



“Should my student take the SAT or the ACT?”

We get asked this question quite often. Like, really often. But before we delve into our answer, please know that The Study Hall recognizes that every student is different and your child’s situation may call for a slightly different plan of action. However, we have found this advice to be applicable to the majority of the students we have worked with. A few things to consider:

- The SAT was redesigned in 2016 to, among other things, become more aligned with the Common Core. Every public school is required to follow the Common Core.
- In response to more and more seniors applying for college earlier in the year, the SAT now offers an SAT date in August. This test date is the “earliest” date offered to incoming seniors.
- The majority of colleges will consider either test scores and do not have a preference of one over the other.
- With the recent changes made to the SAT (and the slight tweaks to the ACT), it is fair to say that both tests are more similar to each other than they ever have been in the past.

So...what is our advice? Pick a test and stick with it! Students, and parents, already have enough anxiety-inducing forces in their lives. It is our belief that standardized testing doesn’t have to be one of them. Because there really isn’t a difference between a “SAT student” and an “ACT student” anymore, it is much more important that the student adequately prepares for either test rather than worrying about which one to take.

With all of this being said, we are partial to the SAT as it allows for more time per question and mirrors the common core (making it easy to prep for) while offering the most test dates. We suggest taking the SAT for the first time during the middle of your junior year, again in the spring of your junior year, and then going into your senior year (if necessary). This advice can change a bit from student-to-student, so feel free to come in and meet with us. We offer complimentary SAT/ACT consultations.