



SIGNET  
EDUCATION

# HOW TO MAKE SENSE OF THE PSAT SCORE REPORT

*A guide for parents, prepared by  
the experts at Signet Education.*

**Hi, Ima B. Student**

School Name: John F. Kennedy High School, School Code: 123456

2016, Grade: 11th Grade

Student ID: 24068907

Optional Code: 00

Access Code: A02670146P

College Board ID: 12345678

 CollegeBoard /  NATIONAL MERIT  
SCHOLARSHIP CORPORATION

# PSAT/NMSQT®

Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test

## Your Score Report

Get your full report online  
[studentscores.collegeboard.org](https://studentscores.collegeboard.org)

Access Code **A02670146P**



### SAT® Practice

Connect to Khan Academy®  
for FREE, world-class SAT  
practice on [satpractice.org](https://satpractice.org).

### AP® and C

See which AP and C  
be good matches for you.

Use this link and access code to obtain an online  
version of this report as well as a copy of the actual  
test the student took. This is invaluable for assessing  
a student's strengths and weaknesses and  
developing a plan for studying for the SAT.

### the SAT

date, and  
register for it now.

These three scores are the most important information in the report.

Your Evidence-Based  
Reading and Writing Score

**430** | 160 to 760

Your Nationally  
Representative **31st** Sample  
Percentile

Section scores are out of 760.



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](https://satpractice.org).

Your Total Score

**960** | 320 to 1520

Your Nationally  
Representative **51st** Sample  
Percentile

Keep in mind,  
the PSAT/NMSQT®  
and SAT® are on  
the same scale.

Your score  
have scored  
you do dep

The PSAT is a bit easier than the SAT,  
but these scores are scaled to be  
directly comparable to the SAT.

Your Math Score

**530** | 160 to 760

Your Nationally  
Representative **69th** Sample  
Percentile

The combined score is out of 1520.

THE BENCHMARK IS 510



You are on track for college readiness.

Stay on track and continue your progress. Start now with your free, personalized recommendations waiting for you on [satpractice.org](https://satpractice.org).

#### The College and Career Readiness Benchmark

Reaching your grade-level benchmark means that you are likely on track to be ready for select first-year, credit-bearing college courses.



Need to strengthen skills



Approaching Benchmark



Meet or exceed Benchmark

\*The red, yellow, and green ranges in the test scores and subscores reflect your areas of strengths and weaknesses, compared to the typical performance of students in your grade.

### Test Scores 8 to 38 range\*

**23** Reading



**20** Writing and Language



**26.5** Math



### Cross-Test Scores

Use the individual test scores to get a sense of which of the three sections was the hardest for your student. This tells you where your student should start studying.

If a student were to take the same test repeatedly (with no new learning), the standard deviation of the student's repeated test scores is called the standard error of measurement (SEM). Your score range is computed as your score  $\pm$  SEM. For PSAT/NMSQT, these ranges are approximately:

**Total Score:** Your score  $\pm$  40 points.

**Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Section Score:** Your score  $\pm$  25 points.

**Math Section Score:** Your score  $\pm$  33 points.

**Test Scores and Cross-Test Scores:** Your score  $\pm$  2 points.

**Subscores:** Your score  $\pm$  1 to 2 points.

Remember that you will receive scores in the same areas when you take the SAT.

### Subscores 1 to 15 range\*

**8** Command of Evidence



**5** Words in Context



**7** Expression of Ideas



**7** Standard English Conventions



**8** Heart of Algebra



Subscores can be interesting for some students, based on the patterns of questions missed, but the information tends to be fairly confusing.

We recommend going straight to the questions themselves after looking at the section and test scores.

Ima B. Student

2016, Grade: 11th Grade, Student ID 24068907



# National Merit Scholarship Corporation

National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) conducts the National Merit® Scholarship Program, an academic competition for recognition and college scholarships. To designate students who qualify for recognition in its 2018 competition, NMSC will consider the 2016 PSAT/NMSQT®

## Your NMSC Selection Index

# 139

NMSC uses a Selection Index based on PSAT/NMSQT scores as an initial screen of students who enter its scholarship programs. To calculate your Selection Index, double the sum of your Reading, Writing and Language, and Math Test scores.

## Eligibility Information

If your Selection Index places you among the 50,000 high scorers who qualify for National Merit Scholarship Program recognition, you will be notified next September.

