

ARMENTA LEARNING ACADEMY

Empower · Enrich · Educate

Wisdom **I**ntegrity **S**uccess **E**xcellence through Education

SAT/ACT Preparation

Written by Julie M. Armenta, M.A. Founder & Education & Family Specialist

Until recently, the ACT was traditionally required by colleges in the Midwest, and the SAT was the test of choice in the Northeast and on the East and West coasts. But now an increasing number of students are taking the ACT, and the majority of schools in the United States now accept *both* SAT and ACT test results. Admissions officers and educators often describe the difference between SAT and ACT in these terms: the ACT is a content-based test, whereas the SAT tests critical thinking and problem solving. Some schools such as the ones in the Ivy League require both tests.

Start as early as sophomore year preparing for the SAT and ACT

Good SAT prep books

Gruber's Complete Preparation for the New SAT

The College Board's Official SAT Study Guide for the New SAT

The Princeton Review's Cracking the New SAT, 2013

Good ACT prep books

The Real ACT Prep Guide

The ACT for Dummies

Workshops, classes, private tutoring

Take as many as you need to score your best

We offer SAT support at Armenta Learning Academy

We recommend 4 hours a week studying for the SAT and frequent practice tests with 2-3 months to prepare ahead.

Where to take the test:

Saddleback College

You can look up other local locations online

When: The test is generally given 6-7 times a year starting in the Fall. This year's schedule is as follows:

SAT Dates

Test Date

Sat., October 6, 2012

Sat., November 3, 2012

Sat., December 1, 2012

Sat., January 26, 2013

Sat., March 9, 2013

Sat., May 4, 2013

Sat., June 1, 2013

ACT Dates

Test Date

Sat., September 8, 2012

Sat., October 27, 2012

Sat., December 8, 2012

Sat., February 9, 2013

Sat., April 13, 2013

Sat., June 8, 2013

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Cost: SAT: \$50 unless you qualify for the SAT waiver program

ACT: \$35 (no writing), \$50.50 (w/writing)

How often:

You can take it as often as you like, but some colleges average the scores. Find out the policy of the college of your choice and plan accordingly. Colleges usually consider the highest score, but each one has its own policy.

Send scores to colleges you are applying to:

Cal State Fullerton has no official minimum but the average person scores above 500 on both math and verbal. However USC has strict requirements and expects scores above 620 in verbal and 650 and up in math and an Ivy League school requires 630 and up in verbal and 670 and up in math. Look at the website of the college of your choice. Most of them will have average SAT scores of their students posted on the site.

Don't rely on only the SAT scores:

Consistent excellence is more impressive than high scores on the SAT or ACT. GPA matters, so keep it as high as possible. Colleges look at the overall success of a student including activities outside of academics such as athletics, performances, arts, community service, clubs, jobs or internships and any leadership accomplishments.

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