



# College Board SAT<sup>®</sup> Suite of Assessments Webinar

Text Complexity and Skill Progression  
on the Evidence-Based Reading and  
Writing Section

January 25-29, 2021



# Agenda

Here's what we'll cover today:

- Text Complexity on the SAT® Suite of Assessments
- Skill Progression
- SAT® Suite Question Bank
- Instructional Strategies for the Reading and Writing and Language Tests



# Essential Prerequisites for College and Career Readiness

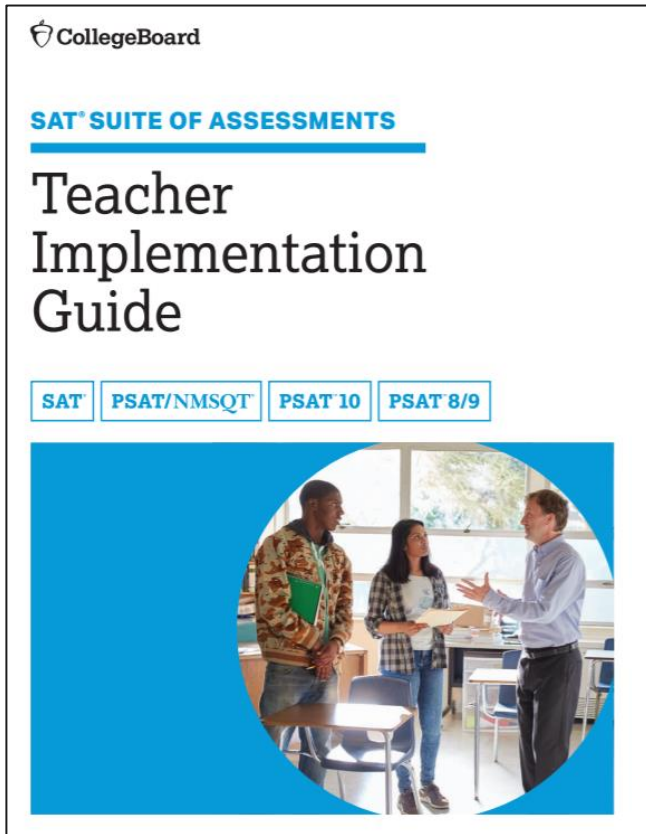


The College Board has concluded that students must be able to

- read, analyze, and use reasoning to comprehend challenging literary and informational texts, including texts about science and history/social studies topics, to demonstrate and expand their knowledge and understanding;
- revise and edit extended texts across a range of academic and career-related subjects for expression of ideas and show facility with a core set of grammar, usage, and punctuation conventions;
- show command of a focused but powerful set of knowledge, skills, and understandings in math and solve problems situated in science, social studies, and career-related contexts;
- make careful and deliberate use of evidence as they read and write;
- demonstrate skill in analyzing data, including data represented graphically in tables, graphs, charts, and the like, in reading, writing, and math contexts; and
- reveal an understanding of words in context and how word choice helps shape meaning and tone.

<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/pdf/redesigned-sat-k12-teacher-implementation-guide.pdf>

# Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Section



The Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Section of the SAT comprises the Reading Test and the Writing and Language Test.

Key elements of both tests include the following:

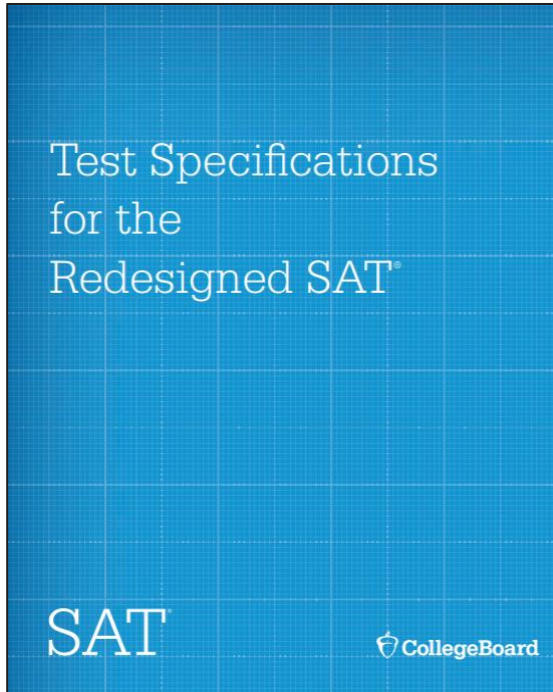
- the use of a specified range of text complexity aligned to college and career readiness levels of reading
- an emphasis on source analysis and use of evidence
- the inclusion of data and informational graphics, which students must analyze in conjunction with text
- a focus on words in context and word choice for rhetorical effect
- attention to a core set of important English language conventions and to effective written expression
- the requirement that students work with texts across a wide range of disciplines

<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/pdf/redesigned-sat-k12-teacher-implementation-guide.pdf>

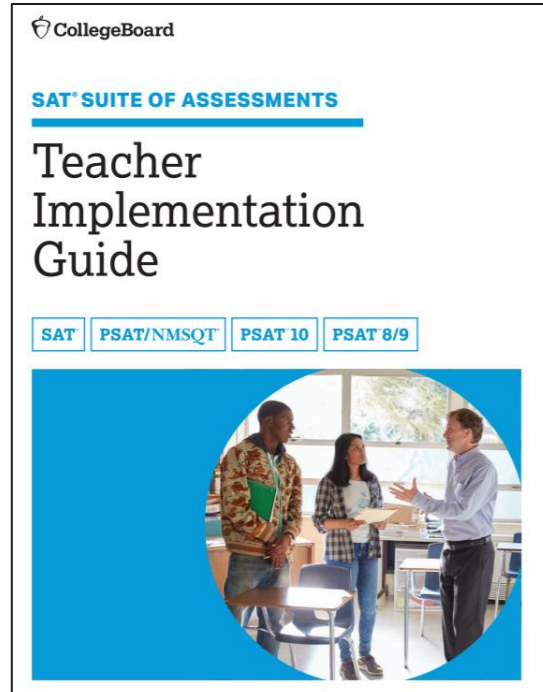


# Resources about Text Complexity

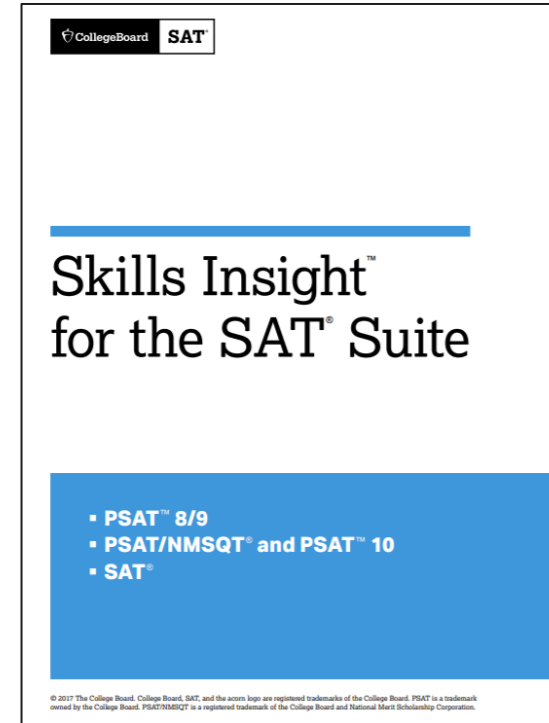
<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/sat-psat.aspx>



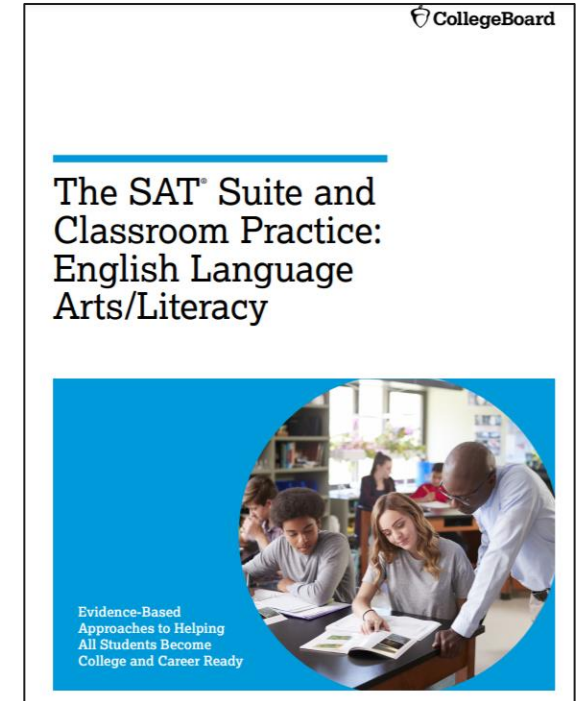
Test Specifications  
for the SAT



Teacher Implementation  
Guide



Skills Insight



The SAT Suite and Classroom  
Practice: English Language  
Arts/Literacy

# Curriculum Review Worksheets

<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/sat-psat.aspx>


**The Curriculum Review Worksheets are designed to help teachers**

- understand many of the skills and knowledge that are assessed on the PSAT™ 8/9, PSAT™ 10, and SAT®;
- review student performance;
- identify skills and knowledge that need additional instruction and support; and
- develop a plan for implementation.


The Curriculum Review Worksheets contain sets of tables addressing most of the skills and knowledge assessed on the PSAT™ 8/9, PSAT™ 10, and SAT® (Reading, Writing and Language, and Math Tests).

Each table includes a description of a skill or knowledge and provides a structure to guide educators to evaluate the placement of that skill or knowledge within the curriculum.

To request the full version of the curriculum worksheets for Reading, Writing and Language, and Math, please email [ILSAT@collegeboard.org](mailto:ILSAT@collegeboard.org).



