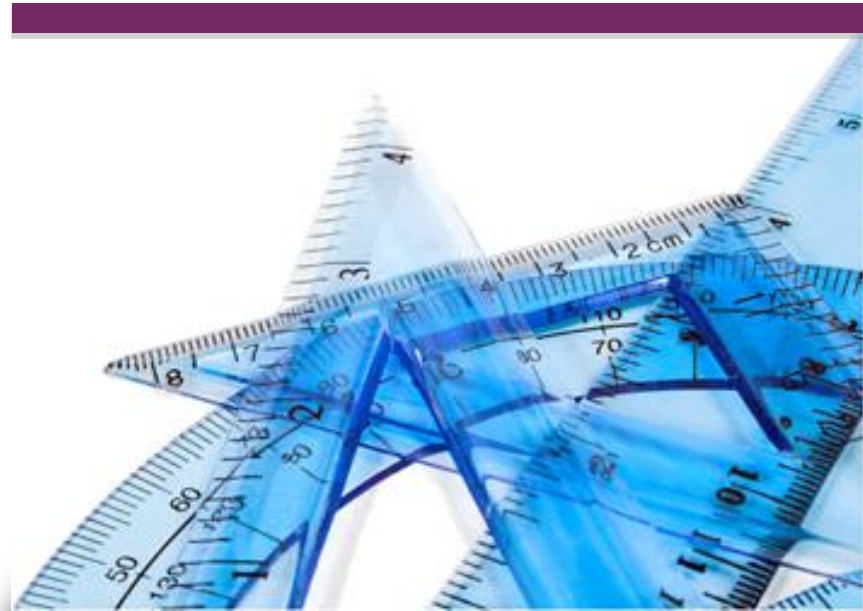
# Mathematics Questions

Use content from:

- number and operations
- algebra and functions;
- geometry and measurement
- data analysis
- statistics
- probability

28 Multiple-Choice  
Questions

10 Student-Produced  
Response Questions (“Grid-ins”)

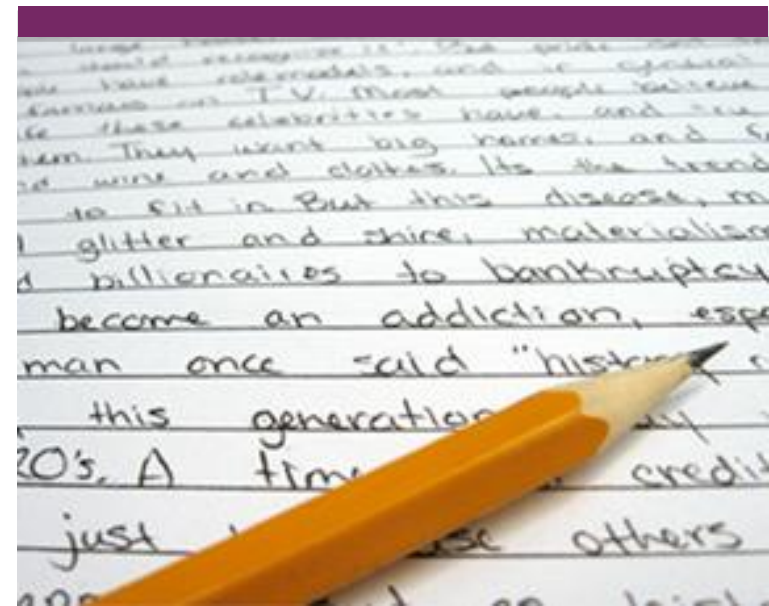




# Writing Skills Questions

Focus on editing, grammar, usage, and organization.

- 20 Improving Sentences Questions
- 14 Identifying Sentence Error Questions
- 5 Improving Paragraph Questions



# How does the PSAT/NMSQT<sup>®</sup> compare to the SAT<sup>®</sup>?

## Question Types:

The same, except the PSAT/NMSQT does not have an essay component.

## Length:

The PSAT/NMSQT is 2 hours, 10 minutes.

The SAT is 3 hours, 45 minutes.

## Level of Difficulty:

The PSAT/NMSQT does not have 11<sup>th</sup> grade-level math questions.



Knowledge Skills Behaviors Awareness

# Sample Questions

# Critical Reading: Sentence Completions

Roger said the report was significant; Heather contradicted him, saying that all the information presented was \_\_\_\_\_ .

- (A) contemporary
- (B) scintillating
- (C) objective
- (D) irrevocable
- (E) immaterial**

- Because Heather is contradicting Roger, the correct response is the word that is most nearly the opposite of “significant.”
- Choice (E) is correct.
- “Immaterial” means inconsequential or irrelevant.
- Information that is immaterial is by definition not significant.

