

SAT Essay Writing & Language

SAT Essay

- Prompt, Format & Scoring Rubric
- Rhetorical Tools
- Practice

SAT Writing & Language

- Part One: Introduction to Writing & Language Strategy
- Part Two: Words
- Part Three: Questions
- Part Four: Punctuation

The Essay Prompt

The prompt (question) or a nearly identical one, is used every time the new SAT is given.

As you read the passage below, consider how [the author] uses evidence, such as facts or examples, to support claims.

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

*****See Handout for Scoring Rubric*****

The Essay Prompt

Write an essay in which you explain how [the author] builds an argument to persuade [his/her] audience that [author's claim]. In your essay, analyze how [the author] uses one or more of the features listed above (or features of your own choice) to strengthen the logic and persuasiveness of [his/her] argument. Be sure that your analysis focuses on the most relevant features of the passage. Your essay should not explain whether you agree with [the author's] claims, but rather explain how the author builds an argument to persuade [his/her] audience

The Essay Prompt

You can count on seeing the same prompt no matter when you take the new SAT with Essay, but the passage will be different every time.

All passages have these things in common:

Written for a broad audience

Argue a point

Express subtle views on complex subjects

Use logical reasoning and evidence to support claims

Examine ideas, debates, or trends in the arts and sciences, or civic, cultural, or political life

Always taken from published works

All the information you need to write your essay will be included in the passage or in notes about it.

What the SAT Essay Measures

The SAT Essay shows how well you understand the passage and use it as the basis for a well-written, thought-out discussion. The two people who score your essay will each award between 1 and 4 points in each of these three categories:

Reading: A successful essay shows that you understood the passage, including the interplay of central ideas and important details. It also shows an effective use of textual evidence.

Analysis: A successful essay shows your understanding of how the author builds an argument by:

Examining the author's use of evidence, reasoning, and other stylistic and persuasive techniques

Supporting and developing claims with well-chosen evidence from the passage

Writing: A successful essay is focused, organized, and precise, with an appropriate style and tone that varies sentence structure and follows the conventions of standard written English.

The Rhetorical Triangle



Rhetorical Triangle

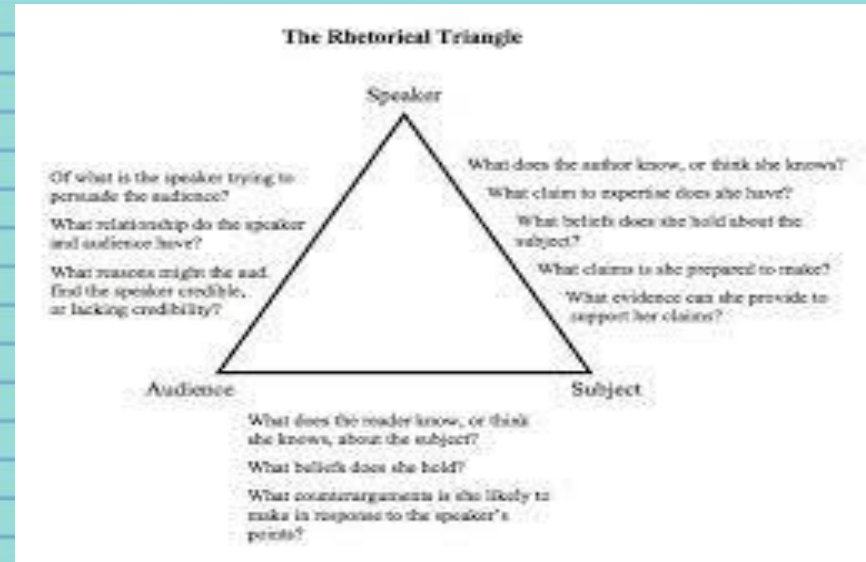
Ethos -

Logos -

Pathos -

SOAPSTONE - author's point of view

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Rhetorical Forms

Exemplification

Definition

Compare/Contrast

Classification

Process Analysis

Description

Narrative

Cause/Effect

Other Rhetorical Tools

Style - diction, syntax, details, imagery, and tone

Figurative Language - simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, paradox, irony

ANALYZE WHY the author chose the strategies used for the audience, occasion, and/or purpose

WHY does the author choose THOSE strategies?

SAT ESSAY TASK LIST

Step One: Read the prompt - find the article's argument

Step Two - Read the passage/identify how the author builds his argument
- rhetorical tools/appeals

Step Three - Figure out what tools you plan to discuss in the essay -
choose the tools that are recurrent - at the beginning, middle, and end of
the essay

Rule of Thumb: If you can't find 3 examples - go to 3 tools

Your Job: Analyze/Explain how the tools function for the author's argument

SAT ESSAY TASK LIST

Step Four: Create a thesis statement - author's argument + chosen tools

Four Items to include in thesis: Name of author/"Title of Piece"/Author's argument/tools that you choose to analyze

Step Five: Body Paragraphs - Answer WHY you believe the tool functions toward the argument/answer HOW the examples prove that the tool functions toward the argument

-Work chronologically through text when giving examples - give insights of tools functioning toward the argument in the beginning, middle, and end.

