

new sat verbal prep for reading and writing mastery decoding the verbal part of the revised sat march 2016 and beyond

New SAT Verbal Prep for Reading and Writing Mastery: Decoding the Verbal Part of the Revised SAT March 2016 and Beyond

The SAT has long been a crucial component of college admissions in the United States, and the recent revisions made in March 2016 have significantly altered its structure and content. Understanding the new verbal components—Reading and Writing—can be challenging for students aiming to achieve mastery. This article will break down the essentials of the new SAT Verbal sections, providing strategies and tips to help students navigate these tests effectively.

Understanding the Revised SAT Structure

The revised SAT is divided into two main sections: Evidence-Based Reading and Writing, and Math. The verbal part, which encompasses both reading and writing, is designed to assess a student's readiness for college-level work.

Evidence-Based Reading

The Evidence-Based Reading section consists of multiple-choice questions based on reading passages. These passages can include literature, historical documents, social sciences, and natural sciences.

1. **Passage Types:** Students will encounter various types of texts, including narratives, arguments, and informational texts.
2. **Question Types:** Questions may focus on comprehension, analysis, and the ability to interpret author's intent and tone.
3. **Textual Evidence:** Many questions require students to support their answers with specific references from the passage, emphasizing the importance of close reading.

Writing and Language

The Writing and Language section assesses a student's ability to revise and edit texts. This section includes multiple-choice questions focused on grammar, punctuation, and style. Key components include:

- **Grammar and Usage:** This includes questions about subject-verb agreement, verb tense, and pronoun usage.
- **Punctuation:** Students must demonstrate understanding of commas, semicolons, colons, and apostrophes.
- **Sentence Structure:** Questions will assess sentence variety and clarity, requiring students to recognize and fix awkward or unclear phrasing.

Strategies for Success on the Verbal Sections

To excel in the verbal sections of the SAT, students need a targeted approach to preparation. Here are some effective strategies:

1. Familiarize Yourself with the Test Format

Understanding the format of the SAT is crucial for effective preparation. Familiarize yourself with the types of passages and questions you will encounter. Taking practice tests under timed conditions can help you gain confidence and improve your pacing.

2. Develop Strong Reading Habits

Strong reading skills are essential for the Evidence-Based Reading section. Consider the following tips:

- **Read Daily:** Engage with a variety of texts, including fiction, non-fiction, and academic articles.
- **Practice Active Reading:** Take notes, highlight important points, and summarize paragraphs to improve comprehension.
- **Analyze Arguments:** Pay attention to the author's claims, supporting evidence, and counterarguments.

3. Focus on Grammar and Style in Writing

The Writing and Language section requires a strong grasp of grammar and stylistic conventions. Here are some tips to enhance your skills:

1. **Review Grammar Rules:** Brush up on key grammar concepts, such as parts of speech and sentence structure.
2. **Practice Editing:** Work with sample texts to identify and correct grammatical errors and improve clarity.
3. **Learn from Mistakes:** After taking practice tests, review incorrect answers to understand your mistakes and avoid them in the future.

4. Utilize Official SAT Prep Resources

Using official SAT prep materials can provide valuable insights into the test's structure and content. Resources include:

- **The College Board:** The official SAT website offers practice tests, sample questions, and study guides.
- **Khan Academy:** Free online resources tailored specifically for SAT preparation, including personalized practice based on your performance.
- **Prep Books:** Consider investing in reputable SAT prep books that provide comprehensive content reviews and practice questions.

Time Management Techniques

Effective time management is vital during the SAT. Here are some strategies to help you manage your time effectively:

1. Practice Pacing

When taking practice tests, time yourself to ensure you can complete each section within the allotted timeframe.

2. Prioritize Questions

During the actual test, quickly assess which questions you find easiest to answer. Tackle these first before spending more time on challenging questions.

3. Use the Process of Elimination

If you are unsure about an answer, use the process of elimination to narrow down your options. Cross out any obviously incorrect answers to improve your chances of guessing correctly if needed.

Common Pitfalls to Avoid

As students prepare for the SAT verbal sections, certain pitfalls can hinder their performance. Here are some common traps to avoid:

1. Skipping the Reading Passages

Some students may try to answer questions without reading the passages thoroughly. This can lead to misunderstandings and incorrect answers. Always read the passages carefully.

2. Ignoring Context Clues

Context clues within the passages can provide valuable information for answering questions, particularly vocabulary and inference questions. Be sure to consider the surrounding text when making decisions.

3. Overlooking Answer Choices

Sometimes, students may choose the first answer that seems correct without considering all available options. Take the time to read all answer choices before making a selection.

Conclusion

Mastering the verbal sections of the revised SAT requires a comprehensive

understanding of its structure, content, and strategies for success. By engaging in targeted practice, developing strong reading and writing habits, and utilizing official resources, students can enhance their skills and boost their confidence. Remember to focus on time management and avoid common pitfalls during your preparation. With dedication and the right approach, achieving mastery in the SAT verbal sections is within reach.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the key changes to the verbal section of the SAT introduced in March 2016?

The key changes include a greater emphasis on evidence-based reading and writing, the inclusion of complex texts, and the introduction of questions that require students to analyze and interpret information from various sources.

How can students effectively prepare for the reading section of the new SAT?

Students can prepare by practicing with a variety of texts, focusing on comprehension skills, understanding context, and analyzing arguments. Utilizing official SAT practice materials and online resources can also be beneficial.

What strategies can students use to improve their writing skills for the SAT?

Students can improve their writing skills by studying grammar rules, practicing essay writing, and learning to structure their arguments clearly. Reviewing sample essays and feedback can also help refine their writing.

Are there specific types of passages that frequently appear in the SAT reading section?

Yes, the SAT reading section often includes passages from literature, historical documents, social sciences, and natural sciences. Familiarity with these genres can help students better understand and analyze the material.

What role does vocabulary play in the new SAT verbal section?

While the new SAT places less emphasis on obscure vocabulary, understanding context clues and the meaning of words within passages is crucial. Students should focus on academic vocabulary and how to infer meanings from context.

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