

## THE SAT HAS GONE DIGITAL .....

*Are you ready?*



### What is the SAT?

College Board is an American private nonprofit organization with a catalogue of standardized tests designed to prepare students for post-secondary education. Its centrepiece, the SAT, remains a key component of the U.S. college and university admissions process, and a student's results on the standardized test offer would-be destination schools a better overall view of the applicant's academic abilities. Administered seven times a year (March, May, June, August, October, November and December), it measures an individual's aptitude for English and math by rating their skills in evidence-based reading, writing and language, mathematical problem solving, and statistical analysis.

### The SAT's Evolving Role

Since its inception in 1926, the SAT has regularly undergone changes to reflect the test's evolving role in the U.S. college admissions landscape. The introduction of the digital version in March 2023 coincided with a new way of viewing a student's SAT scores: as validation of their high school grades, which have been rising consistently over the last two decades. The number of students graduating with an A average has climbed from 39% in 1998 to 55% in 2021. The wide variations in curricular standards, grading systems, parental influence and course offerings - not to mention the challenge of teaching and evaluating students during the COVID era - have put renewed focus on standardized tests to level the playing field. Whereas SAT scores were once used as a gateway to admissions, their more likely role in the current climate is to strengthen a student's college application, as if to say, "That's right, my high school grades are to be believed."

### The New Digital SAT

Throughout its nearly century-long history, the SAT has routinely undergone changes in order to remain relevant and vital. It would not be an exaggeration to suggest the latest overhaul may be the most dramatic of all.

For starters, the test recently switched platforms, from paper-and-pencil to digital. This has affected the way students not only write, but also prepare for, the SAT. College Board didn't stop there, though, taking advantage of the opportunity to modify the format itself and implement measures designed to better safeguard students' results. From shortening the test to restoring full use of calculators to developing a laptop-based app for secure delivery, College Board hopes the new version of the SAT better reflects the way students study and demonstrate what they've learned in today's educational environment. Although the familiar scoring scale (from 400 to 1600) has been retained, several question types have been dropped in favour of others deemed more consistent with current practices.

## SAT prep course

**TIME LINE:** lead-up to the May 4, 2024 and June 1, 2024 administrations  
**ONLINE INSTRUCTION:** 12 two-hour sessions from late January to late April  
**DATES AND TIMES:** to be determined by online survey  
**COURSE REGISTRATION DEADLINE:** Friday, January 19, 2024 at 5pm

In preparation for the above test date (and beyond), **The Learning Curve Tutoring and Educational Services (TLC)** will be providing a series of online SAT training sessions in the winter/spring of 2024 for all interested grade 10 and 11 students. The exact course dates will be determined based on the results of a survey that appears on the registration form.

Each of the 12 two-hour sessions will focus on the SAT's two core elements: English and math. The course is designed to introduce students to the voice, format and patterns of the test so as to reduce the element of surprise and help them create individual game plans for each section. The syllabus will comprise the following::

### *Basic Introduction:*

- tour of the SAT (overview of each section, with universal tips and strategies for multiple-choice and free-response questions)
- demonstration of the online testing tools and platform

### *Question Types:*

- Expression of Ideas (revise texts to improve the effectiveness of written expression and meet specific rhetorical goals)
- Standard English Conventions (edit texts to conform to core rules of structure, usage and punctuation)
- Craft and Structure (use high-utility words and phrases in context, evaluate texts rhetorically and make connections between texts)
- Information and Ideas (locate, interpret, evaluate and integrate information and ideas from texts and informational graphics)
- Algebra (analyze, fluently solve and create linear equations, systems of equations and inequalities using multiple techniques )
- Problem Solving and Data Analysis (apply quantitative reasoning and unit rate, and interpret one- and two-variable data)
- Advanced Math (understand absolute value, quadratic, exponential, polynomial, rational, radical and other nonlinear equations)
- Geometry and Trigonometry (solve problems that focus on area and volume; angles, triangles and trigonometry; and circles)

### *Test-taking skills:*

- pacing and time management (drills that reinforce how to budget and keep track of time)
- educated guessing (process of elimination, deductive reasoning)
- reasonableness (using common sense to determine the validity of possible answers to math questions)
- prioritizing (determining the order in which a student should answer the questions in each section of the test)

### *Evaluations:*

- individual and group exercises/activities designed to put into practice standardized testing strategies and self-prompts
- feedback and review (full explanation of the scoring system, performance break-downs, final Q&A)

\* *Students who qualify for accommodations will have a chance to complete exercises with appropriately modified timing prompts.*



### **OTHER OPTIONS:**

#### **i) Private lessons (flexible schedule, online)**

For those who prefer more flexibility and individualized attention, one-on-one sessions may be the best option. This approach is more organic in the sense that lesson plans are developed on the go, inspired by whatever progress the student is making. Because sessions are booked based on mutual availability between student and instructor, they don't necessarily take place at the same time every week. Such an arrangement is also convenient for those who need less frequent help because students are not required to commit to a minimum number of sessions

- one or two may be enough to shore up a few key skills.

#### **ii) Semi-private lessons (flexible schedule, online)**

Some students may wish to pair up with a friend or classmate to create a more collaborative environment. This option provides many of the same benefits as do private lessons, but at a discounted hourly rate.

**PLEASE NOTE:** *Private and semi-private lessons are subject to the instructor's availability.*

## Registration Information

- 1) To sign up for the SAT prep course or to book private or semi-private tutoring sessions, please complete the online registration form, which can be found by visiting [www.learningcurvetutoring.ca](http://www.learningcurvetutoring.ca).
- 2) The course registration deadline is Friday, January 19, 2024 at 5pm. There is NO such deadline to sign up for private or semi-private sessions.
- 3) Fees for the various SAT prep options are as follows:  
**PREP COURSE(12 two-hour sessions): \$1,200**  
**PRIVATE SESSIONS: \$80/hr**  
**SEMI-PRIVATE SESSIONS: \$60/hr, per student**
- 4) For more information about the SAT, the course or both, please contact **Colin McMahon**, owner/director of The Learning Curve Tutoring and Educational Services (e-mail and telephone listed below).



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