**SAT® Math Test**  
Curriculum Review Worksheets



## Curriculum

### Introduction

This set of curriculum review worksheets is designed to help you

- understand many of the skills and knowledge that are assessed on Reading Tests;
- review student performance;
- identify skills and knowledge that need additional instruction and support; and
- develop a plan for implementation.

The Curriculum Review Worksheets contain set of tables addressing most of the skills and knowledge assessed on the SAT Suite Reading Tests. Each table includes description of a skill or knowledge and provides a structure to guide you as you evaluate the place of that skill or knowledge in your curriculum.

Each skill/knowledge table includes the following elements:

- The name and definition of the skill or knowledge (or skill/knowledge area)
- Questions guiding you to consider the place of the skill or knowledge in your curriculum
- An indication of which SAT Suite subscore(s) the skill or knowledge is associated with
- A series of statements describing the ways in and extent to which students scoring in various score ranges on the Reading Tests (e.g., 20–24) are typically attaining of the skill or knowledge, and spaces where you can indicate which of these statements best reflects your students' general level of attainment

The statements in the tables are taken from *Skills Insight for the SAT*, linked to describe typical performance of students scoring in various score ranges on the SAT Suite tests). The Skills Insight statements are generalizations based on analysis of questions and on the performance data of thousands of students taking one of assessments. In a few cases, identified in this set of worksheets by dark gray bar performance has to date been too inconsistent to allow for valid generalization

In each table, a light gray band signals that the 30–34 score range (and the "core complexity level") contains the college and career readiness test-level benchmark Test). More information about the benchmark, as well as benchmarks by grade can be found in *The College and Career Readiness Benchmarks for the SAT Suite* linked to above.

### Introduction

Curriculum Review Worksheets are designed to help you

- understand many of the skills and knowledge that are assessed on the SAT Suite of Assessments
- Math Tests;
- review student performance;
- identify skills and knowledge that need additional instruction and support; and
- develop a plan for implementation.


The curriculum review worksheets consist of a set of tables addressing most of the skills and knowledge assessed on the SAT Suite Math Tests. Each table includes description of a skill or knowledge and provides a structure to guide you as you evaluate the place of that skill or knowledge in your curriculum.

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- An indication of which SAT Suite subscore(s) the skill or knowledge is associated with
- A series of statements describing the ways in and extent to which students scoring in various score ranges on the Math Test (e.g., 20–24) are typically able to demonstrate attainment of the skill or knowledge, and spaces where you can indicate which of these statements best reflects your students' general level of attainment

To use these worksheets, please review the following resources:

- K-12 Score Reporting Portal data
- District/school curriculum maps
- Released SAT practice tests
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## Curriculum

### Introduction

This set of curriculum review worksheets is designed to help you

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- An indication of which SAT Suite subscore(s) the skill or knowledge is associated with
- A series of statements describing the ways in and extent to which students scoring in various score ranges on the Writing and Language Tests (e.g., 20–24) are typically able to demonstrate attainment of the skill or knowledge, and spaces where you can indicate which of these statements best reflects your students' general level of attainment

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In each table, a light gray band signals that the 30–34 score range contains the college and career readiness test-level benchmark (31 for the SAT Writing and Language Test). More information about the benchmark, as well as benchmarks by grade for grades 8 through 11, can be found in *The College and Career Readiness Benchmarks for the SAT Suite of Assessments*, also linked to above.

The set of tables below includes abbreviations for the four subscores associated with the SAT Suite Writing and Language Tests. Subscores identify areas of concentration on the tests and consequently have potential instructional value.

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This set of curriculum review worksheets is designed to help you

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- A series of statements describing the ways in and extent to which students scoring in various score ranges on the Writing and Language Tests (e.g., 20–24) are typically able to demonstrate attainment of the skill or knowledge, and spaces where you can indicate which of these statements best reflects your students' general level of attainment

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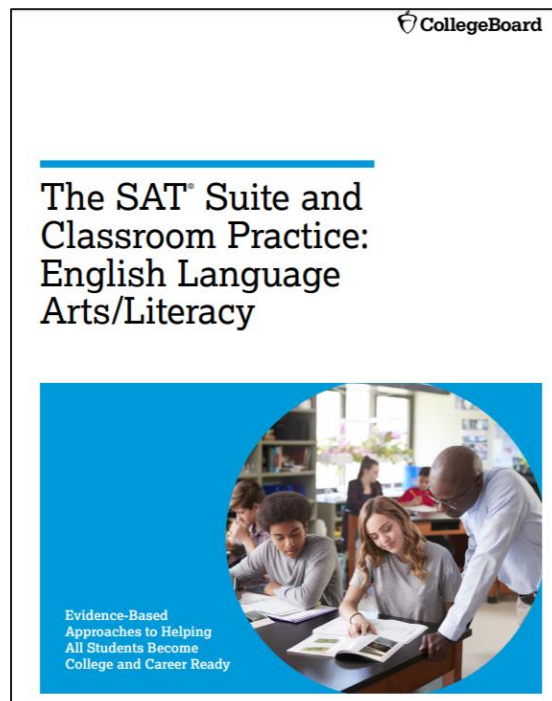
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# **Text Complexity, Complex Text, and Grade-Level Complex Text on the SAT® Suite of Assessments**

# Text Complexity



Text complexity refers to the inherent difficulty (or ease) of text distinct from reader and task considerations.

Aspects of text contributing to text complexity (or ease) include the following:

- both word- and sentence-level factors
- text structure
- density of information and ideas
- demands on the reader's knowledge

Text complexity conceived this way can be measured **quantitatively and qualitatively**.

Students taking the Reading Test and the Writing and Language Test are presented with passages of a consistent range of text complexity as measured quantitatively and qualitatively.

- The SAT versions of the tests contain passages in the grades 9–10, grades 11–CCR (college and career readiness), and early postsecondary text complexity bands.
- The PSAT™ 10 contains passages in the grades 9–10 and grades 11–CCR bands.
- The PSAT™ 8/9 includes passages in the upper end of the grades 6–8 band as well as passages in the grades 9–10 band.
- The SAT Essay includes passages in the high school (grades 9–12) text complexity range.

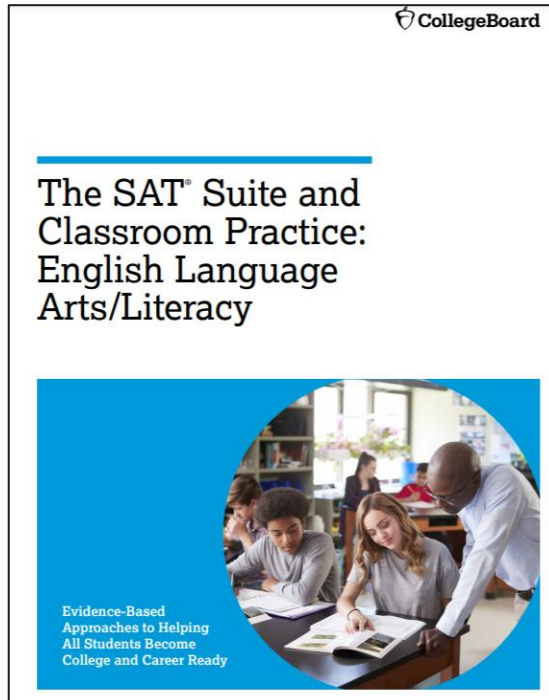


# Complex Text

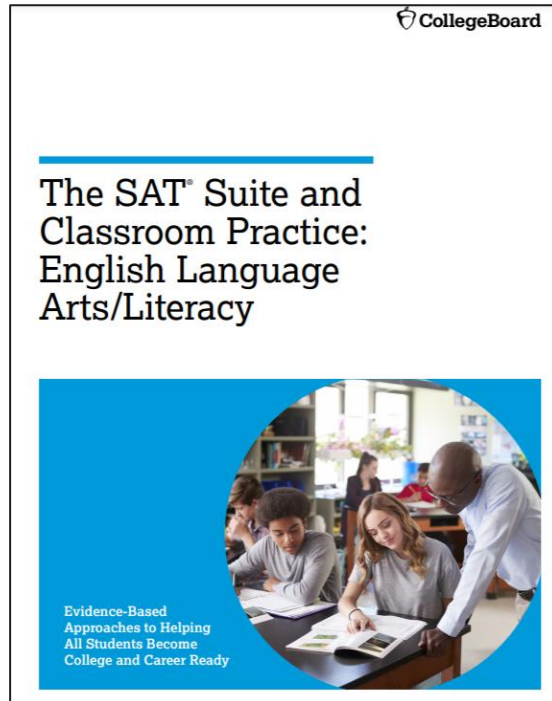
Complex text means a level of complexity typically assigned to students as part of coursework in common entry-level, credit-bearing courses in college and workforce training programs.

As defined by college and career readiness standards, students must be able to read complex text proficiently and independently by no later than the end of high school in order to be ready for the kinds of texts they'll encounter in postsecondary education.

In other words, by no later than high school graduation, students must be able to read and comprehend text at the college and career readiness level with little or no scaffolding and support.