Rhetorical Analysis Format

Introduction - introduce author, use "title of article," brief summary and thesis statement

Thesis Statement - Author's argument and the tools that function to illustrate that argument

Body Paragraphs - 2 to 3 based on chosen tools

Assertion, Textual Evidence, and Analysis

Four Step Format

Step One: Transitional Topic Sentence – only includes your tool and a transitional word or phrase

Step Two: Make/Explain Your Point – explain why the author is using the tool to illustrate his argument - ANSWER THE WHY

Step Three: Prove Your Point - Evidence of Tools – beginning, middle, and end - pull out 2 to 3 examples that support your point

Step Four: Concluding Sentence: explains how your examples function toward your reason/article's argument – effect on audience/effect on argument

Power Verbs – instead of “show”

- Implies
- Suggests
- Compares
- Addresses
- Analyzes
- Asserts
- * Establishes
- * Expounds
- * Argues
- * Questions
- * Justifies
- * Explains
- * Defines
- * Emphasizes
- * Illuminates
- * Demonstrates

SAT Writing & Language Workshop

35 minutes

44 ?s - 4 excerpts of 11 ?s each

Grammar

Content - reading charts & graphs

Paragraph Development

Word Choice - transitions, verbs, pronouns, precision and concision

Organization

Punctuation

To Be Successful...

- Remember that to answer the ?s, you must NOTICE those ?s and then answer those questions - READ CAREFULLY
- Always choose the answer MOST consistent with the task in the ?/passage
- Keep this Rule in Mind - Passages should be judged on what they say NOT on what they could say - when dealing with style, tone, and focus work with words/phrases already used in the passage

PART ONE - Introduction to Writing & Language Strategy

- Most aren't actually questions - your job is to determine whether the underlined portion is correct or if it should be replaced with one of the given choices.
- Answer choices ask the questions -
 - Find what's changing in the answer choices (figures out what is being tested)
- Learn from the answer choices
 - Indicate what a particular question is testing

Step 1: Check what's changing in the answer choices - words or punctuation or both?

Step 2: Figure out what the question is testing and let the differences in the answer choices reveal potential errors

Step 3: Use POE - Process of Elimination

Step 4: If you can't eliminate three answer choices, pick the shortest answer that is most consistent with the rest of the sentence

PART TWO - Words

- **The Words Change, But the Song Remains the Same**
 - **Consistency** - correct answers are consistent with the rest of the sentence and the passage
 - **Precision** - correct answers make the meaning of the sentence as precise as possible
 - **Concision** - barring other errors, correct answers are as concise as possible

PART TWO - Words

- Transitions - look at the ideas that the transition word connects - transition should be consistent with the relationship between those ideas - do they agree or contrast - eliminate transitions that indicate the wrong directions
- Verbs - If verbs are changing, make sure those verbs are...
 - Consistent with their subject
 - Consistent with other verbs in the sentence/surrounding sentences
 - Parallel agreement with other verbs
- Pronouns - identify noun - be consistent whether it's singular or plural with the noun they refer to
 - Choice between a pronoun and an actual noun - choose the noun

PART TWO - Words

- Vocabulary - Job is to find the word that gives the most precise meaning in context - consistent with ideas in context
- Concision - being concise is key when you want to communicate meaning - if everything else is consistent/precise - the shortest one is usually the answer
- Modifiers - describing phrase - need to be closest to what it's describing
- Parallelism and Comparisons - all -ing verbs/all -ed verbs
 - Comparison errors - more/less than/as
- Confused Words/Idioms - affect/effect
 - Idioms involve prepositions - of, with, in, for,

Consistent - verbs, nouns, and pronouns should agree within sentences and passage

Precise - writing should communicate specific ideas/events

Concise - when everything else is correct, the shortest answer choice is correct

PART THREE - Questions

- Purpose Questions
 - Ask about a main idea/detail - identifying purpose - choose the answer that is most consistent with that purpose
 - What best establishes the main idea of the paragraph
- Adding and Deleting
 - Two ?s to consider
 - Is the information to be added or deleted consistent with the rest of the paragraph?
 - If it's consistent - does it make it more precise
 - Both No - not added
 - Both Yes - Added

PART THREE - Questions

- **Order - Consistency**
 - Placing a sentence within a paragraph, look for words or phrases that can connect the sentence to the others
 - General to specific details
- **Combining Sentences**
 - Goal of combining sentences - make things shorter
 - If sentence is consistent/precise and correctly punctuated, the shortest is the best option
- **Graphs/Grammar - can you read a graph?**
 - Read labels - titles, axes, key or legend
 - Choose answer most consistent with data
 - Straightforward/Fundamental

PART FOUR - Punctuation

STOP, GO, AND VERTICAL LINE TEST

When you are linking ideas, you must use one of the following:

STOP

- Period (.)
- Semicolon (;)
- Comma (,) + **FANBOYS**
- Question Mark (?)
- Exclamation Mark (!)

HALF-STOP

- Colon (:)
- Long dash (—)

GO

- Comma (,)
- No punctuation

FANBOYS stands for
For, **A**nd, **N**or, **B**ut, **O**r,
Yet, and **S**o.

STOP punctuation can link *only* complete ideas.

HALF-STOP punctuation must be *preceded* by a complete idea.

GO punctuation can link anything *except* two complete ideas.

PART FOUR - PUNCTUATION

- What's changing in the answer choices
- Does punctuation need to be here?
- Vertical Line Test - draw a line where you see STOP or HALF-STOP punctuation - then read up to the vertical line - then read after the vertical line
 - 2 complete ideas - only STOP

STOP PUNCTUATION - end-of-sentence punctuation

HALF-STOP - middle-of-sentence punctuation

- Apostrophes - possessive nouns or contractions
 - Needs to have a noun/noun phrase after an apostrophe for there to be possession shown

PART FOUR - PUNCTUATION

- **FOUR** reasons to use a comma
 - In **STOP** Punctuation, with one of the **FANBOYS**
 - In **GO** Punctuation, to separate incomplete ideas from together ideas
 - In a list of three or more things
 - In a sentence containing unnecessary information - in middle of a sentence, need two commas

IF YOU CANNOT CITE REASONS TO USE THESE PUNCTUATION MARKS - DO NOT USE THEM!