

Sat: an aptitude test or a profit making scam

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Any college-bound senior in high school will tell you that junior year of high school is the most stressful. Why you may ask? Well, besides the stress to date, do laundry without mom, and that sudden drop in one's metabolism rate, a junior in high school has to deal with those ominous SATS, better known by the students as "the test that can make your future or ruin the rest of your life in exactly one 4 hour sitting". It is only one simple test and we've all taken tests since kindergarten, so how hard can it be, right? Wrong. On a normal day, you'd prepare for a test, go to your class, and take it. On these days, there are two possible outcomes; one, you do well and you move onto the next yawn-inducing event on your mundane journey that is high school, or two, you fail and go home to cry to mommy and you move onto the next yawn-inducing event on your mundane journey that is high school.

Either way, life goes on. The SAT is in a whole different league. Not only does it decide if and which college you will be attending in the following year, it also helps those generous rich folk decide if they should unburden themselves from their infinitely growing fortunes by giving a "promising" student a decent sized scholarship. If you happened to be a straight A student, you're probably reading this thinking, "What's the big deal? I know I'll do just as well on this test as I've done on everything else in my life!"

Unfortunately, the SAT, also known as the Scholastic Aptitude Test, is nothing more than a glorified skill test that measures anything but scholastic ability; there are no questions testing content or knowledge. In fact, the results of the SAT are so prone to error that previous school grades have been shown to be about twice as accurate at predicting academic success than SAT scores. Though some studies have found that using SAT scores in

conjunction with previous grades are slightly better indicators of undergraduate success, these statistics are very low (Elert).

Scholastic tests in general are bad indicators of aptitude for a couple of reasons. First, they are conducted in a timed sitting. The student is generally under a lot of stress and cannot process information at their normal rate, thus performing very poorly on these tests. The SAT can also be retaken numerous times; after 3-5 times, the student is shown to do better regardless of aptitude level because they have taken the test so many times. In fact, by just showing up and signing your name on that \$50 piece of paper, you get an automatic 800 points.

Now if that's not a message from Collegeboard saying that "this test is so error prone that we're going to buffer your score with 800 free points", I don't know what is. Moreover, if a student happened to be as dumb as a brick and got every single question on the test wrong, the lowest they could score is a 200. What kind of test doesn't even allow a score of zero points? Makes you wonder how the scores would look if they weren't cushioned to make the test look like it's a real test with a normal score distribution. It was found that with a little coaching from companies such as Princeton Review, a student could raise their score an average of 100 points in each test section. However, such test preparation classes come at a hearty cost, making them inaccessible to the greater population financially.

These companies work towards establishing a profit making industry centered on this need to improve SAT scores, rather than truly helping the greater population of students receive the proper training they need to do

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well on the test. What a typical American mindset. There is a reason why America is not 1st for education. It is because we place such a high importance on preparing our students to take a test, which is really more of a business than a test, to correctly assess their undergraduate success rate. There is a simple answer to this dilemma; cut the useless stuff out of our education every year and focus on increasing the amount and difficulty of material taught. Children as early on as 6th grade waste time preparing for the SATs.

This time could be better spent on something like physical education so we will no longer take 1st place for the esteemed " Most Obese Nation" award. It could also be spent stressing the importance of the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) subject areas, which are vital to the progression of this nation. With all these problems with the test, why is it that over 92% of schools still require it for admission into their undergraduate programs? Over 1.7 million students waste their money and time taking this test, which essentially shows how well they can imitate the first group of students who took the test and scored well. Other than being one of the only healthy business industries in a time of economic hardship, the SAT is a scam.

As such, it needs to be dismissed as a requirement for undergraduate college admission. Four years of grades obtained from slaving away at high school and a student's GPA are more than enough at accurately predicting a student's future success, so there is no need for a test with such a high error rate to have such an importance in the college admitter's decision making process. You wouldn't let Bernard Madoff handle your investments, so why <https://assignbuster.com/sat-an-aptitude-test-or-a-profit-making-scam/>

let the SAT be the main indicator of academic potential? Works Cited Elert, Glenn. " The SAT Aptitude or Demographics?." E-World. Hypertextbook, 05 05 1992.

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