

# Standardized Test Preparation

This lesson is designed to help students explore the various standardized tests required by some colleges

## OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. Learn about the two major standardized tests used by colleges during the admissions process
2. Research the standardized tests required by the colleges to which they intend to apply
3. Evaluate which test(s) they plan to take and their preparedness for the test by taking practice tests
4. Create a plan for preparing for and taking the standardized test

## ACTIVITIES

### PART 1

#### Content Knowledge

Teach students about the difference between the PSAT, SAT, and ACT, by using the *Standardized Tests* page under the *Search Colleges* tab in MEFA Pathway and the *Standardized Test Planning Handout* included below.

### PART 2

#### Applying Information

Students should look at the admissions requirements for colleges they are interested in. Students can use the search bar at the top of the MEFA Pathway *College Search* page under the *Search Colleges* tab to search for a college and view the college's profile. The details page will indicate the average test scores for all students that were accepted and enrolled. Students can use the link to the school's website on the details page to see if the school is test-optional. Over 1,000 4-year schools do not require the SAT or ACT. Tell students that even if a school is test-optional, if they score well, they should include their scores in their application, as test scores may be required to be considered for merit scholarships or for placement once enrolled. Also, a strong test score can help bolster an admissions application.

Grade Level: 11

#### MEFA PATHWAY SECTIONS WITHIN THIS LESSON:

- Standardized Test
- College Search

#### DOMAIN:

- College & Career Exploration
- Academic Skills

#### TIME:

- 45 minutes

#### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Internet connection to work with the MEFA Pathway website
- Standardized Test Planning Handout (attached)

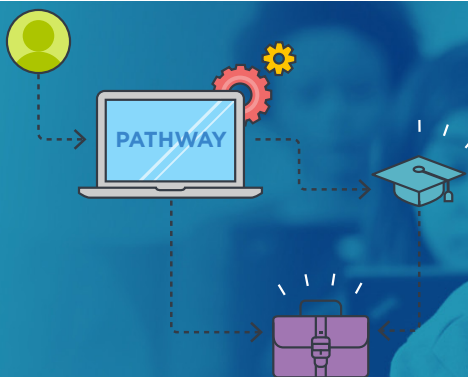
#### FUTURE READY SKILLS:

- Evaluating
- Critical Thinking
- Time Management

#### VOCABULARY:

- PSAT
- SAT
- ACT

Email any questions to:  
[info@mefapathway.org](mailto:info@mefapathway.org)



# LESSON PLAN

PART 3

Evaluating Information

After collecting admissions information for all the colleges they are interested in, students should decide what test they intend to take for college admissions purposes. Students may decide that they want to take both the SAT and ACT.

PART 4

Critical Thinking/Creative Application

Once students determine the tests they want to take, they should create a plan for when they will take them and how they will prepare for them. Urge students to use the resources available to them through the MEFA Pathway *Standardized Tests* page as well as the PSAT practice website, ACT practice website, and SAT practice website, all of which are linked to within the *Standardized Tests* page. [Khan Academy](#) offers free test prep that can tailor a practice plan based on a student's PSAT and/or SAT scores. If students need help making a plan, show them this example and have them create a similar chart with their personal info.

Test Name	Test Date	Test Preparation Plan
SAT	February 9, 2023	Review the question of the day on the SAT website every night Purchase a SAT preparation book Take practice questions on the SAT website every weekend (focus on one small section per weekend) Take the free full SAT on the SAT website over Thanksgiving Review the types of questions I did poorly on and focus on those

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# Standardized Test Planning Handout

	PSAT	SAT	ACT
<b>Details</b>	The preliminary SAT or practice SAT; Taken by sophomores and juniors; is not used for college admissions  Can qualify students for National Merit Scholarships and other corporate and college-sponsored merit scholarships	A standardized test that assesses critical thinking	A subject-based standardized test taken usually by juniors and seniors
<b>Cost</b>	\$16. Students may be eligible for a fee waiver; schools request waiver, not student	\$60 <a href="#">Fee waivers</a> are available if the student meets the qualifications	\$63 without the writing portion and \$88 with the writing portion. If you miss the registration date, there is an additional \$36 fee.  <a href="#">Fee waivers</a> are available if the student meets certain qualifications.
<b>Length &amp; Sections</b>	Two hours and forty-five minutes; four total sections <b>Math:</b> One 25-minute section and one 45-minute section consisting of multiple-choice and grid-ins (student-produced answers) <b>Evidence-Based Reading:</b> One 60-minute section consisting of reading comprehension <b>Writing:</b> One 35-minute section consisting of fixing grammatical errors and revising words and phrases to improve the text	Three hours (3 sections) <b>Math:</b> One 80-minute section (58 questions) consisting of primarily multiple-choice questions and some grid-ins produced answers); the main concepts tested here are algebra, problem-solving, data analysis, and advanced math <b>Reading:</b> One 65-minute section (52 questions) consisting of understanding complex passages and identifying words in context <b>Writing and Language:</b> One 35-minute section (44 questions) consisting of targeting grammar and argument-building abilities	Two hours and 55 minutes long (4 sections) without the writing section and 3 hours and 35 minutes (5 sections) with the writing portion <b>English:</b> One 45-minute section (75 questions) comprised of usage/mechanics and rhetorical skills <b>Math:</b> One 60-minute section (60 questions) comprised of algebra, elementary algebra, intermediate algebra, coordinate geometry, plane geometry, and trigonometry <b>Reading:</b> One 35-minute section (40 questions) comprised of Social Studies, Natural Science, Literary Narrative or Prose Fiction, and Humanities <b>Science:</b> One 35-minute section (40 questions) comprised of Testing Data Analysis, Experimental Results, and Conflicting Viewpoint <b>Writing:</b> One 40-minute written section (1 essay) comprised of taking a position on an issue in response to a question; this section requires students to exhibit their ability to explain their position using supporting evidence, opinion, and reason. Only some colleges require the writing section
<b>Scoring</b>	Each section has a scaled score from 160 to 760 points	The SAT is scored on a 1600-point scale. There is no penalty for a wrong answer	The four multiple-choice sections are graded on a scale of 1-36 and will generate a composite score of 1-36  The writing section is graded ranging 0 to 12