# Grade-Level Complex Text

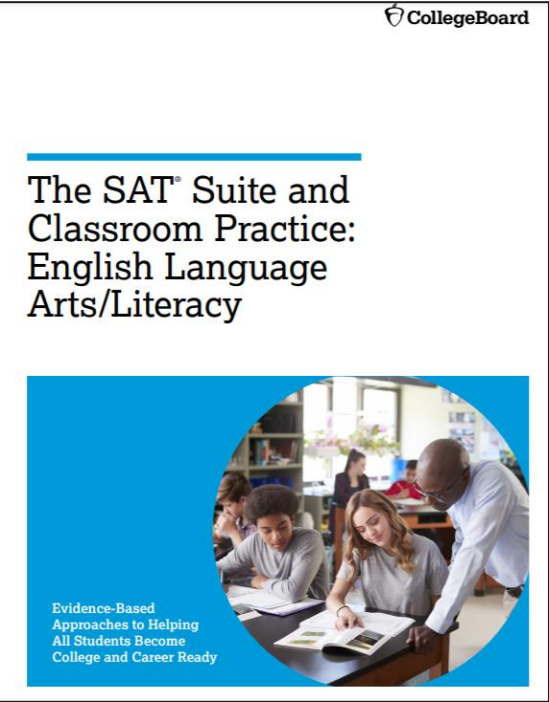


Grade-level complex text is material that's appropriately challenging relative to students' level of schooling.

We can think of grade-level complex text as steps on the journey to the destination of complex text.

In this conception, in order for students to reach college and career readiness proficiency in reading—that is, have the ability to read complex text independently—by the end of high school, they need to be asked to read appropriately challenging texts—that is, grade-level complex texts—all along the path of K–12 education.

# Definitions



Text Complexity	Complex Text	Grade-Level Complex Text
Text complexity refers to the inherent difficulty (or ease) of text distinct from reader and task considerations.	Complex text means a level of complexity typically assigned to students as part of course work in common entry-level, credit-bearing courses in college and workforce training programs.	Grade-level complex text is material that’s appropriately challenging relative to students’ level of schooling.

[The SAT Suite and Classroom Practice: English Language Arts/Literacy](#)

# Text Complexity



Evidence indicates that students' developed ability to comprehend complex text is strongly associated with college and career readiness and success.



Students taking the SAT see a consistent range of moderately challenging, complex, and highly complex texts, with the main focus on texts at the complex level.



# Text Complexity Levels

CollegeBoardSAT

SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Section  
Curriculum Review Worksheets

Introduction

This set of curriculum review worksheets is designed to help you

- understand many of the skills and knowledge that are assessed on the SAT Suite of Assessments Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Section;
- review student performance;
- identify skills and knowledge that need additional instruction and support; and
- develop a plan for implementation.

The Curriculum Review Worksheets contain a set of tables addressing most of the skills and knowledge assessed on the SAT Suite Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Section. Each table includes description of a skill or knowledge (or broader knowledge/skill area, such as sentence structure) and provides a structure to guide you as you evaluate the place of that skill or knowledge in your curriculum.

Each skill/knowledge table includes the following elements:

- The name and definition of the skill or knowledge (or skill/knowledge area)
- Questions guiding you to consider the place of the skill or knowledge in your curriculum
- An indication of which SAT Suite [subscore\(s\)](#) the skill or knowledge is associated with
- A series of statements describing the ways in and extent to which students scoring in various score ranges on the Writing and Language Tests (e.g., 20–24) are typically able to demonstrate attainment of the skill or knowledge, and spaces where you can indicate which of these statements best reflects your students' general level of attainment

The statements in the tables are taken from *Skills Insight for the SAT*, linked to above. The Skills Insight describe typical performance of students scoring in various score ranges on the Reading Test and Writing and Language Tests (and other SAT Suite tests). The Skills Insight statements are generalizations based on analysis of hundreds of test questions and on the performance data of thousands of students taking one of the SAT Suite assessments. In a few cases, identified in this set of worksheets by dark gray bands, student performance has to date been too inconsistent to allow for valid generalizations.

In each table, a light gray band signals that the 30–34 score range contains the college and career readiness test-level benchmark (30 for the SAT Reading Test; 31 for the SAT Writing and Language Test). More information about the benchmark, as well as benchmarks by grade for grades 8 through 11, can be found in *The College and Career Readiness Benchmarks for the SAT Suite of Assessments*, also linked to above.

Subscores

The set of tables below includes abbreviations for the four subscores associated with the SAT Suite Writing and Language Tests. Subscores identify areas of concentration on the tests and consequently have potential instructional value.

To use these worksheets, please review the following resources:

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Moderately Challenging	Complex	Highly Complex
A passage (or passage pair) that likely poses some challenge for college- and career-ready students; typically associated with grades 9–10 texts	A passage (or passage pair) that likely poses a challenge for college- and career-ready students; typically associated with grades 11–12 texts	A passage (or passage pair) that poses a significant challenge for college- and career-ready students; typically associated with texts found in college-entry, credit-bearing courses

# Moderately Challenging Text

A passage (or passage pair) that likely poses **some challenge** for college- and career-ready students; typically associated with grades 9–10 texts.

Such texts commonly feature some or many of the following:

- **A single, relatively straightforward purpose (informational text); one or possibly multiple levels of meaning (literary text), the understanding of which is useful to full comprehension**
- Relatively subtle central ideas or themes either explicitly stated or relatively easy to infer
- Moderately challenging information, ideas, and relationships either explicitly stated or relatively easy to infer
- Experiences and ideas sometimes unfamiliar to high school audiences
- Possible abstract or theoretical concepts
- Moderate information density; information conveyed at a fairly rapid pace
- **Relatively straightforward text structure**
- Moderately challenging syntax, including some complex sentences
- Somewhat elevated diction that is to a certain extent distinct from everyday language
- Moderate vocabulary demands
- Moderate to moderately high demands on students' knowledge of the world, culture, and/or subject matter

CollegeBoard SAT SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Section Curriculum Review Worksheets

### Introduction

This set of curriculum review worksheets is designed to help you

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- review student performance;
- identify skills and knowledge that need additional instruction and support; and
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The Curriculum Review Worksheets contain a set of tables addressing most of the skills and knowledge assessed on the SAT Suite Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Section. Each table includes description of a skill or knowledge (or broader knowledge/skill area, such as sentence structure) and provides a structure to guide you as you evaluate the place of that skill or knowledge in your curriculum.

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4. A series of statements describing the ways in and extent to which students scoring in various score ranges on the Writing and Language Tests (e.g., 20–24) are typically able to demonstrate attainment of the skill or knowledge, and spaces where you can indicate which of these statements best reflects your students' general level of attainment

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### Subscores

The set of tables below includes abbreviations for the four subscores associated with the SAT Suite Writing and Language Tests. Subscores identify areas of concentration on the tests and consequently have potential instructional value.

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# Complex Text

A passage (or passage pair) that likely poses a **challenge** for college- and career-ready students; typically associated with grades 11–12 texts.

Such texts commonly feature some or many of the following:

- **One or more relatively subtle or complex purposes (informational text); multiple levels of meaning (literary text), the understanding of which is important to full comprehension**
- Relatively subtle or complex central ideas or themes either explicitly stated or relatively challenging to infer
- Challenging information, ideas, and relationships often implicit and relatively challenging to infer
- Experiences or ideas often unfamiliar to high school audiences
- Likely abstract or theoretical concepts
- Moderately high to high information density; information conveyed at a fairly rapid to rapid pace
- **Relatively intricate or complex text structure**
- Challenging syntax, including many complex sentences
- Elevated diction that is distinct from everyday language
- Moderately high vocabulary demands
- Moderately high to high demands on students' knowledge of the world, culture, and/or subject matter
- Possibly some important connections to other texts (e.g., allusions or references to prior studies)

 SAT

SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Section  
Curriculum Review Worksheets

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**CollegeBoard SAT** SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Section Curriculum Review Worksheets

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# Highly Complex Text

A passage (or passage pair) that poses a **significant challenge** for college- and career-ready students; typically associated with texts found in college-entry, credit-bearing courses.

Such texts commonly feature some or many of the following:


- **Multiple subtle or complex purposes (informational text); multiple levels of meaning (literary text), an understanding of which is necessary for full comprehension**
- Subtle or complex central ideas or themes either explicitly stated or challenging to infer
- Highly challenging information, ideas, and relationships frequently implicit and challenging to infer
- Experiences or ideas frequently unfamiliar to high school audiences
- Highly likely abstract or theoretical concepts
- High to very high information density; information conveyed at a rapid to very rapid pace
- **Intricate or complex text structure**
- Highly challenging syntax consisting mostly of complex sentences
- Elevated diction that is sharply distinct from everyday language
- High vocabulary demands
- High to very high demands on students' knowledge of the world, culture, and/or subject matter
- Likely some critical connections to other texts (e.g., allusions or references to prior studies)



# Text Complexity Levels by Dimension

CollegeBoard

The SAT® Suite and Classroom Practice: English Language Arts/Literacy



Evidence-Based Approaches to Helping All Students Become College and Career Ready