# Critical Reading: Passage-Based Questions

## Passage Excerpt:

After I left the room, I began to sift my impressions. Only the day before, an acquaintance had warned me to watch carefully for sleight-of-hand tricks, especially as the man had earlier been a stage conjuror.

Question: The “acquaintance” mentioned in line 2 can best be described as a

- (A) skeptic
- (B) hypocrite
- (C) hoaxer
- (D) confidant
- (E) mystic

- The acquaintance mentioned in line 2 warns the author to “watch carefully for sleight-of-hand tricks.”
- Choice (A) is correct.
- In warning the author to watch out for tricks, the acquaintance is showing that he is skeptical about the telepathist's supposed powers.

# Math Section: Multiple Choice

If  $ax + bx = 36$ , what is the value of  $x$  when  $a + b = 12$ ?

- (A) 3
- (B) 6
- (C) 12
- (D) 24
- (E) 48

The expression  $ax + bx$  is equivalent to  $(a + b)x$ , so the equation  $ax + bx = 36$  is equivalent to  $(a + b)x = 36$ .

When  $a + b = 12$ , the equation becomes  $12x = 36$ , which can be solved to get  $x = 3$ .

# Math Section: Student-Produced Response

Know the **Student-Produced Response Directions!** The correct answer must be **gridded** correctly to receive credit. What is written in the boxes is not scored.

If  $\frac{h}{4} + \frac{1}{3} = \frac{5h}{6}$ , then what is the value of  $h$ ?

4	/	7	
<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	0	0	0
1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	4	4	4
5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6
7	7	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	7
8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9

- Multiply each member of the equation by 12 (the common denominator) to get  $3h + 4 = 10h$
- Subtract  $3h$  from both sides to get  $7h = 4$
- Divide by 7
- $h = 4/7$

\$1.75

1	.	7	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	0	0	0
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	1	1
2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4
5	5	5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6	6	6	6
7	7	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7
8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9

2 1/3

7	/	3	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	0	0	0
1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2
3	3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3
4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7	7	7
8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9

0.444...

.	4	4	4
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	0	0	0
1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3
4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9

20%

.	2		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	0	0	0
1	1	1	1
2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2	2
3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9

## Student-Produced Responses – Sample Grids



# Calculators are Encouraged



A scientific or graphing calculator is recommended. Bring a familiar calculator. Test day is not the time to figure out how to use a new calculator.

# Writing Skills Section: Improving Sentences

A few barges still move oil up to Hartford, but in the old days they had more traffic then.

(Note: In this question type, the first choice (A) always repeats the underlined phrase exactly, indicating that there should be no change.)

Choice (B) is correct. It avoids the errors of the original by eliminating both the unnecessary adverb, “then,” and the vague pronoun, “they.”

- (A) but in the old days they had more traffic then
- (B) but in the old days traffic was heavier
- (C) but in the old days they had a lot more
- (D) whereas the traffic was a lot more in the old days
- (E) whereas then there was more traffic in the old days

# Writing Skills Section: Identifying Sentence Errors

The electronic computer is a technological triumph that scientists have developed, mastered, and then put it to constantly increasing use. No Error.

A
B
C
D
E

The error in this sentence occurs at (B), where an unnecessary pronoun is used.

The object of the verb “have . . . put” (like the object of the verbs “have developed” and “have . . . Mastered”) is the relative pronoun “that,” which refers to “technological triumph.”

The pronoun “it” is therefore unnecessarily inserted after “put.”

# Writing Skills Section: Improving Sentences

A few barges still move oil up to Hartford, but in the old days they had more traffic then.

(Note: In this question type, the first choice (A) always repeats the underlined phrase exactly, indicating that there should be no change.)

Choice (B) is correct. It avoids the errors of the original by eliminating both the unnecessary adverb, “then,” and the vague pronoun, “they.”

- (A) but in the old days they had more traffic then
- (B) but in the old days traffic was heavier
- (C) but in the old days they had a lot more
- (D) whereas the traffic was a lot more in the old days
- (E) whereas then there was more traffic in the old days

# Writing Skills Section: Improving Paragraphs

(1) The last century was a time of great technological progress. (2) Life is more convenient, comfortable, and efficient today than ever before. (3) Yet this has created new concerns.

Which of the following versions of sentence 3 (reproduced below) is most effective?

***Yet this has created new concerns.***

- (A) Although this has created new concerns.
- (B) Yet this progress has created new concerns.
- (C) Yet these have created new concerns.
- (D) Yet this has created new concerns to worry about.
- (E) New concerns have been created.

Choice (B) is correct. The vague pronoun “this” is replaced by “this progress,” which clearly refers to the progress mentioned in sentence 1.