## Entry Requirements

(Information you provided on your answer sheet)

High school student:

**YES**

Year to complete high school and enroll full-time in college:

**2018**

Years to be spent in grades 9–12:

**4**

U.S. Citizenship:

**YES**

The National Merit Selection Index is derived by doubling the sum of the student's individual test scores. Each state has a different cut off. If your student is above the cut off score, he or she will receive additional information and an application for the scholarship program.

## Your Scores: Next Steps

Additional skills and improvement suggestions can be found in your online score report.

Your score indicates that you are already likely able to:

Reading Test

Improve your skills by focusing on the following suggestions:

Revise text as needed to improve the exactness or content appropriateness of word choices within somewhat challenging texts

Retain or add information or ideas to a piece of a text to support claims or points in somewhat challenging text

Revise somewhat challenging text to ensure that information is presented in the most logical order

# 23

8 to 38

Retain or add information or ideas to a piece of text to support claims or points in challenging text

Use a variety of sentence structures to accomplish a rhetorical purpose such as persuading an audience

Revise text as needed to improve the exactness or content appropriateness of word choices within challenging texts

## Writing and Language Test

Draw reasonable conclusions from somewhat challenging texts

Describe the overall structure of a somewhat challenging text

Identify claims and counterclaims explicitly stated in a somewhat challenging passage

# 20

8 to 38

Draw reasonable inferences and logical conclusions from challenging texts

Analyze information presented quantitatively in such forms as graphs, tables, and charts and relate that information to information presented in somewhat challenging text

Determine how the selection of specific words shapes meaning and tone in a challenging passage

## Math Test

Interpret a linear inequality in one variable with rational coefficients that represents a context. Select the equation of a line of best fit and interpret the slope and intercept of the line in the context of the situation (when a linear model is appropriate)

Interpret sample statistics understanding and using margin of error

Solve and interpret a quadratic function or equation that represents a context and requires multiple steps

Calculate and interpret frequency distributions using tables and other representational methods

# 26.5

8 to 38

Determine how a graph may be affected by a change to its equation

Determine the value of a constant or coefficient for an equation with no solution or infinitely many solutions

Using a specified model, make a prediction and compare the predicted values with the actual values in the data set

Within a context, compare the center of two separate data sets with different spreads

## Get more

students

This section repeats the individual test scores and provides general advice about how to increase the scores.

Often, this advice is too general to provide the basis for a solid study plan. Instead, skip ahead to the student's answers for more valuable information.



SAT Practice

Connect to Khan Academy for FREE, world-class SAT practice on [satpractice.org](http://satpractice.org).



good matches for you.



register for it now.

# Your Question-Level Feedback

## Reading

Question #	Correct	Your Answer	Difficulty	Subscore	Cross-Test Score
1	A	✓	Easy		
2	B	A	Easy	COE	
3	B	✓	Easy		
4	B	A	Easy	WIC	
5	C	✓	Easy		
6	D	✓	Easy		
7	B	✓	Easy	COE	
8	A	✓	Easy	WIC	
9	D	✓	Easy	WIC	
10	A	✓	Easy		HSS
11	D	C	Easy	WIC	HSS
12	D	B	Easy	WIC	HSS
13	D	A	Easy	COE	HSS
14	A	C	Easy		HSS
15	C	B	Easy	COE	HSS
16	B	C	Easy		HSS
17	D	C	Easy		HSS
18	B	D	Easy		HSS
19	A	✓	Easy	SCI	
20	C	✓	Easy	SCI	
21	B	D	Easy	COE	SCI
22	D	✓	Easy	SCI	
23	B	D	Easy	SCI	
24	D	✓	Easy	WIC	SCI
25	C	✓	Easy	WIC	SCI
26	B	A	Easy	SCI	
27	B	C	Easy	SCI	
28	A	C	Easy	COE	SCI
29	A	A	Easy	WIC	HSS
30	B	✓	Easy	HSS	
31	D	✓	Easy	COE	HSS
32	A	✓	Easy		HSS
33	C	✓	Easy	COE	HSS
34	A	B	Easy	WIC	HSS
35	A	B	Easy		HSS
36	C	Ø	Easy		HSS
37	B	C	Easy		HSS
38	C	D	Easy		HSS
39	C	✓	Easy	SCI	
40	C	✓	Easy	SCI	
41	B	✓	Easy	SCI	
42	B	✓	Easy	COE	SCI
43	A	B	Easy	SCI	
44	A	✓	Easy	WIC	SCI
45	A	C	Easy	SCI	
46	D	A	Easy	COE	SCI
47	C	B	Easy		