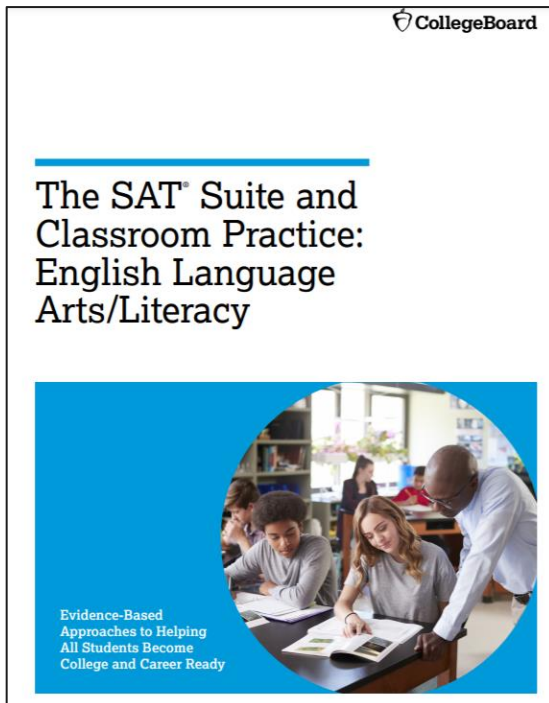
## CHAPTER 1 • TEXT COMPLEXITY

### Appendix

Dimension	Complexity Band				
	Grades 4–5	Grades 6–8 (PSAT 8/9)	Grades 9–10 (SAT, PSAT/ NMSQT, PSAT 10, PSAT 8/9)	Grades 11–CCR (college and career readiness) (SAT, PSAT/ NMSQT, PSAT 10)	Grades 13–14 (early postsecondary) (SAT)
	Basic	Somewhat challenging	Moderately challenging	Complex	Highly complex
<b>Purpose</b> <i>Chiefly informational texts</i>	Single Clear and direct	Single Generally clear and direct	Single Relatively straightforward	Single or multiple Relatively subtle or complex Possibly hidden or intentionally obscured	Multiple Subtle or complex Possibly hidden or intentionally obscured
<b>Level(s) of Meaning</b> <i>Chiefly literary texts</i>	One or multiple; if multiple, text can be understood/ enjoyed on a literal level	One or multiple; if multiple, text can be understood/ enjoyed on a literal level	One or multiple; if multiple, useful to a full understanding of the text	Multiple and important to a full understanding of the text	Multiple and necessary to a full understanding of the text
<b>Central Idea(s) and Theme(s)</b>	Explicit Straightforward	Explicit or implicit; if implicit, easy to infer Relatively straightforward	Explicit or implicit; if implicit, relatively easy to infer Relatively subtle	Explicit or implicit; if implicit, relatively challenging to infer Relatively subtle or complex	Explicit or implicit; if implicit, challenging to infer Subtle or complex
<b>Information, Ideas, and Relationships</b>	Straightforward; connections are explicit and clear	Somewhat challenging; connections may be implicit but easy to infer	Moderately challenging; connections may be implicit but relatively easy to infer	Challenging; connections are often implicit and relatively challenging to infer	Highly challenging; connections are frequently implicit and challenging to infer



# Text Complexity Levels by Dimension



Dimension	Complexity Band				
	Grades 4–5	Grades 6–8 (PSAT 8/9)	Grades 9–10 (SAT, PSAT/NMSQT, PSAT 10, PSAT 8/9)	Grades 11–CCR (college and career readiness) (SAT, PSAT/NMSQT, PSAT 10)	Grades 13–14 (early postsecondary) (SAT)
	Basic	Somewhat challenging	Moderately challenging	Complex	Highly complex
<b>Vocabulary</b>	Familiar Moderately low tier 2 and/or tier 3 demands; tier 3 words/phrases routinely glossed and foregrounded Archaic, foreign, and otherwise uncommon words/phrases generally absent	Generally familiar Moderate tier 2 and/or tier 3 demands; tier 3 words/phrases routinely glossed and foregrounded Archaic, foreign, and otherwise uncommon words/phrases generally absent, discernible from context, or not central to meaning	Moderate High tier 2 and/or tier 3 demands; tier 3 words/phrases less explicitly foregrounded Archaic, foreign, and otherwise uncommon words/phrases more likely to appear and to be relevant to a full understanding of the text	Moderately high Very high tier 2 and/or tier 3 demands; relatively little scaffolding for tier 3 words/phrases Archaic, foreign, and otherwise uncommon words/phrases much more likely to appear and to be important to a full understanding of the text	High Major tier 2 and/or tier 3 demands; little scaffolding for tier 3 words/phrases Archaic, foreign, and otherwise uncommon words/phrases highly likely to appear and to be central to a full understanding of the text
<b>Knowledge Demands (World/Cultural, Subject Matter)</b>	Moderately low	Moderate	Moderate to moderately high	Moderately high to high	High to very high
<b>Intertextuality</b>	Absent, low, or incidental to full understanding of the text	Absent, low, or incidental to full understanding of the text	Absent, low, or incidental to full understanding of the text	Low to moderate; may be important to full understanding	Moderate to high; may be central to full understanding of the text

## The SAT Suite and Classroom Practice: English Language Arts/Literacy

# Passage Examples

<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/pdf/test-specifications-redesigned-sat-1.pdf>

## Moderately Challenging Example

This passage is adapted from Richard Florida, *The Great Reset*. ©2010 by Richard Florida.

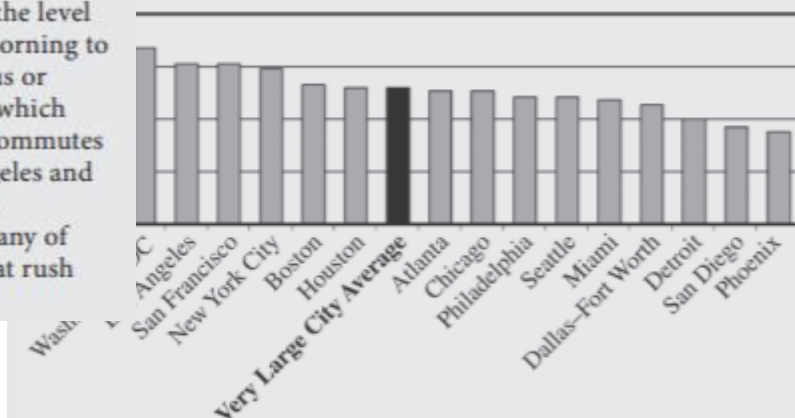
The following passage on commuting is of lower complexity, although some aspects of the passage are more challenging than others. This passage is accompanied by an informational graphic.

This passage is adapted from Richard Florida, *The Great Reset*. ©2010 by Richard Florida.

In today's idea-driven economy, the cost of time is what really matters. With the constant pressure to innovate, it makes little sense to waste countless collective hours commuting. So, the most efficient and productive regions are those in which people are thinking and working—not sitting in traffic.

The auto-dependent transportation system has reached its limit in most major cities and megaregions. Commuting by car is among the least efficient of all our activities—not to mention among the least enjoyable, according to detailed research by the Nobel Prize-winning economist Daniel Kahneman and his colleagues. Though one might think that the economic crisis beginning in 2007 would have reduced traffic (high unemployment means fewer workers traveling to and from work), the opposite has been true. Average commutes have lengthened, and congestion has gotten worse, if anything. The average commute rose in 2008 to 25.5 minutes, “erasing years of decreases to stand at the level of 2000, as people had to leave home earlier in the morning to pick up friends for their ride to work or to catch a bus or subway train,” according to the U.S. Census Bureau, which collects the figures. And those are average figures. Commutes are far longer in the big West Coast cities of Los Angeles and San Francisco and the East Coast cities of New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C. In many of these cities, gridlock has become the norm, not just at rush hour but all day, every day.

The Most Congested Cities in 2011  
Yearly Hours of Delay per Automobile Commuter



Adapted from Adam Werbach, “The American Commuter Spends 38 Hours a Year Stuck in Traffic.” ©2013 by The Atlantic.



# Passage Examples: Moderately Challenging Example

## Lower Text Complexity Example

This passage should offer a relatively low reading challenge for college- and career-ready high school juniors and seniors, although some aspects of the passage are more challenging than others (as is generally true of authentic texts).

(1) This passage is adapted from Richard Florida, *The Great Reset*. ©2010 by Richard Florida.

(2) In today's idea-driven economy, the cost of time is what really matters. With the constant pressure to innovate, it makes little sense to waste countless collective hours commuting. So, the most efficient and productive regions are those in which people are thinking and working—not sitting in traffic.

(3) The auto-dependent transportation system has reached its limit in most major cities and megaregions. Commuting by car is among the least efficient of all our activities—not to mention among the least enjoyable, according to detailed research by the Nobel Prize-winning economist Daniel Kahneman and his colleagues. Though one might think that the economic crisis beginning in 2007 would have reduced traffic (high unemployment means fewer workers traveling to and from work), the opposite has been true. Average commutes have lengthened, and congestion has gotten worse, if anything. (4) The average commute rose in 2008 to 25.5 minutes, “erasing years of decreases to stand at the level of 2000, as people had to leave home earlier in the morning to pick up friends for their ride to work or to catch a bus or subway train,” according to the U.S. Census Bureau, which collects the figures. And those are average figures. Commutes are far longer in the big West Coast cities of Los Angeles and San Francisco and the East Coast cities of New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C. In many of these cities, gridlock has become the norm, not just at rush hour but all day, every day.

(5) The costs are astounding. In Los Angeles, congestion eats up more than 485 million working hours a year; that's seventy hours, or nearly two weeks, of full-time work per commuter. In D.C., the time cost of congestion is sixty-two hours per worker per year. In New York it's forty-four hours. Average it out, and the time cost across America's thirteen biggest city-regions is fifty-one hours per worker per year. Across the country, commuting wastes 4.2 billion hours of work time annually—nearly a full workweek for every commuter. The overall cost to the U.S. economy is nearly \$90 billion when lost productivity and wasted fuel are

(1) **Knowledge Demands: Content/Discipline Knowledge:** The passage assumes little to no prior familiarity with the topic, which reduces the reading challenge.

(2) **Language Conventionalty and Clarity:** The passage generally uses familiar vocabulary and relatively simple sentence structures. The author's fairly informal tone also helps make the passage more accessible, further reducing the reading challenge.

(3) **Purpose:** The purpose of the passage is straightforward: to describe the degree of and costs associated with the congestion of U.S. cities and city-regions. The passage consistently builds support to achieve this purpose, which also helps reduce the reading challenge.

(4) **Knowledge Demands: Content/Discipline Knowledge:** The passage's references to other texts and sources of evidence are clearly signaled and easily grasped, making them fairly easy to digest.

(5) **Structure:** The structure of the passage is relatively simple. Paragraphs generally are introduced by topic sentences, focus on a single main idea, and use easily understood supporting details clearly related to the main idea. These factors contribute to the relatively low reading challenge of the text.

