

## **The Facts About the New SAT®**

In two months, hundreds of thousands of the nation's high school juniors will gather in exam centers around the country to take the new SAT®. Much has been written and said both true and false about how the SAT will change. As a result, it is understandable that some students may be confused about what they will see on the new test. Here is a review of the basic information to assist counselors as they work with students who will be taking the first administration of the exam on March 12, 2005.

The new SAT will consist of three sections: writing, critical reading, and math. Each section will be scored on the familiar 200-800 scale. The test will take 3 hours and 45 minutes, as opposed to the current 3 hours.

The writing section is new. It will include multiple-choice questions on grammar and usage and a 25-minute essay to be handwritten by the student in response to a specific prompt. The essay will count for 30 percent of the writing score; the multiple-choice questions will count for the remaining 70 percent. The essay prompts will be general enough to be comprehensible to all students, but specific enough to ensure that students can't write their essay ahead of time.

The critical reading section was formerly called the verbal section. Analogies will be eliminated, and short reading passages will be added to the existing longer reading passages. Those passages also will test analogical reasoning.

In the math section, quantitative comparisons will be eliminated. However, the content will be expanded to include topics from third-year, college-preparatory math, often referred to as Algebra II.

One of the best ways to prepare for the new SAT is to take the College Board's [6]online practice test.

Additional information about the new SAT is available at the [7]new SAT website for high schools. The new [8]SAT Readiness Program is also a helpful resource.