PSAT Lesson Plans



High School Students: Five Steps to Sign Up for RaiseMe	5
Educators: Tips for Using RaiseMe in 9th-12th Grade	6
RaiseMe for Parents: An Overview	7
Parents: Getting Started with your RaiseMe Account	8
Parents: Tips for Supporting your Student on RaiseMe	9



LESSON PLAN INSTRUCTIONS

Objective:

Students will describe why it matters to try your best on the PSAT. Students will describe the ways in which test scores impact admission considerations. Students will determine the relative weight of test scores in institutional aid considerations.

() Key Points:

- 1. It's important to take the PSAT seriously as it is the qualifying exam for the National Merit Scholarship.
- 2. You can earn money from RaiseMe college partners just for taking the PSAT *and/or* for scoring well on the PSAT!
- 3. Setting goals, knowing what to expect when sitting for the exam, and practicing good study habits in advance will help to prime you mentally to do your best on test day.
- 4. Using the average SAT and ACT range of accepted students is a good initial indicator of your likelihood of acceptance at a college.
- 5. Looking at these numbers *before* taking the SAT or ACT is a great way to set goals and set your study plan to increase your chances of getting into a dream college.

Activities:

- 1. Worksheet: PSAT and SAT Prep
 - a. Estimated time: 20 min
 - b. Students will internalize the structure of the PSAT exam, consider ways to physically and mentally prepare, and analyze how exam scores factor into college admissions.

Requirements:

- 1. Printed hard copies of the worksheets
- 2. Access to a computer to reference a RaiseMe account

Worksheet: PSAT and SAT Prep

There are 3 different PSAT exams:

- PSAT 8/9
- PSAT 10
- PSAT/NMSQT

The PSAT 8, 9, and 10 are preliminary SAT exams intended to be taken in the grade level corresponding with their number.

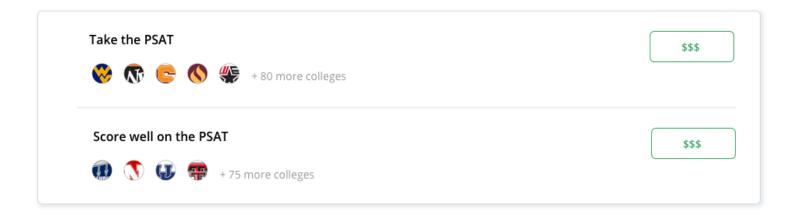
The **PSAT/NMSQT** is the same assessment as the PSAT 10, but counts as the official entrance exam to be considered for the **National Merit Scholarship**.

If you score well in your junior year, you are eligible for the following awarding tiers:

- 50,000 students with the highest PSAT scores will qualify for recognition
- Two-thirds of the highest scorers will qualify to receive a Letter of Commendation
- One-third of the highest scorers will be named semi-finalists
- Some 7,500 students will be awarded as finalists, earning as much as \$2,500 in scholarship money to college

Getting any level of recognition from the National Merit Scholarship Program is considered a high honor at all colleges and universities where you apply, so it's worthwhile to try your best on the PSAT!

In addition to the National Merit Scholarship, when you take the PSAT you are eligible for micro-scholarship awards at many RaiseMe college partners!



The PSAT - An Overview

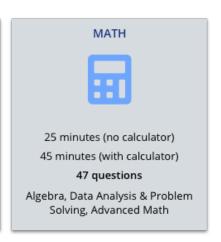
Here's what to know about the PSAT format:

- Test Duration: 2 hours and 45 minutes
- Score Range: 320 1520
- There is no penalty for guessing, so it's in your best interest to answer every question!

The test is broken up into the following sections:









REFLECT

- 1. Which section are you most confident about?
- 2. Which section will be more of a challenge?
- 3. What can you do to tackle that section head on?
- 4. What's a goal you want to set going in to the exam? Note: this doesn't need to be a score!

Preparation for the Exam

Test taking is in many ways a performance setting—like a big game, music recital, theater production, debate, class presentation, etc. When you have a routine in place going in, you will be mentally prepared to do your best.



GET LOTS OF SLEEP

A consistent bedtime and wake time will maximize your restfulness



SET A GOAL

Know what you hope to accomplish going in to the exam



JOURNAL

Write down all the positive ways you are showing up for yourself!



DRINK WATER/ EAT BREAKFAST

Good nutrition will ensure your brain is ready to perform



What are some habits you can commit to leading up to test day that will set you up for success?

The College Board website has official practice tests you can take at home https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/psat-nmsqt-psat-10/practice/full-length-practice-tests

Test Scores and Admissions

As its name implies, the PSAT is a practice simulation of what it will feel like you when sit for the official college entrance exams (SAT or ACT). Practice, in anything you do, is necessary to perform at your best when it counts. It's no different in the case of exams.

Your PSAT score will give you a sense for how you might score on the SAT. Why does that matter?