THE REDESIGNED SAT • SECTION III



taken into account. At the Martin Prosperity Institute, we calculate that every minute shaved off America's commuting time is worth \$19.5 billion in value added to the economy. The numbers add up fast: five minutes is worth \$97.7 billion; ten minutes, \$195 billion; fifteen minutes, \$292 billion.

It's ironic that so many people still believe the main remedy for traffic congestion is to build more roads and highways, which of course only makes the problem worse.

New roads generate higher levels of (6) “induced traffic,” that is, new roads just invite drivers to drive more and lure people who take mass transit back to their cars. Eventually, we end up with more clogged roads rather than a long-term improvement in traffic flow.

The coming decades will likely see more intense clustering of jobs, innovation, and productivity in a smaller number of bigger cities and city-regions. Some regions could end up bloated beyond the capacity of their infrastructure, while others struggle, their promise stymied by inadequate human or other resources.

(6) **Language Conventionalty and Clarity:** The passage does introduce some abstract and potentially unfamiliar terms, but the author provides sufficient context for understanding them, which reduces the reading challenge.

<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/pdf/test-specifications-redesigned-sat-1.pdf>

# Passage Examples

<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/pdf/official-sat-study-guide-sample-reading-test-questions.pdf>

## Moderately Challenging Example

This passage is adapted from Richard Florida, *The Great Reset*. ©2010 by Richard Florida.

On questions that ask for the meaning of a word in context, consider the role the word plays in the context in which it appears. Wrong answer choices will often consist of alternate meanings of the word that don't fit the context.

2

As used in line 52, “intense” most nearly means

- A) emotional.
- B) concentrated.
- C) brilliant.
- D) determined.

**Content:** Information and Ideas

**Key:** B

**Objective:** You must determine the meaning of a word in the context in which it appears.

**Explanation:** Choice B is the best answer because the context makes clear that the clustering of jobs, innovation, and productivity will be more concentrated in, or more densely packed into, “a smaller number of bigger cities and city-regions” (lines 53-54).

Choice A is incorrect because although “intense” sometimes means “emotional,” it would make no sense in this context to say that the clustering of jobs, innovation, and productivity will be more emotional in “a smaller number of bigger cities and city-regions” (lines 53-54).

Choice C is incorrect because although “intense” sometimes means “brilliant,” it would make no sense in this context to say that the clustering of jobs, innovation, and productivity will be more brilliant in “a smaller number of bigger cities and city-regions” (lines 53-54).

Choice D is incorrect because although “intense” sometimes means “determined,” it would make no sense in this context to say that the clustering of jobs, innovation, and productivity will be more determined in “a smaller number of bigger cities and city-regions” (lines 53-54).

# Passage Examples

<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/pdf/test-specifications-redesigned-sat-1.pdf>

## Higher Text Complexity Example

The following passage is from a text in the Great Global Conversation inspired by U.S. founding documents and is of higher complexity, although some aspects of the passage are less challenging than others.

Questions 4-8 are based on the following passage.

The passage is adapted from a speech delivered by Congresswoman Barbara Jordan of Texas on July 25, 1974. She was a member of the Judiciary Committee of the United States House of Representatives. In the passage, Jordan discusses how and when a United States president may be impeached, or charged with serious offenses while in office. Jordan's speech was delivered in the context of impeachment hearings against then President Richard M. Nixon.

Today, I am an inquisitor. An hyperbole would not be fictional and would not overstate the solemnness that I feel right now. My faith in the Constitution is whole; it is complete; it is total. And I am not going to sit here and be an idle spectator to the diminution, the subversion, the destruction, of the Constitution.

“Who can so properly be the inquisitors for the nation as the representatives of the nation themselves?” “The subjects of its jurisdiction are those offenses which proceed from the misconduct of public men.”\* And that’s what we’re talking about. In other words, [the jurisdiction comes] from the abuse or violation of some public trust.

It is wrong, I suggest, it is a misreading of the Constitution for any member here to assert that for a member to vote for an article of impeachment means that that member must be convinced that the President should be removed from office. The Constitution doesn’t say that. The powers relating to impeachment are an essential check in the hands of the body of the legislature against and upon the encroachments of the executive. The division between the two branches of the legislature, the House and the Senate, assigning to the one the right to accuse and to the other the right to judge—the framers of this Constitution were very astute. They did not make the accusers and the judges . . . the same person.



# Passage Examples: Higher Text Complexity Example

## Higher Text Complexity Example

This passage should offer a relatively high reading challenge for college- and career-ready high school juniors and seniors, although some aspects of the passage are less challenging than others (as is generally true of authentic texts).

(1) This passage is adapted from a speech delivered by Congresswoman Barbara Jordan of Texas on July 25, 1974, as a member of the Judiciary Committee of the United States House of Representatives. In the passage, Jordan discusses how and when a United States president may be impeached, or charged with serious offenses, while in office. Jordan's speech was delivered in the context of impeachment hearings against then president Richard M. Nixon.

(2) Today, I am an inquisitor. (3) An hyperbole would not be fictional and would not overstate the solemnness that I feel right now. My faith in the Constitution is whole; it is complete; it is total. And I am not going to sit here and be an idle spectator to the diminution, the subversion, the destruction, of the Constitution.

(4) "Who can so properly be the inquisitors for the nation as the representatives of the nation themselves?" "The subjects of its jurisdiction are those offenses which proceed from the misconduct of public men."\* And that's what we're talking about. In other words, [the jurisdiction comes] from the abuse or violation of some public trust.

It is wrong, I suggest, it is a misreading of the Constitution for any member here to assert that for a member to vote for an article of impeachment means that that member must be convinced that the President should be removed from office. The Constitution doesn't say that. The powers relating to impeachment are an essential check in the hands of the body of the legislature against and upon the encroachments of the executive. The division between the two branches of the legislature, the House and the Senate, assigning to the one the right to accuse and to the other the right to judge—the framers of this Constitution were very astute. They did not make the accusers and the judges . . . the same person.

We know the nature of impeachment. We've been talking about it a while now. It is chiefly designed for the President and his high ministers to somehow be called into account. It is designed to "bridle" the executive

(1) **Purpose:** The purpose of the passage is relatively straightforward (and clarified to some degree in the passage's advance organizer): to offer Jordan's view of the nature of the impeachment of a U.S. president.

(2) **Structure:** The passage is fairly loose in structure. This adds to the challenge of following the development of the argument.

(3) **Language Conventional and Clarity:** Jordan uses elevated diction, uncommon sentence structures, and potentially unfamiliar vocabulary here and throughout the passage (although context clues are generally available), which adds to the challenge of the passage.

(4) **Knowledge Demands: Content/Discipline Knowledge:** Jordan makes numerous references to other texts, particularly to the U.S. Constitution and other U.S. founding documents, as she builds her case. This interspersing of quotations and historical references significantly increases the challenge of the passage.

THE REDESIGNED SAT • SECTION III

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if he engages in excesses. "It is designed as a method of national inquest into the conduct of public men."\* The framers confided in the Congress the power, if need be, to remove the President in order to strike a delicate balance between a President swollen with power and grown tyrannical, and preservation of the independence of the executive.

(5) The nature of impeachment: a narrowly channeled exception to the separation of powers maxim. The Federal Convention of 1787 said that. It limited impeachment to high crimes and misdemeanors, and discounted and opposed the term "maladministration." "It is to be used only for great misdemeanors," so it was said in the North Carolina ratification convention. And in the Virginia ratification convention: "We do not trust our liberty to a particular branch. We need one branch to check the other."

. . . The North Carolina ratification convention: "No one need be afraid that officers who commit oppression will pass with immunity." "Prosecutions of impeachments will seldom fail to agitate the passions of the whole community," said Hamilton in the Federalist Papers, number 65. "We divide into parties more or less friendly or inimical to the accused."\* I do not mean political parties in that sense.

The drawing of political lines goes to the motivation behind impeachment; but impeachment must proceed within the confines of the constitutional term "high crime[s] and misdemeanors." Of the impeachment process, it was Woodrow Wilson who said that "Nothing short of the grossest offenses against the plain law of the land will suffice to give them speed and effectiveness. Indignation so great as to overgrow party interest may secure a conviction; but nothing else can."

Common sense would be revolted if we engaged upon this process for petty reasons. Congress has a lot to do: appropriations, tax reform, health insurance, campaign finance reform, housing, environmental protection, energy sufficiency, mass transportation. Pettiness cannot be allowed to stand in the face of such overwhelming problems. So today we're not being petty. We're trying to be big, because the task we have before us is a big one.

\*Jordan quotes from Federalist No. 65, an essay by Alexander Hamilton, published in 1788, on the powers of the United States Senate, including the power to decide cases of impeachment against a president of the United States.

<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/pdf/test-specifications-redesigned-sat-1.pdf>

# Passage Examples

<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/pdf/official-sat-study-guide-sample-reading-test-questions.pdf>

## Higher Text Complexity Example

Rhetorical effect is the influence or impact that a particular arrangement of words has on the intended meaning of a text.

To answer this question, students should identify what point the author is trying to get across in the paragraph in which the three phrases appear.

5

The main rhetorical effect of the series of three phrases in lines 5-6 (the diminution, the subversion, the destruction) is to

- A) convey with increasing intensity the seriousness of the threat Jordan sees to the Constitution.
- B) clarify that Jordan believes the Constitution was first weakened, then sabotaged, then broken.
- C) indicate that Jordan thinks the Constitution is prone to failure in three distinct ways.
- D) propose a three-part agenda for rescuing the Constitution from the current crisis.

Content: Rhetoric

Key: A

Objective: You must determine the main rhetorical effect of the speaker's choice of words.

Explanation: Choice A is the best answer because the quoted phrases—building from “diminution” to “subversion” to “destruction”—suggest the increasing seriousness of the threat Jordan sees to the Constitution.