Knowledge Skills Behaviors Awareness

# Test Preparation Strategies

# Know How the PSAT/NMSQT Is Scored

## Multiple-choice questions:

- 1 point for each correct
- $\frac{1}{4}$  point deducted for each incorrect

## Math grid-ins:

- 1 point for each correct
- 0 points for each incorrect

**0 points for omitted questions**

## Scale:

- 20-80 for each test section

# Personalized Skills Information

## The PSAT/NMSQT Score Report:

- contains information to help you improve your academic skills.
- lists skills that you have the best chance of improving with additional work.
- includes advice, written by teachers, on how to improve those skills.



# Test Preparation: Long-Term

## READ!

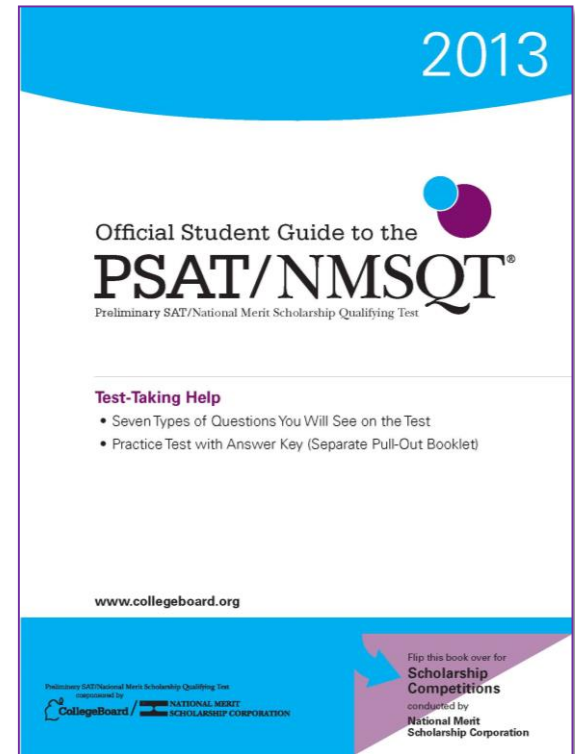
- Continuous reading improves vocabulary and develops essential skills.
- Read more books than just those required for class.

## Take Challenging Courses!

- This will help you to develop and strengthen your critical thinking skills.

# Test Preparation: Short-Term

- Take the practice test in the *Official Student Guide to the PSAT/NMSQT*.
- Understand scoring and “educated guessing.”
- Familiarize yourself with the test’s format, questions types, and directions.



# Test Preparation: Test Readiness Strategies

## When you sit down to take the test:

- Read all of the directions.
- Read all of each question's answer choices.
- Do scratch work in the test book.
- Work at a steady pace.

## If you skip a question:

- Note it in the test book.
- Leave it blank on the answer sheet.
- Return to it if there is time.
- Remember: you don't have to answer every question to score well.

# Visit collegeboard.org

SAT AP College Planning College Search Professional Development Store More ▾ CollegeBoard

## For Students

Search by keyword

Welcome to the College Board. Get information on our tests, find colleges, learn about financial aid and get application help.

**June SAT Scores** ✕

Most scores are now available for the June SAT and SAT Subject Tests.

---

**My Organizer**

Username

**Sign In** Forgot [username](#) or [password](#)?

Create a free account. [Sign up](#)

**College Planning**

See [what's new in BigFuture](#)  
 Introducing BigFuture™: Step-by-step advice and interactive tools to help you [get started](#) navigating the college planning process, [explore majors and careers](#), [get in](#) to schools you like, and figure out how best to [pay for it](#).

---

**Find Colleges**  
 Explore your interests to find your college fit, learn about academic life and explore college campuses.

**SAT & SAT Subject Tests**

**Upcoming SAT Tests**

Date	Deadline*	Status
Oct. 6	Sept. 7	<a href="#">Register Now</a>
Nov. 3	Oct. 4	<a href="#">Register Now</a>
Dec. 1	Nov. 1	<a href="#">Register Now</a>

\*Deadlines expire at Midnight, EDT [See more dates](#)

**Practice for the SAT**  
 Get ready for test day with free official SAT questions. Find tips on how to do your best, and take a free practice test so you can feel confident on test day.

---

**SAT Subject Tests**  
 Showcase your achievements in the college admission

# Take the PSAT/NMSQT

How to Sign Up: \_\_\_\_\_

Test Day/Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Bring:

- Two #2 Pencils
- Calculator (optional)



Knowledge Skills Behaviors Awareness

# PSAT/NMSQT

*A Step to the Future*

PSAT/NMSQT®