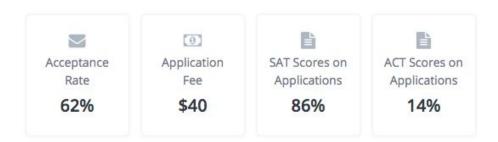
- 1. You'll know what sections to prioritize in practice and prep leading up to the SAT/ACT.
- 2. You'll have a new indicator to use when looking at the admission criteria for colleges you're considering.

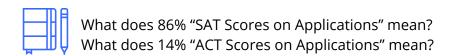


Let's log in to your RaiseMe account to learn more about how SAT/ACT can factor into admissions.

On the **"About"** page of any college listed in RaiseMe, you can scroll down to the **"Admissions"** section to learn the average statistics on recently admitted students.

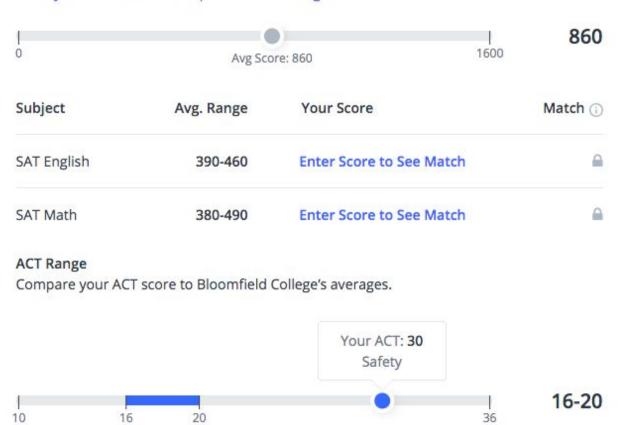
Admissions





Average SAT Score

Enter your SAT Score to compare to SAT averages.





- 1. What's the average SAT score for this college?
- 2. What's the average for the SAT English section?
- 3. What's the average for the SAT Math section?



Once you've taken the SAT or ACT, input your score on RaiseMe! You'll be able to see where that lands in the average range of accepted students.

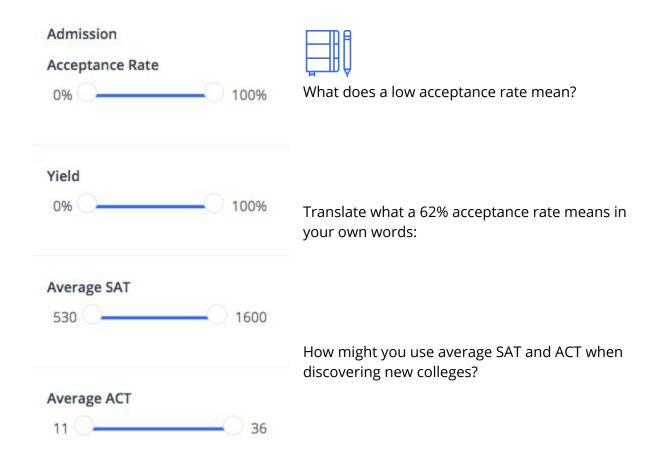
College Admissions - Diving Deeper



For a college/university you are interested in, scroll down to the admissions section and answer the following questions:

College Name: Average SAT score: Average ACT score:

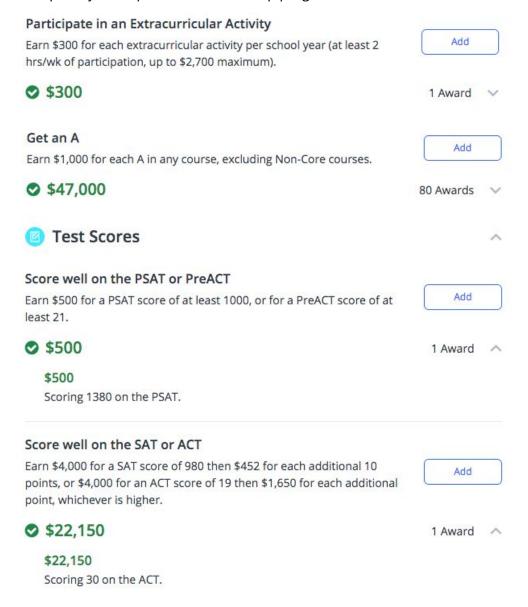
To filter colleges based on admission metrics, you can also slide the dials in the following categories on the **"Search Colleges"** tab.





Another page to pay attention to is the **"Scholarship"** tab for a RaiseMe college partner that you're interested in.

Here's part of a sample micro-scholarship program:





1. How many extracurricular activities would you need to do to make more scholarship money than scoring well on the PSAT?

2. How many A's would you need to get to earn as much scholarship money as an ACT score of 25?
Show your work:
Answer:
3. Is it worthwhile to invest time in preparing for the PSAT? 4. Is it important to you to score well on the SAT and/or ACT? Why or why not?
An easy place to start in planning and preparing for the SAT is Khan Academy. Their practice program is comprehensive and will be personalized to you based on your PSAT results.
You can check that out here: https://www.khanacademy.org/sat
5. What are some other ways you can start preparing for the SAT/ACT?

LESSON PLAN INSTRUCTIONS

Objective:

Students will be able to analyze their PSAT score report, identifying strengths, growth areas, and specific topics to focus on for additional practice.