Choice B is incorrect because the passage offers no evidence that the quoted phrases refer to three different events that happened in a strict sequence. It is more reasonable to infer from the passage that Jordan sees “diminution,” “subversion,” and “destruction” as differing degrees to which the Constitution could be undermined. Moreover, the passage suggests that Jordan sees these three things as products of the same action or series of actions, not as three distinct stages in a process.

Choice C is incorrect because the passage offers no evidence that the quoted phrases refer to three distinct ways in which the Constitution is prone to failure. It is more reasonable to infer from the passage that Jordan sees “diminution,” “subversion,” and “destruction” as differing degrees in which the Constitution could be undermined. Moreover, the passage suggests that Jordan sees these three things as products of the same action or series of actions, not as three distinct “ways.”

Choice D is incorrect because the passage offers no evidence that the quoted phrases refer to three unique elements of a proposal to resolve a crisis. It is more reasonable to infer from the passage that Jordan sees “diminution,” “subversion,” and “destruction” as differing degrees in which the Constitution could be undermined. Moreover, the passage suggests that Jordan sees these three things as products of the same action or series of actions, not as three distinct “parts.”

# SAT<sup>®</sup> Skills Insight

<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/pdf/skills-insight-sat-suite.pdf>

# Overview— Reading Skills

There are six score ranges for Reading—Academic Skills in the Skills Insight document.

6-14

15-19

20-24

25-29

30-34

35-40

Reviewing score band 30-34, which would show a student to be college and career ready, demonstrates that a student should typically be able to do the following:

- Read a complex passage closely to draw a reasonable inference.
- Determine the best textual evidence for an inference when the evidence requires some interpretation or analysis and the inference requires close reading.
- Determine the central idea or theme of a complex passage that features several important ideas.
- Determine a relationship between information, ideas, or people depicted in a passage (e.g., establishing cause-effect, comparison-contrast, or sequential relationship).
- Determine the main purpose of a portion of a passage (e.g., detail or metaphor) in relation to the passage as a whole.
- Draw a straightforward, reasonable inference about point of view or perspective in a complex passage (e.g., identifying where point of view switches in a literary passage; distinguishing among conflicting perspectives in an informational passage).
- Determine the main purpose of a complex passage or one of its paragraphs.
- Determine a claim or counterclaim in a complex argument; analyze a subtle argumentative technique.

# Using Skills Insight™ for the SAT Suite

<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/pdf/skills-insight-sat-suite.pdf>

- Demonstrates how the SAT Suite of Assessments is linked to the knowledge and skills taught in the classroom
- Describes the academic skills typically mastered at each score band and strategies for improvement
- Provides actionable suggestions for improving skills that help students gain additional practice

## Academic Skills at Each Score Band and Suggestions for Improvement

### Reading Score Range 20–24

#### Academic Skills

##### A typical student in this score band can do the following:

- Read a moderately challenging passage closely to draw a reasonable inference
- Determine the best textual evidence for an inference when both evidence and inference are relatively obvious and direct (e.g., a clearly stated fact as evidence for a simple inference) [OOE]
- Determine the central idea or theme of a moderately challenging passage
- Determine a straightforward relationship between information, ideas, or people depicted in a passage (e.g., establishing a cause-effect, comparison-contrast, or sequential relationship)
- Determine the meaning of a common high-utility academic word or phrase, especially when clear context clues are available (e.g., when the passage's topic suggests a likely definition); determine the meaning of a simple figurative expression [WIC]
- Determine the main purpose or effect of an author's word choice in a moderately challenging passage [WIC]
- Identify the narrator's point of view in a literary passage; determine the author's perspective in a moderately challenging informational passage
- Determine the implicit main purpose of a moderately challenging passage or of one of its paragraphs; identify a clearly indicated main purpose of a complex passage
- Identify a similarity or difference in a pair of moderately challenging passages (e.g., recognizing that a particular detail appears in one passage but not in the other)
- Locate data or make a straightforward accurate interpretation of data in an informational graphic, such as a table, graph, or chart (e.g., comparing the sizes of numerous bars; determining which of two lines, each revealing a clear trend, represents a generally higher value) [OOE]

#### Suggestions for Improvement

##### To advance to the next highest score band, students should focus on the following skills:

- Spend time reading complex texts. These are texts that can be difficult to understand at first because their information, ideas, structure, purpose, and language are likely to be challenging, may be unfamiliar, and will require careful analysis. Read these texts closely and purposefully, rereading as necessary, and focus on identifying key information that is stated directly in the texts. Then, think about what reasonable inferences you can draw from the texts.
- When you read, look for the ideas, points, or claims the text is presenting, and look for and analyze details in the text that can support the inferences you draw about them. Determine what evidence provides the best support for a given inference. Check your interpretation by identifying all possible evidence and making sure you can determine what evidence stands out as providing particularly effective support for that inference. If you cannot find good, sufficient evidence, go back to the text and reconsider your inference.
- When you are reading complex texts, look closely at the key information and ideas, and then use them to help you determine the central idea or theme the authors want to convey.
- When you read, look for the connections the author draws between information, ideas, and people depicted in the text. Among the most important of these are cause-effect, comparison-contrast, and sequential relationships. Pay attention to words that signal such relationships, such as *because*, *differs*, and *then*.
- **High-utility academic words and phrases**—vocabulary found frequently in readings across a range of subjects—are especially valuable to know when trying to unlock the meaning of texts. Work on developing your vocabulary through reading, vocabulary lessons, and class discussions, paying particular attention to acquiring the meaning(s) of relatively common high-utility academic words and phrases and how their particular meaning is often shaped by the contexts in which they appear. Also, underline or highlight figurative (nonliteral) expressions in texts, and use context clues to help determine their meaning.
- When you are reading complex texts, pay close attention to the specific word and phrase choices authors make, and consider what purpose or effect is being sought. Keep in mind when reading texts of any sort that the purpose or effect of word and phrase choice may be somewhat subtle, such as when an author chooses words and phrases to express a particular emotion. For example, consider how the connotation changes if an author

Use the Instructional Planning Reports from the K-12 Assessment Reporting Portal to find the percent of students in each score band.



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# Skill Progression

15-19

**Read a moderately  
challenging passage**

closely to identify explicitly  
stated information or  
ideas.

20-24

**Read a moderately  
challenging passage**

closely to draw a  
reasonable inference.

25-29

**Read a complex  
passage**

closely to  
identify explicitly  
stated information  
or ideas or to draw  
a relatively simple  
reasonable  
inference.

30-34

**Read a  
complex  
passage**

closely to draw  
a reasonable  
inference.

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# Skill Progression

15-19

Identify the central idea or theme of a passage **that has a single, clear purpose of a passage.**

20-24

Determine the central idea or theme of a **moderately challenging passage.**


25-29

Determine the central idea or theme of a **complex passage.**

30-34

Determine the central idea or theme of a **complex passage that features several important ideas.**

# Resources about Skill Progression



## SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Section Curriculum Review Worksheets

### Introduction

This set of curriculum review worksheets is designed to help you

- understand many of the skills and knowledge that are assessed on the SAT Suite of Assessments Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Section ;
- review student performance;
- identify skills and knowledge that need additional instruction and support; and
- develop a plan for implementation.

The Curriculum Review Worksheets contain a set of tables addressing most of the skills and knowledge assessed on the SAT Suite Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Section. Each table includes description of a skill or knowledge (or broader knowledge/skill area, such as sentence structure) and provides a structure to guide you as you evaluate the place of that skill or knowledge in your curriculum.

Each skill/knowledge table includes the following elements:

1. The name and definition of the skill or knowledge (or skill/knowledge area)
2. Questions guiding you to consider the place of the skill or knowledge in your curriculum
3. An indication of which SAT Suite subscore(s) the skill or knowledge is associated with
4. A series of statements describing the ways in and extent to which students scoring in various score ranges on the Writing and Language Tests (e.g., 20–24) are typically able to demonstrate attainment of the skill or knowledge, and spaces where you can indicate which of these statements best reflects your students' general level of attainment

The statements in the tables are taken from *Skills Insight for the SAT*, linked to above. The Skills Insight describe typical performance of students scoring in various score ranges on the Reading Test and Writing and Language Tests (and other SAT Suite tests). The Skills Insight statements are generalizations based on analysis of hundreds of test questions and on the performance data of thousands of students taking one of the SAT Suite assessments. In a few cases, identified in this set of worksheets by dark gray bands, student performance has to date been too inconsistent to allow for valid generalizations.


In each table, a light gray band signals that the 30–34 score range contains the college and career readiness test-level benchmark (30 for the SAT Reading Test; 31 for the SAT Writing and Language Test). More information about the benchmark, as well as benchmarks by grade for grades 8 through 11, can be found in *The College and Career Readiness Benchmarks for the SAT Suite of Assessments*, also linked to above.

#### Subscores

The set of tables below includes abbreviations for the four subscores associated with the SAT Suite Writing and Language Tests. Subscores identify areas of concentration on the tests and consequently have potential instructional value.

To use these worksheets, please review the following resources:

- K-12 Score Reporting Portal data
- District/school curriculum maps
- Released SAT practice tests
- *Skills Insight for the SAT Suite* ([sat.org/skillsinsight](https://sat.org/skillsinsight))
- *The College and Career Readiness Benchmarks for the SAT Suite of Assessments* (<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/pdf/educator-benchmark-brief.pdf>)

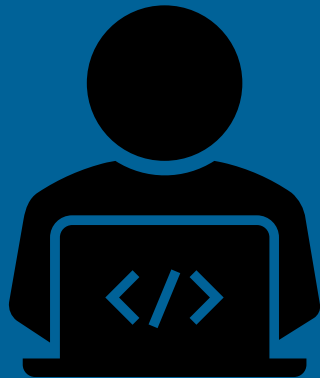


## Skills Insight™ for the SAT® Suite

- PSAT™ 8/9
- PSAT/NMSQT® and PSAT™ 10
- SAT®

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# Accessing and Utilizing the SAT<sup>®</sup> Suite Question Bank



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# The SAT<sup>®</sup> Suite Question Bank May Be Accessed at

<https://satsuitequestionbank.collegeboard.org>.

