

It easier. Because the clues will be more concentrated, your reasoning skills will need to be razor focused as well.

Notes Analysis (Rhetorical Analysis)

The College Board has added a new question type in the digital SAT Reading and Writing test that requires you to use your rhetorical synthesis skills.

These questions incorporate a bit of storytelling within the questions themselves. They usually begin with a sentence telling you that a student took some notes while researching a topic. A bulleted list of notes follows. Then they give you more information about the student and what the student wants to do with the notes. Sometimes the student's goal is to prove or disprove a point, suggest a plan of action based on information from the notes, emphasize a conclusion, summarize the information, and so forth. Your job is to decide which of the answer choices supplies the best statement based on the notes that accomplish the student's goal.

Be careful not to get confused by all those notes. Find out what the goal is first, and then read the notes to see which ones are relevant to the student's goal. By establishing that information first, you should be able to eliminate the incorrect answer choices quickly.

The digital SAT also includes the types of grammar and punctuation questions you have come to expect on a standardized test. These include:

TIP

Pay close attention to conjunctive adverbs.

- Number and Tense Agreement (subject/verb agreement, pronoun/antecedent agreement, verb tense agreement, and so forth)
- Punctuation
- Sentence Structure and Organization
- Transitions

Math

There are two Math modules on the new digital SAT. The first module will be standard difficulty. The second module will be adaptive, meaning it has a difficulty level based on how you did on the first module. Each module contains 22 questions.

Both multiple-choice and student-response (fill-in) questions will appear in the new Math modules. The fill-in questions are sprinkled in about 25% of the exam. They do not appear together the way they did on the paper-based SAT.

The questions will be about 35% Algebra, 35% Advanced Math, 15% Problem-Solving/Data Analysis, and 15% Geometry and Trigonometry. All numbers used in the digital SAT are real numbers. The SAT no longer includes imaginary and complex numbers.

Calculators

Calculators are now permitted on this portion of the SAT. You can bring your own calculator or use the one provided in the program. Also available is a math reference sheet with geometry and trigonometry facts and formulas. Both features can be clicked on right from your computer screen.

- Make sure your calculator has fresh batteries the week of the test.
- Do not purchase a calculator for the test that is more sophisticated than the one you use in school. A graphing calculator may be useful, but most of the graphs can be sketched quickly by hand.
- Try to do as many of the calculations as you can mentally; use your calculator or the one provided by the program to make computations that would waste valuable time if done by hand.

The level of difficulty on the Math section of the digital SAT generally proceeds from easy to medium to hard. The following question would appear in the difficult section.

▶ Example

$$-16x^2 - 24x + m = 0$$

In the equation above, m is a constant. If the equation has exactly one solution, what is the value of m ?

- (A) -9
- (B) -3
- (C) 0
- (D) 9

The correct answer is (A). When looking for the number of solutions, use the discriminant. For exactly one solution, the discriminant states:

$$\begin{aligned}b^2 - 4ac &= 0 \\-16x^2 - 24x + m &= 0 \\a = -16 \quad b = -24 \quad c = m \\(-24)^2 - (4)(-16)(m) &= 0 \\576 + 64m &= 0 \\576 &= -64m \\m &= -9\end{aligned}$$

The digital SAT includes negative answers for the first time.

▶ Example

What is the *least* value of $\sqrt{(x+2)^2} = \sqrt{4x+13}$??

Square both sides, and solve for x .

$$\begin{aligned}(\sqrt{(x+2)^2})^2 &= (\sqrt{4x+13})^2 \\(x+2)^2 &= 4x+13 \\x^2 + 4x + 4 &= 4x + 13 \\x^2 - 9 &= 0 \\(x+3)(x-3) &= 0 \\x = -3 \quad x = 3\end{aligned}$$

Check for extraneous solutions.

$$x = -3$$

$$\sqrt{(-3 + 2)^2} = \sqrt{4x + 13}$$

$$1 = 1$$

$$x = 3$$

$$\sqrt{(3 + 2)^2} = \sqrt{4(3) + 13}$$

$$\sqrt{25} = \sqrt{25}$$

$$5 = 5$$

Both 3 and -3 are solutions to the problem. However, the question asks for the *least* value, so enter your -3 on your digital test form.

Reading

Reading Practice Questions

Words in Context

When you are attempting to discover the meanings of words, look for context clues, such as:

- **Definition** (Some older churches contain feretories, shrines used to house relics of saints.)
- **Example** (There are some members of the lily family that we eat every day,—for example, garlic.)
- **Comparison** (An oriel is like a large bay window with attitude.)
- **Contrast** (Unlike the silk flowers in the hall, origami is made of paper.)
- **Restatement** (She realized that her new boss was irascible. In other words, the boss had a quick temper.)
- **Synonym** (He sent in troops to quash, or subdue, the rioting crowd.)
- **Detail** (Frontogenesis occurred over central Texas last night. Cold air from the north collided with warm Gulf air to produce thunderstorms.)