## Writing and Language

Question #	Correct	Your Answer	Difficulty	Subscore	Cross-Test Score
1	D	C	Easy	SEC	
2	B	✓	Easy	EOI	HSS
3	C	D	Easy	SEC	
16	B	A	Easy	SEC	
17	B	D	Easy	SEC	
18	A	✓	Easy	EOI	SCI
19	B	✓	Easy	EOI	SCI
20	C	D	Easy	COE, EOI	SCI
21	A	✓	Easy	COE, EOI	SCI
22	A	B	Easy	WIC, EOI	SCI
23	C	B	Easy	WIC, EOI	
24	D	C	Easy	SEC	
25	C	D	Easy	SEC	
26	A	✓	Easy	COE, EOI	
27	A	D	Easy	EOI	
28	B	✓	Easy	COE, EOI	
29	D	A	Easy	WIC, EOI	
30	C	B	Easy	SEC	
31	D	✓	Easy	EOI	
32	B	✓	Easy	SEC	
33	D	✓	Easy	SEC	
34	D	B	Easy	EOI	
35	D	✓	Easy	SEC	
36	B	A	Easy	EOI	
37	C	D	Easy	COE, EOI	
38	A	✓	Easy	SEC	
39	C	✓	Easy	SEC	
40	D	A	Easy	WIC, EOI	
41	D	B	Easy	SEC	
42	A	Ø	Easy	SEC	
43	C	B	Easy	COE, EOI	
44	B	C	Easy	WIC, EOI	

## Math Test-Calculator

Question #	Correct	Your Answer	Difficulty	Subscore	Cross-Test Score
1	B	✓	Easy	PSD	HSS
2	A	✓	Easy	HOA	
3	B	✓	Easy	PSD	SCI
15	C	A	Easy		
16	B	✓	Easy	PSD	HSS
17	D	✓	Easy	PSD	
18	B	A	Easy	PSD	HSS
19	C	A	Easy	HOA	
20	B	✓	Easy	PAM	
21	B	C	Easy	HOA	
22	D	C	Easy	PAM	
23	D	B	Easy	HOA	SCI
24	C	Ø	Easy	PAM	SCI
25	B	A	Easy	PSD	SCI
26	D	✓	Easy	PAM	
27	D	A	Easy	HOA	

Question #	Correct	Your Answer	Difficulty	Subscore	Cross-Test Score
15	C	A	Easy		
16	B	✓	Easy	PSD	HSS
17	D	✓	Easy	PSD	
18	B	A	Easy	PSD	HSS
19	C	A	Easy	HOA	
20	B	✓	Easy	PAM	
21	B	C	Easy	HOA	
22	D	C	Easy	PAM	
23	D	B	Easy	HOA	SCI
24	C	Ø	Easy	PAM	SCI
25	B	A	Easy	PSD	SCI
26	D	✓	Easy	PAM	
27	D	A	Easy	HOA	

Here you can see all of the questions your student missed, their difficulty, and the subscore they contributed to.

Look for patterns, like if your student missed questions at the ends of sections or missed mostly hard or easy questions (i.e. content gaps vs. careless mistakes).

Question #	Correct	Your Answer	Difficulty	Subscore	Cross-Test Score
28	65	60	Easy	HOA	
29	0, 12	2	Easy	PAM	
30	1368	Ø	Easy	PSD	HSS
31	85	75	Easy	PSD	HSS

## Math Test-No Calculator

Question #	Correct	Your Answer	Difficulty	Subscore	Cross-Test Score
1	D	✓	Easy	PAM	
2	A	✓	Easy	PAM	SCI
3	B	✓	Easy	PAM	
4	C	B	Easy	PAM	
5	C	✓	Easy	HOA	
6	B	✓	Easy	HOA	SCI
7	A	✓	Easy	HOA	

Question #	Correct	Your Answer	Difficulty	Subscore	Cross-Test Score
8	B	C	Easy	HOA	
9	C	✓	Easy	HOA	
10	D	✓	Easy	HOA	HSS
11	A	C	Easy		
12	C	✓	Easy	PAM	
13	B	A	Easy	PAM	