Open to the Public

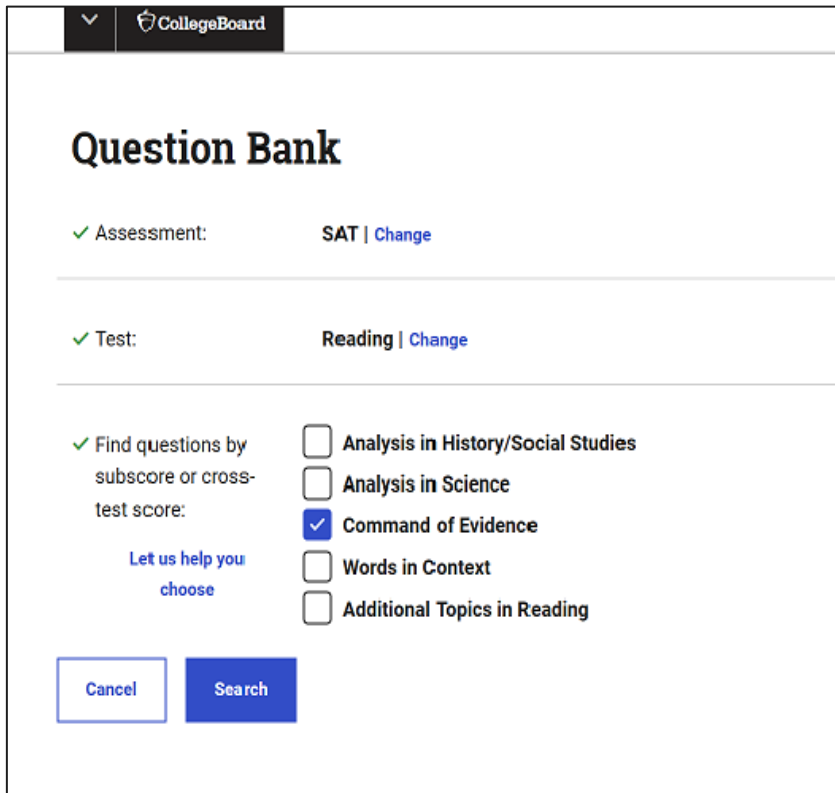
No College Board Account or Access Code Required

# How to Create a Question Set within the SAT® Suite Question Bank

Go to <https://satsuitequestionbank.collegeboard.org>

To create a question set:

- Use the filters to narrow the list.
- Select question IDs to view question content.
- Check boxes to create the set (up to 20 questions).
- Select the “Export PDF” button.
- Choose to print questions with or without the correct answers and explanations.



The screenshot shows the 'Question Bank' interface on the CollegeBoard website. At the top, there is a 'CollegeBoard' logo and a dropdown menu. Below this, the 'Question Bank' title is displayed. The interface includes several filter sections: 'Assessment' set to 'SAT' with a 'Change' link; 'Test' set to 'Reading' with a 'Change' link; and a section for finding questions by subscore or cross-test score. This last section includes a list of topics with checkboxes: 'Analysis in History/Social Studies', 'Analysis in Science', 'Command of Evidence' (which is checked), 'Words in Context', and 'Additional Topics in Reading'. A link 'Let us help you choose' is also present. At the bottom of the filter section are 'Cancel' and 'Search' buttons.



# Filters: Level of Difficulty

Questions are classified as easy, medium, or hard and are based on student performance.

Difficulty: ?

Passage Text Complexity: ?

Primary Dimension: ?

Please Select ^

Please Select v

Please Select v

Medi

☐ Easy

☒ Medium

☐ Hard

Clear Filters

✓			Test and	Primary Dimension ?	Secondary Dimension ?	Tertiary Dimension ?	Passage Text Complexity ?
<input type="checkbox"/>	5441685	■ ■ □	Command of Evidence	Expression of Ideas   Development	Proposition	N/A	Grades 13-14
<input type="checkbox"/>	423182	■ ■ □	Command of Evidence	Expression of Ideas   Development	Focus	N/A	Grades 9-10
<input type="checkbox"/>	18293	■ ■ □	Command of Evidence	Expression of Ideas   Development	Support	N/A	Grades 11-CCR
<input type="checkbox"/>	5439716	■ ■ □	Command of Evidence	Expression of Ideas   Development	Support	N/A	Grades 11-CCR
<input type="checkbox"/>	1473183	■ ■ □	Command of Evidence	Expression of Ideas   Development	Support	N/A	Grades 13-14

# Dimensions

**Primary Dimensions:** broad categories of the skills and knowledge measured by each test

**Secondary Dimensions:** subcategories of each primary dimension

**Tertiary Dimensions:** categories of each secondary dimension

<div>Difficulty: ? Please Select v</div> <div>Passage Text Complexity: ? Please Select v</div> <div>Primary Dimension: ? Please Select ^</div>							
<div>Information and ideas X</div> <div>Filters</div>							
✓	ID #	Difficulty ?	Cross-Test and Subscore	Primary Dimension ?	Secondary Dimension		
<input type="checkbox"/>	423175	■ ■ ■	Command of Evidence	Information and Ideas	Citing textual evidence	N/A	Grades 9-10
<input type="checkbox"/>	421987	■ ■ ■	Command of Evidence	Information and Ideas	Citing textual evidence	N/A	Grades 11-CCR
<input type="checkbox"/>	4170181	■ ■ □	Command of Evidence	Information and Ideas	Citing textual evidence	N/A	Grades 11-CCR
<input type="checkbox"/>	1474439	■ ■ □	Command of Evidence	Information and Ideas	Citing textual evidence	N/A	Grades 11-CCR
<input type="checkbox"/>	422157	■ ■ ■	Command of Evidence	Information and Ideas	Citing textual evidence	N/A	Grades 13-14

# Text Complexity

## Grades 9–10

Passages are clear and more direct than those at a higher level, but they convey ideas and themes with some subtlety.

## Grades 11–CCR (College and Career Ready)

The purpose of these passages may be subtle or complex and possibly hidden. Ideas and themes are easier to infer than passages written at a postsecondary level.

## Grades 13–14

These highly complex passages serve multiple purposes. Ideas and themes can be challenging to infer.

Difficulty: ?			Passage Text Complexity: ?			Primary Dimension: ?		
Please Select			Please Select			Please Select		
✓	ID #	Difficulty ?	Cross-Test and Subscore	P D	on	Tertiary Dimension ?	Passage Text Complexity ?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	5207035	■ □ □	Words in Context	In.	and phrases in	N/A	Grades 11-CCR	
<input type="checkbox"/>	422390	■ ■ □	Words in Context	Information and Ideas	Interpreting words and phrases in context	N/A	Grades 11-CCR	
<input type="checkbox"/>	423117	■ ■ □	Words in Context	Information and Ideas	Interpreting words and phrases in context	N/A	Grades 11-CCR	
<input type="checkbox"/>	1474389	■ □ □	Words in Context	Information and Ideas	Interpreting words and phrases in context	N/A	Grades 13-14	
<input type="checkbox"/>	4788203	■ □ □	Words in Context	Information and Ideas	Interpreting words and phrases in context	N/A	Grades 11-CCR	
<input type="checkbox"/>	19775	■ □ □	Words in Context	Information and Ideas	Interpreting words and phrases in context	N/A	Grades 11-CCR	
<input type="checkbox"/>	5094295	■ ■ □	Words in Context	Information and Ideas	Interpreting words and phrases in context	N/A	Grades 13-14	
<input type="checkbox"/>	422426	■ □ □	Words in Context	Information and Ideas	Interpreting words and phrases in context	N/A	Grades 9-10	

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Assessment	Test	Cross-Test and Subscore	Difficulty	Primary Dimension	Secondary Dimension	Tertiary Dimension	Passage Text Complexity
SAT	Reading	Words in Context	■ ■ ■	Information and Ideas	Interpreting words and phrases in context	N/A	Grades 11–CCR

Questions 22–31 are based on the following passage and supplementary material. This passage is adapted from Bryan Walsh, "Whole Food Blues: Why Organic Agriculture May Not Be So Sustainable." ©2012 by Time Inc.

Line But change the conversation to food, and suddenly efficiency doesn't look so good. Conventional industrial agriculture has become incredibly efficient on a simple land to food basis. Thanks to fertilizers, mechanization and irrigation, each American farmer feeds over 155 people worldwide. 5 Conventional farming gets more and more crop per square foot of cultivated land—over 170 bushels of corn per acre in Iowa, for example—which can mean less territory needs to be converted from wilderness to farmland. And since a third of 10 the planet is already used for agriculture—destroying forests and other wild habitats along the way—anything that could

In [line 60](#), "sheer" most nearly means

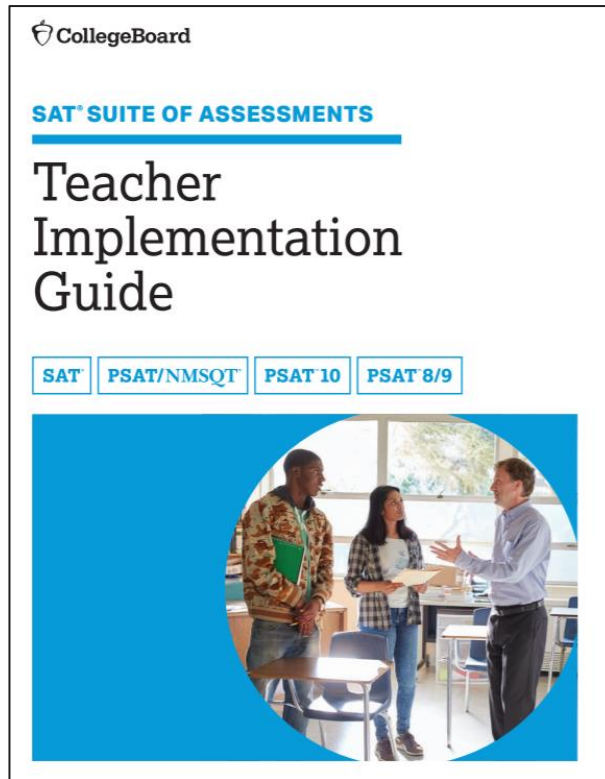
- A. transparent.
- B. abrupt.
- C. steep.
- D. pure.