Remember, context clues can lead to the identity of any word you may see in an online article, a book you may be reading, or instructional materials you see in your classroom. The bulleted items mentioned above will be your tools (clues) to do just that!

Try to practice by observing interesting words you may see throughout your busy day that you are not sure the meaning of. Then look for the context

clues to help! This is a good type of SAT question. It also helps to build your vocabulary.

Practice

Each question has one or more passages. Carefully read each passage and question, and choose the best answer to the question based on the passage(s).

1. This text is from Anne Fadiman, *Ex Libris: Confessions of a Common Reader*, copyright © 1998 by Anne Fadiman.

I call the “to each his own” quandary the His’er Problem, after a solution originally proposed by Chicago school superintendent Ella Young in 1912: “To each his’er own.” I’m sorry. I just can’t. My reactionary self has aesthetic as well as grammatical standards, and his’er is hideous. Unlike Ms., his’er could never become reflexive. (I might interject here that when I posed the His’er Problem to my brother, who was raised in the same grammatical hothouse as I, he surprised me by saying, “I won’t say his’er. That would be a capitulation to barbarism. But I would be willing to consider a more rhythmically acceptable neologism such as hyr or hes, which would be preferable to having to avoid his by plotting each sentence in advance like a military campaign.”)

As used in the text, what does the word “neologism” most nearly mean?

- (A) New word
 - (B) Contraction
 - (C) Pronoun
 - (D) Correct word
2. The following text is from the beginning of short stories by F. Scott Fitzgerald in *Flappers and Philosophers*, originally published in 1920.

There he paused for a moment until his eyes became accustomed to the sun, and then seeing the girl under the awning he uttered a long even grunt of disapproval. If he had intended thereby to obtain a rise of any sort he was doomed to disappointment. The girl calmly turned over two pages, turned back one, raised the lemon mechanically to tasting distance, and then very faintly but quite unmistakably yawned.

As used in the text, what does the word “rise” most nearly mean?

- (A) Increase
- (B) Greeting
- (C) Reaction
- (D) Wave

3. This passage is from Paul Fussell, “Hiroshima: A Soldier’s View,” copyright © 1981 by *The New Republic*.

I’ve already noted what “a few more days” would mean to the luckless troops and sailors on the spot, and as to being thoughtful when “opening up the age of nuclear warfare,” of course no one was focusing on anything as portentous as that, which reflects a historian’s tidy hindsight. The U.S. government was engaged not in that sort of momentous thing but in ending the war conclusively, as well as irrationally remembering Pearl Harbor with a vengeance.

As used in the text, what does the word “tidy” most nearly mean?

- (A) Clean
- (B) Orderly
- (C) Substantial
- (D) Satisfactory

4. This passage also is from Paul Fussell, “Hiroshima: A Soldier’s View,” copyright © 1981 by *The New Republic*.

Understanding the past requires pretending that you don’t know the present. It requires feeling its own pressure on your pulses without any ex post facto* illumination. That’s a harder thing to do than Joravsky seems to think.

As used in the text, what does the word “illumination” most nearly mean?

- (A) Exaggeration
- (B) Intellectual enlightenment
- (C) Pretension to knowledge
- (D) Spiritual enlightenment

5. This passage is from Irving Kristol, *Reflections of a Neoconservative*, copyright © 1983 by Irving Kristol.

A _____ society, a society whose civilization is shaped by market transactions, is always likely to reflect the appetites and preferences of common men and women. Each may not have much money, but there are so many of them that their tastes are decisive.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- (A) socialistic
- (B) commercial
- (C) philosophic
- (D) philanthropic

6. This passage is from Milton Friend, “Why Bother About Wildlife Disease?” from *U.S. Geological Survey Circular 1401*, 2014.

Some emerging zoonoses cause major economic impacts for _____ because of their presence in food production species such as poultry (H5N1) and swine (Nipah virus). For example, the highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza virus that appeared in Asia during 1997 and reached 51 countries by early 2010 caused billions of dollars in losses for the poultry industries of those countries.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- (A) horticulture
- (B) forestry
- (C) hydroponics

(D) agriculture

7. The following passage is from Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, translated from French into English by Henry Reeve and originally published in 1835. Alexis de Tocqueville was a French writer and visitor to the United States.

When I _____ to obey an unjust law, I do not contest the right of the majority to command, but I simply appeal from the sovereignty of the people to the sovereignty of mankind.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- (A) demand
(B) acquiesce
(C) refuse
(D) assent
8. The following passage is from “Sustainability and Renewable Resources” by Steven Hayward, Ph.D., Elizabeth Fowler, and Laura Steadman, copyright © 2000 by the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, Midland, Michigan.

Renewable resources are subject to a variety of _____, often more powerful than those acting on non-renewables. They are inexhaustible in the sense that they can be continually recycled, but this does not mean they are infinite in amount and does not prevent their degradation.

Which word choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- (A) stresses
(B) conditioned responses
(C) protections
(D) refuges