() Key Points:

- The PSAT is the qualifying exam for the National Merit Scholarship Program, and honor that is highly regarded by colleges
- There is also a National Hispanic Recognition Program, and the recipients are chosen via PSAT score.
- Your Percentile and College Benchmark are measures for assessing how well you did compared to your peers.
- The subscore breakdown helps you identify strength areas and topics that you will want to practice further before taking the SAT.

Activity:

- 1. Worksheet: Interpreting your PSAT Score
 - a. Estimated time: 10-15 minutes
 - b. Students will consider why it's important to practice for important exams like the SAT, understand the terminology and scale on the score report, identify the categories evaluated on the exam and consider how they can use their scores to plan and prepare for the SAT.

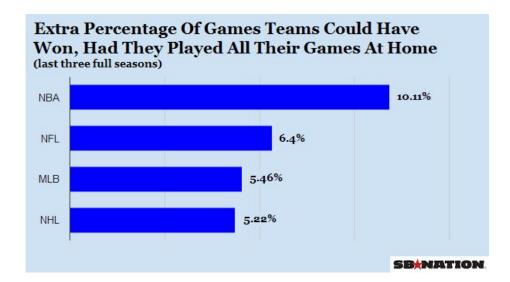
Requirements:

- 1. Printed hard copies of the worksheets
- 2. Copy of the student's PSAT score report to review
- 3. *Optional but encouraged*: access to a computer to log a PSAT score!

Worksheet: Interpreting your PSAT Scores

Warmup Discussion

Consider some data on win-loss percentages based on the location of a game.





CONSIDER

- 1. Why are teams more likely to win at home?
- 2. If an athlete has never played in an arena before, how might this affect her/his play?
- 3. How does this apply to test-taking?

Why the PSAT Matters

PSAT is short for Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test, meaning it's a precursor to the SAT.

This practice allows you to:

- Identify subjects and skills that you are ace-ing, and ones that require more review
- Know what to expect: The format and style of the exam mirrors the SAT
- Reflect on the experience and make a game plan for the real deal
 - Did you get thirsty?
 - Were there distractions?
 - Were you sleepy?
 - Making note of all these feelings planning accordingly next time will set you up for success

Scoring well on the PSAT is not only an indication that you're on track for college, but it also is the requisite step to be considered for the **National Merit Scholarship Program**.

National Hispanic Recognition

Every year, the NHRP recognizes about 5,000 Hispanic/Latino juniors who take the PSAT/NMSQT.

This is an academic honor that can be included on college applications (and your RaiseMe portfolio!)

To be considered, you must:

- Take the PSAT/NMSQT in October of your junior year
- Be at least one-quarter Hispanic/Latino
- Achieve a minimum score, which varies each year, on the exam
- Earn a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher by middle of junior year

Check out the website for more information:

https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/psat-nmsqt-psat-10/scholarships-and-recognition-program

^{*}Make sure to identify as Hispanic/Latino on the PSAT/NMSQT answer sheet*

Exam Overview

National Averages (2017)

Top 50% = 950 - 1060 range

Top 25% = 1070 - 1200 range

Top 10% = 1210 - 1520 range

Section	Score Range
Evidence-Based Reading/ Writing	160 - 760
+ Math	160 - 760
= Total Score	320-1520



Interpreting your Score

Example Score Report

Your Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Score

430 | 160 to

Your Nationally Representative



Sample Percentile





Your scores indicate you are close to being on track for college readiness, but you need to continue to strengthen your skills.

Let's get you back on track, so you won't have to take noncredit courses in college. You have free, personalized recommendations waiting for you on satpractice.org.

Percentile

An indicator of how you rank against all other test-takers in the nation.

The higher the percentage, the better your performance

College Benchmark

The scale indicates how ready you are for college-level coursework in that subject area.

Green = On-track
Red = Needs improvement



Is this student stronger in math or reading/writing? How do you know?



Command of Evidence

Matching answers to specific lines from a reading passage.

Words in Context

Matching words from a passage to their definition.

Expression of Ideas

Revising a sentence to make it better.

Standard English Conventions

Grammar and punctuation.

Heart of Algebra

Algebraic expressions, equations, and word problems.

Problem Solving and Data Analysis

Interpreting math expressions, graphs, and data.

Passport to Advanced Math

Higher-level math questions like functions and quadratic equations.

Meet or exceed Benchmark



What specific skills should the student work on before taking the SAT? What can the student do to get practice with the skills the challenged them?



REFLECT

- 1. Based on your overall performance, what are you most proud of?
- 2. How do you feel about your math score?
- 3. How do you feel about your evidence-based reading and writing score?
- 4. Based on the score breakdown, what skills are your strength? What courses can you take to challenge yourself further in that area?
- 5. Which skills would you like to improve? What courses can you take to get more practice in these area?
- 6. What went well on test day that you want to replicate when you take the SAT?



Be sure to link your PSAT report to Khan Academy to get customized practice that's tailored to you – www.satpractice.org