Question #	Correct	Your Answer	Difficulty	Subscore	Cross-Test Score
14	2	0	Easy	HOA	
15	90	80	Easy	HOA	
16	1	2	Easy	PAM	
17	0	✓	Easy	PAM	

Access Code  
A02670146P

See the questions, and the answer explanations, online  
[studentscores.collegeboard.org](https://studentscores.collegeboard.org)

### Subscore

**COE** Command of Evidence  
**WIC** Words in Context  
**EOI** Expression of Ideas  
**SEC** Standard English Conventions  
**HOA** Heart of Algebra  
**PSD** Problem Solving and Data Analysis  
**PAM** Passport to Advanced Math

### Key

✓ Correct  
 Ø Omitted  
 U Unscorable  
 Easy  
 Medium  
 Hard

### Cross-Test Score

**HSS** Analysis in History/Social Studies  
**SCI** Analysis in Science

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Don't miss this: you can pull up all of the questions and answers online! This is incredibly helpful for diagnosing your student's errors at a more detailed level.

# FREQUENTLY-ASKED QUESTIONS

## ***Does the PSAT matter in college admissions?***

A student's PSAT score does not matter for college admissibility. College admissions officers will not see it when they are evaluating applications. The PSAT is simply a benchmark for students to use when thinking about preparing for the actual SAT.

The only case where a PSAT score may influence the college process is in the financial aid process: if a student qualifies to be a National Merit Scholar, he or she may then qualify for a scholarship or other merit aid.

## ***What should we do with this PSAT score?***

The best way to use the PSAT is as a benchmark for the SAT. Students can get a sense from their PSAT score how they would do on the SAT if they took it that day.

We believe that students who plan to take a college admissions exam should practice and prepare for it. The PSAT will tell you how much practice and preparation your student might need for the SAT. By looking at the questions your student got correct or incorrect, the PSAT will also give you a general sense of what topics or content areas your student needs to work on most.

## ***Why is the PSAT scored out of 1520, not 1600?***

The new PSAT is designed to be scored on the same scale as the SAT. In other words, a 1360 on the PSAT should translate to a student scoring right around a 1360 on the SAT.

However, because the PSAT is administered earlier than when most students take the SAT, the test is slightly easier. To account for this, the score can only go up to 1520, or 760 in each section.

## ***What if the score seems low?***

That's OK. A lot of students score lower than they would like. Remind your student to see this score as a starting point: it's where he or she is now, not a prediction of where he or she will score eventually.

If your student's score is lower than he or she hoped, it's just a sign that diligent practice is needed prior to actually taking the test. In many cases, students don't take the PSAT seriously. College isn't quite on their mind yet, or they aren't sure why they have to take the PSAT in school. A low score can be a useful wake up call that they need to focus, try their best, and potentially start studying for the real deal that's coming up.

# WHAT TO DO NEXT

## 1. Review and analyze this report

- First look at the actual questions and your student's responses. Identify all the questions the student missed or skipped, and make a list of those topics.
- If the student can remember where he or she guessed, also review those questions.
- Review the more challenging questions in each section (marked with a level 3 difficulty on the PSAT report) whether or not the student got them wrong—they may have guessed and gotten lucky!
- Take notes on each question the student missed or skipped:

*If it was in a reading section, what kind of passage was it—fiction, science, history? How much of the passage did the question refer to—one line, one paragraph, or the whole passage?*

*Did the question involve a table, chart, or figure? What kind?*

*If it was in a math section, was it a lengthy word problem, a picture of an x-y plane, or a nasty-looking algebraic equation?*

Answering these questions may help identify whether there are larger issues at play, more than just reading comprehension or a specific topic within a particular math field.

- Finally, look at larger patterns in the student's performance.

*If the student got a number of easy or medium questions wrong, this may indicate that he or she was rushing or paid poor attention to detail.*

*If he or she left a lot of questions blank at the end of a section, the student may have run out of time.*

# WHAT TO DO NEXT (CONTINUED)

## 2. Take an ACT diagnostic test

The SAT and ACT are accepted equally by all 4-year U.S. colleges and universities. Students can choose which test they want to submit. The tests are similar, but many students find they do significantly better on one test or the other.

Comparing ACT practice scores to PSAT scores is the first step in deciding which test to focus on. You can use the same methods you used to analyze your student's PSAT results to analyze your student's ACT results.

