**US HISTORY – “SELF” – MY CAREER PATH**

**SECTION 1.1:** **The SAT vs. ACT**

**NAME: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**PERIOD: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

I hate tests. It's a really lousy way to judge a person's ability.

- Bill Paxton

DBQ CHECKLIST

* Answer in Paragraph Form includes:
  + Thesis (1 sentence)
  + Set up each piece of your evidence
  + Evidence supporting one your thesis (at least 2 pieces of evidence from the document)
    - Be sure to cite in parenthesis after your evidence (Doc 1).

**Analysis: 4 3 2 1**

* + Conclusion statement at the end (Restate thesis in different words)

If you are missing any of the above items for each DBQ, it is incomplete!

DRIVING QUESTION

Which exam, the SAT or the ACT, is more appropriate for you? And Why?

Rubric:

**Analysis**

4 – Evidence selected is strong and accurately supports the thesis. Answer shows a high level of content knowledge throughout the response

3 – Evidence selected is strong and partially supports the thesis. Answer shows an average level of content knowledge through the response.

2 – Evidence selected is weak and minimally supports the thesis. Answer show a basic level of content knowledge throughout the response.

1 – Missing pieces of evidence and its connection to the thesis. Answer does not provide any evidence of content knowledge

**Document 1**

Which One Should You Take?

Colleges use something called “the concordance table” to compare SAT and ACT scores. They don’t prefer one test to the other: they just like you to have the highest COMPARATIVE score possible. A 1600 on the New SAT is a 36 on the ACT – getting either score will give you the exact same quality application, and once you get one great score, you’re finished – there’s no point in getting two good scores! It’s like saying you’re 6 feet tall and ALSO 2 yards tall – they might be different numbers, but you’re saying the exact same thing. If you want to see how different scores compare to each other, you can use [my free New SAT ACT score converter.](https://greentestprep.com/resources/tools/act-sat-score-converter/)

Your only job is to pick ONE test that’ll give you the best comparative score. It’s your job to pick the test that’ll give you the best score, focus all of your energy on it, and knock it out of the park.

With that in mind, the big question is: which one will get you the best comparative score?

The Differences between the New SAT and ACT

The New SAT, which launched on March 5th of 2016, is basically a carbon copy of the ACT – it was designed to be just that.

The two tests have far more commonalities than differences, so let’s list the few things that set them apart:

* **The New SAT doesn’t have a science section.**[**The “science” section of the ACT is easy to master**](https://greentestprep.com/resources/act-prep/act-science-guide/)**, and has nothing to do with science. But if you hate it, then the New SAT is your savior.**
* **The essays are different.**Both tests come with optional essays. The ACT essay asks you to come up with your own argument and support it – the New SAT essay asks you to evaluate an argument that someone else has already written for you. Neither is easier or harder – it’s just an issue of personal preference.
* **The New SAT has a few fill-in-the-blank math problems, and half of the math problems don’t allow calculator use.**The ACT lets you use a calculator on all its math problems, and all the answers are multiple choice. The New SAT has a “with calculator” and “without calculator” section, and 13 of its problems force you to fill in your own answer. The “without calculator” problems aren’t difficult because they don’t require any difficult arithmetic, so it’s not that much of an issue.
* **The New SAT is far less “time intensive.”**This is the big issue that really separates the two exams. The New SAT gives you far more time per problem, so it’s a much less intense testing experience. Alternatively, the ACT makes you go at a blisteringly fast pace. So if you need some more time to consider your answers, the New SAT is going to be your friend. If you can plow through questions and are super focused, then the ACT should be your exam of choice.

Aside from those differences, the tests are practically identical. The material tested is the same. The formatting is basically the same. They both test your knowledge of math, English grammar, and reading comprehension. They both take 3-4 hours to complete. And they both accomplish the same exact same goal: giving admissions an officers to save time by tossing your application in the trash if your scores aren’t high enough before they ever look at it.

Because the New SAT lacks a science section and is less time intensive, it might seem like an obvious choice. But there’s something to keep in mind: the nature of competition.

**Pick the Test That Gives You the Biggest EDGE**

Overall, I’d say that the New SAT is objectively easier than the ACT. You have more time to deal with each question and fewer sections to master. But before you dive right into the New SAT, you need to know the following:

* **College applications are about COMPARISON, and not about absolute value. You’re not evaluated based on how good you are – you’re judged on how good you are *compared to all the other applicants.***
* **These tests are graded on a curve.**Your performance is scaled, and your final score is based on how you did *compared to everyone else.*
* **This means that you should take the test that gives you the biggest competitive edge.**The SAT might be “easier,” but it’s easier for *everyone who takes it.*The ACT might be “harder,” but it’s also just as hard for all the students who are taking it alongside you. The scale will come into play – if you can use that scale to your advantage, you’ll end up with the best college application possible.

The short version: if you’re awesome at fast-paced assignments and can stay focused for long periods of time, you have a *huge*competitive edge on the ACT. You can use those skills to blow the other students taking the ACT out of the water.

If you’re not so good at fast-paced assignments (if you prefer to take your time and think things through, or if you usually don’t finish your tests in school), the ACT will be a total nightmare. You should probably take the New SAT instead.