

SAT Prep Course – Verbal Course Description

The SAT Prep Course is designed to help students get ready to take the Scholastic Aptitude Test. While the student's entire education should be viewed as preparation for this test, this course will give the student specific skills to help him do his best on the exam. In this class we will focus on looking at all the different types of questions that are asked in the Reading and Writing Sections of the SAT and discussing various strategies for attacking the questions. We will also focus on vocabulary and grammar review as these are two areas that are foundational for the entire test.

Preparation for taking the SAT should not stop when this class is over, however. There are a myriad resources to help students get ready for the SAT. We will look at these resources in the class so that students and parents can continue their preparation in the months leading up to test day.

Probably the single most important factor in doing well on the Critical Reading and Writing Sections of the SAT is knowing a lot of words. The SAT is an aptitude test to determine if students are ready for college level reading and writing. Success in these areas depends on a student being able to understand what he is reading and being able to communicate effectively in writing. To this end, he must have a large and sophisticated vocabulary. The first step in answering the questions on the Critical Reading Section of the SAT is being able to understand the questions, and if the student doesn't know what the words in the questions mean, he will have a very hard time answering the questions. There are a lot of "hard" words in the SAT questions. Thus, a significant portion of our work for this class will focus on vocabulary.

In addition to studying vocabulary, we will also focus on reading comprehension. The Passage Based Reading passages on the SAT require the student to be able to read and understand passages at a fairly advanced level. In addition to doing exercises from the *Official SAT Study Guide*, the students will have other reading assignments from various sources to allow them to practice their reading comprehension skills.

The Writing Section of the SAT consists of multiple choice questions that test a student's knowledge of grammar and usage and a timed essay. While many people worry about the essay, it is important to keep in mind that the essay counts for approximately 30% of the Writing score, while the Improving Sentences, Identifying Sentence Errors, and Improving Paragraphs questions count for 70%. To do well on these sections, a student needs a solid knowledge of grammar and mechanics as well as usage. We will be studying the most important grammar concepts in class, and students will have opportunities to review and practice these grammar skills.

While we will be doing a lot of active learning and practice in class, students will have some homework each week in each of the areas covered – vocabulary, reading comprehension, and grammar. I will make every attempt to keep these assignments meaningful and not burdensome.

The Math section of the course will focus on review Algebra and Geometry skills including properties of numbers, operations, sets, algebraic equations, functions, graphs, geometric measurement, data analysis, and probability. We will also discuss test-taking strategies and ways to quickly recall concepts that frequently appear on the SAT. Students will work in class and at home to hone their skills and practice these strategies. Calculator use is allowed (but not required) for the SAT so it is highly recommended that the student bring a calculator to class (ideally the one they plan to use while taking the SAT).

The students will need the following materials for the class:

The Official SAT Study Guide (ISBN 978-0-87447-852-5)
Binder with subject dividers
\$5.00 copy fee