For more information on choosing between exams, check out this article:

<http://signededucation.com/sat-vs-act>

## 3. Set a goal score

Keep two things in mind as you and your student set an SAT or ACT goal score:

- *A student's ideal college.* While most students may not know now where they want to apply, having a sense of the type of school or range of schools is important to knowing what SAT or ACT score might be necessary.

Most colleges publish the "middle 50%" of SAT and ACT scores for the incoming class. Check these ranges for some of your student's ideal colleges, and compare that to the PSAT or ACT diagnostic score to see how much the student needs to improve.

- *A feasible increase.* Typically, students can expect to increase 100-200 points on the SAT or 3-4 points on the ACT with regular, diligent and concerted preparation. Many students can achieve a greater increase, but it requires a lot more work.

We don't discourage students from setting a goal score that's beyond these thresholds, but it's important for them to understand and commit to the amount of work required to achieve their goals.



# WHAT TO DO NEXT (CONTINUED)

## 4. Pick a target test date

We generally recommend students spend 2-4 months preparing for the SAT or ACT.

Most students also take the test two or even three times. Colleges don't mind if students have taken the test multiple times, though it's usually unproductive for students to take the tests more than three times.

Depending on a student's goal score, he or she may budget more or less time for preparation. For example, if your student is very close to the goal score already, he or she can probably schedule the test sooner. Conversely, if the student are very far from the goal score, he or she will likely need more time.

Given the test dates in the table below, if juniors start preparing shortly after the PSAT results come out in December, a general first test date of March/April is good. A second date can be planned for May/June.

Testing again in the fall of senior year is an option, but we strongly recommend students try to finalize their testing by the end of junior year. This is important because it gives students a clear idea of their scores. This will help them create a reliable college list, and it also makes sure that they have ample time to devote to their college applications.

SAT			ACT		
TEST DATE	REGISTER BY	LATE REGISTRATION DEADLINES	TEST DATE	REGISTER BY	LATE REGISTRATION DEADLINE
JAN 21, 2017	DEC 21, 2016	JAN 3, 2017 REGISTRATIONS BY MAIL  JAN 10, 2017 ONLINE/PHONE REGISTRATIONS	FEB 11, 2017	JAN 13, 2017	JAN 20, 2017
MAR 11, 2017	FEB 10, 2017	FEB 21, 2017 REGISTRATIONS BY MAIL  FEB 28, 2017 ONLINE/PHONE REGISTRATIONS	APR 8, 2017	MAR 3, 2017	MAR 17, 2017
MAY 6, 2017	APR 7, 2017	APR 18, 2017 REGISTRATIONS BY MAIL  APR 25, 2017 ONLINE/PHONE REGISTRATIONS	JUN 10, 2017	MAY 5, 2017	MAY 19, 2017
JUN 3, 2017	MAY 9, 2017	MAY 16, 2017 REGISTRATIONS BY MAIL  MAY 24, 2017 ONLINE/PHONE REGISTRATIONS			

# WHAT TO DO NEXT (CONTINUED)

## 5. Build a study plan

Taking into account a student's starting PSAT or ACT diagnostic score, the goal score, target test date, and the time that he or she has to study, you and your student should then build a week-by-week test prep plan.

We normally recommend students commit to studying at least an hour a day, three times per week (or more). To make the best use of this time, students should have a roadmap for what to study.

Students should focus on one or two sections at a time. They should work on understanding concepts, doing practice problems and reviewing them, and taking full-length practice sections or exams.

This plan can be as simple as just a list of chapters in a prep book to cover each week, or it could be as complex as a specific list of concepts and problems to cover every week. You can use the list you developed from analyzing your test scores to determine what to study and when. (Hint: Review foundational concepts first!)

The goal is to have a guide so that study time is used effectively.

For more on how to build a study plan, check out this article:

<http://signededucation.com/testing-plan>

## 6. Take practice tests and use them wisely

Some students make the mistake of overtesting. Just taking practice tests over and over again is not an efficient use of time. However, it is important to take 1-3 practice tests in the regular course of preparation.

Students should space these practice tests out in order to assess their progress, and they should take them under realistic conditions (e.g., in the morning, ideally in a quiet but unfamiliar environment).

Systematically reviewing these tests (in the same way we describe reviewing the PSAT results) will help students continually refine their study plans and make sure that their studying is effective.

*Have more questions or need more guidance?*

**CONTACT US: (617) 714-5262  
INFO@SIGNETEDUCATION.COM**

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