**Rationale**  
Choice D is the best answer. The passage states that conventional agriculture can be superior to organic farming in terms of producing "sheer calories" (line 88). In this context, "sheer" most nearly means pure; the passage is referring to the pure number of calories delivered by foods. Choices A, B, and C are incorrect because in the context of discussing the calories foods can provide, "sheer" suggests the pure number of calories. Also, it does not make sense to say that calories can be seen through (choice A), are somehow sudden or happen unexpectedly (choice B), or are at a very sharp angle (choice C).

# Instructional and Skill-Building Strategies



# General Instructional Strategies



## Instructional Strategies for Reading:

- **Require students to practice reading and analyzing extended passages of text at varied levels of text complexity.**
- The Reading Test passages span a range of difficulty from early high school to early postsecondary (college-entry, credit-bearing) levels of reading.
- Use multiple reading passages to explore ideas in both fiction and nonfiction, giving students the opportunity to practice analysis and synthesis of texts.
- Include graphs, tables, and charts in reading assignments. The Reading Test includes two passages accompanied by one or two related informational graphics. Students will be asked to interpret graphics and make connections between graphics and passages. (They will not need to use mathematical computation to answer the questions.)

# General Instructional Strategies

## Instructional Strategies for Reading (continued):

- Ask students to investigate the way authors use word choice, structure, and other techniques to create a desired effect in both fiction and nonfiction passages.
- Direct students to analyze history and social studies passages from the U.S. founding documents and texts in the Great Global Conversation. Reading selections from such texts helps prepare students for the rigors of making meaning from challenging, often abstract texts on serious topics, such as rights, duties, and freedoms.
- All of the information needed to answer the associated Reading Test questions is found in the passages themselves—the test does not assume that students will have read these passages previously. When useful, a historical note will be provided to contextualize the reading for students.



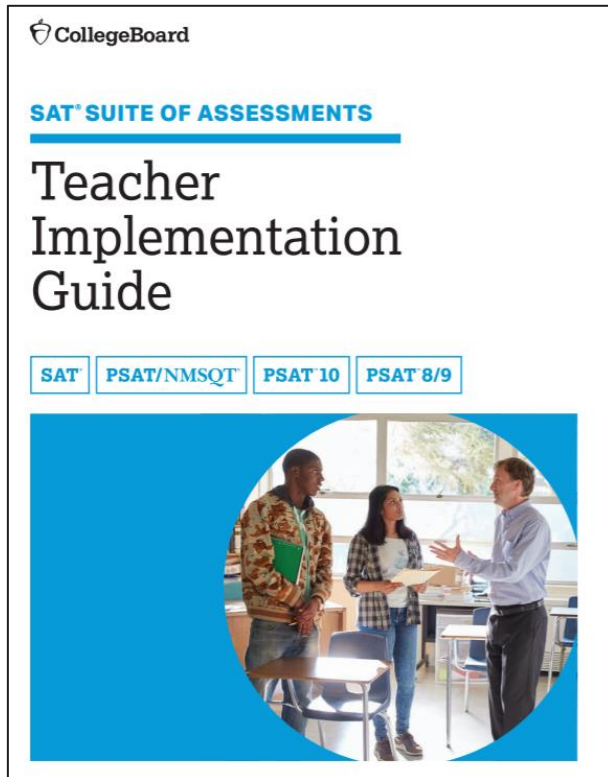
# Skill-Building Strategies



## Skill-Building Strategies for Reading:

- Assign a range of reading passages that includes some longer and more difficult selections, and provide students with needed scaffolding and support so that they can develop the needed independence in reading such pieces.
- Select a particularly meaningful or powerful word or phrase from a reading selection, and then substitute another word or phrase of similar meaning.
- Discuss how it is uncommon for two words or phrases to have exactly the same impact, nuance, or connotation even when they have similar dictionary definitions.
- When reading literature passages, primary sources, or current event publications, ask students to use the SOAPSTone (Speaker, Occasion, Audience, Purpose, Subject, Tone) method to analyze the text.

# Skill-Building Strategies



## Skill-Building Strategies for Reading (continued):

- Ask students to write questions that investigate understanding of a lesson or unit.
- Ask students to practice identifying meaningful and relevant information in order to create high-quality questions for their peers to answer.
- Require students to provide supporting evidence when answering peers' questions.
- Ask students to identify similarities and differences in multiple passages.
- Ask students to locate and present additional texts that support an author's conclusion and to defend their choices by citing textual evidence (e.g., quotations) from the additional texts. This allows students to practice both synthesizing and supporting their ideas with evidence.

# General Instructional Strategies



## Instructional Strategies for Writing and Language:

- Instruct students to provide quotations from passages, data from graphs, tables, charts, or other relevant text as evidence to support conclusions in class discussions and on assignments.
- Teach students in all classes to practice writing and language analysis skills—effective language use, expression of ideas, and the proper use of Standard English Conventions—to develop their analyses of social studies, science, and career-related passages.
- Practice revising and editing during class by asking students to refine their own work as well as the work of their peers to build analysis skills related to grammatical conventions, word choice, and sentence structure in extended contexts.
- Give students the opportunity to correct mistakes both in carefully constructed errors you provide and in their own work. They will be asked to make corrections in word choice, conventions of usage and punctuation, organization, sentence structure, and analysis of graphical data on the SAT Suite of Assessments.



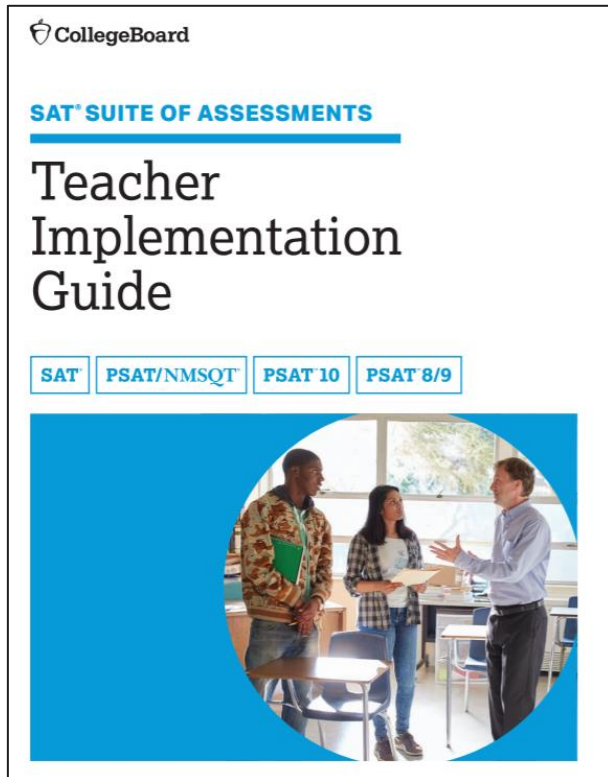
# Skill-Building Strategies



## Skill-Building Strategies for Writing and Language:

- Peer editing can be an important part of the writing process and a useful teaching and learning activity for both the writer and the editor.
- Provide students with a reading passage containing several sentences in need of correction. Ask students to improve the sentences, focusing their attention on the context of the errors, their effect on the sentence, and the meaning of the sentence within the passage.
- After students make corrections, ask them to explain their reasoning. Students are thus simultaneously practicing using language conventions and supporting their answers with evidence.

# Skill-Building Strategies



## Skill-Building Strategies for Writing and Language (continued):

- Encourage students to attend to errors in the application of Standard English Conventions. Use released student essay samples from the College Board to practice analyzing text for strength of proposition, support, focus, and effective language use.
- Ask students to review text messages and then correct grammatically incomplete sentences, problems with end-of-sentence punctuation and punctuation within sentences, and cases of nonstandard expression (when words and phrases are used in a way not typical of Standard Written English) according to Standard English Conventions. Discuss how these changes influence the tone and meaning of the messages.
- Familiarize students with the analysis of data, graphs, and charts in conjunction with text. Using the informational graphics in a textbook or periodical, provide students with inaccurate interpretations of data and ask them to correct the error(s).
- Have them explicitly describe the data they used to make each correction.

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# Next Steps

## Teacher Toolkit

- Review the SAT Suite and Classroom Practice: English Language Arts/Literacy document:  
<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/pdf/sat-suite-classroom-practice-english-language-arts-literacy.pdf>
- Contact [ILSAT@collegeboard.org](mailto:ILSAT@collegeboard.org) to request the full version of the curriculum worksheets for Reading, Writing and Language, and Math.

## Visit the SAT® Suite Question Bank

- Access the SAT® Suite Question Bank at <https://satsuitequestionbank.collegeboard.org>.
- Determine the best use of the readily available 3,500 questions.

Please email questions or comments about this presentation to [ILSAT@collegeboard.org](mailto:ILSAT@collegeboard.org).

# Thank You

