

# Standardized tests oppress the individual

Business



Almost all student achievements are defined by grades; these grades are used to determine a student's value in the eyes of colleges. Most students, usually in their junior and senior year of high school, have to take one of the most the SAT, a test designed by the College Board to determine a student's college readiness by measuring one's mathematical and verbal skills.

However, the SAT is a very standard test that does not accurately measure one's intelligence and does not properly test the material learned over the course of one's high school career. The SAT also favors higher income families, these students being advantageous to students of lower income families.

It lowers their chances of attending a prestigious college—if at all—as well as receiving a degree and getting a well paying job. The SAT fails to foster students' individuality and creativity as well since they are forced to follow a specific rubric for success. In the eyes of the SAT, life is a game that one must play according to the rules; in the end, it's about your results, and not your feelings. Every year, schools across the country have students stressing over working towards a better SAT score. These students have been told that if they raise their SAT score, they will have a higher chance of receiving acceptance into the college of their choice. As for the college, the student's grade is an indicator of the level at which the student will excel in college.

However, the SAT is an inaccurate way of showing true intelligence students who lack the intelligence and personal creativity of their peers could easily do well on the SAT because “ scores generally improve with guidance and repetition, [so] the tests have encouraged an industry of test training that takes advantage of the ambitions of students and families” (Tiefenthaler).

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Instead of evaluating students based on their intelligence, their ability to contribute to a school community, and their passion, the SAT can easily be manipulated by simply maneuvering the format of the SAT. Studies even show that “ standardized tests reward superficial thinking and may discourage more analytical thinking” (“ Standardized Tests Do Not Effectively Measure Student Achievement”). Superficial thinking means that students are being tested on the lowest level of rigor in a subject. The test is instead about how the question is worded and not the correct way to do the problem, therefore giving students the ability to find the answer without needing to have prior knowledge of the topic. The SAT also fails to test the critical elements of student achievement.

“ They fail to measure such important attributes as creativity and critical thinking skills”(“ Standardized Tests Do Not Effectively Measure Student Achievement”) both of which are important when in college and in a career. The SAT’s lack of representation of these aspects prove that the it is not a proper way to measure college readiness since these skills are what will be used everyday for the rest of one’s life. The SAT not only hurts students on a surface level, but also discriminates against many students. The SAT is aimed towards students from considerably wealthy families and it is proven that students of “ families earning more than \$200, 000 a year average a combined score of 1, 714, while students from families earning under \$20, 000 a year average a combined score of 1, 326” (Goldfarb). Students in families with higher incomes can afford better tutors, therefore, giving them an advantage over the students who cannot.

Their abundance of preparation, money, and understanding of the tests helps them do much better than students of lower incomes, despite intelligence. Registration for the SAT is another \$45-\$57, and though The College Board can provide financial aid, it does not make up for lack of tutoring and classes focused on SAT preparation. Financial boundaries are another factor as to why the SAT is against the rights of the individual because it does not fit all student's needs. The setup of the SAT is hurting students individuality and creativity and forces them to follow a specific rubric and causes students to lose sight of their passions and strengths. While studying for the SATs, especially when it comes to the essay portion the students cannot "express their understanding of the world. Or even form their own opinions about ideas they have read.

Instead, they must dance the steps that they have been told are important" ("Standardized tests are killing our students' creativity, desire to learn"). Students are forced to work through a rubric and suppress their ideas and individuality. They cannot influence their essays with their own personality and constantly repeat the same SAT questions through practice tests and actual test taking, which leads them to find a very dull approach to learning. Through this, students find" That school is torture [and] that learning is drudgery" ("Standardized tests are killing our students' creativity, desire to learn"). Since students develop this perspective, their motivation drops and they lose sight of the true value of school and learning.

A person's creativity and individuality is what makes them who they are, and the fact that the SAT is causing this to happen is yet another reason as to why it is repressing individual expression. The novella Anthem by Ayn Rand <https://assignbuster.com/standardized-tests-oppress-the-individual/>

and Siddhartha by Hermann Hesse both support the rights of the individual, unlike the SATs. In Anthem, the main character, Equality-72521, describes his schooling and it resembles the systematic and restricting nature of the SAT. “ But we loved the Science of Things. We wish to know.

We wished to know. We wished to know about all the things which made the earth around us. We asked too many questions that the Teachers forbade it” (Rand 23). Equality’s creativity and ideas are being suppressed by his teachers and he is required to fit a certain standard, no more, no less. “[It] is a great sin, to be born different from our brothers, but it is evil to be superior to them” (Rand 21). Equality’s creativity must not be shown and he is only taught surface level information in a simplistic and boring way.

This is much like the way the SAT expects students to learn and study for the test. Students are not allowed to show creativity or stray from a certain structure or else their score could drop significantly. In Siddhartha, a similar viewpoint is expressed when Siddhartha says “ there is one thing that this clear, worthy instruction does not contain; it does not contain the secret of what the Illustrious One himself experienced—he alone among hundreds of thousands.” (Hesse 34) Here Siddhartha is showing how one must experience life on their own and how one does not need someone to guide them or set a specific way to do things. This is a lesson that could be applied to the SAT in that the SAT expects a certain structure for every student, that may not fit for them or may reduce their individuality and creativity. While there are many flaws in the SAT, many people still see the benefits of the assessments.

A benefit of the SAT is that it has changed around three times in its existence and is a constant way to measure a student's intelligence. It's equality for all students makes it more fair than high school GPA." The SAT gives students the opportunity to demonstrate their college-preparedness despite inconsistent grading systems throughout the nation's high schools. And SAT scores provide a national, standardized benchmark that neutralizes the risk of grade inflation." (Juric).

This helps students who may have had to deal with constantly changing teaching styles and grading systems and as a result, have a GPA that does not reflect their intelligence. With the SAT, students do not have to worry about it changing per year and not knowing what to expect. The SAT also is the same for all students and therefore it does not give certain students an advantage. These benefits of the SAT may be true, but they are easily challenged by the fact that it's unwavering system does not benefit students because it can easily be manipulated and students with low intelligence could score perfectly. That way, college readiness is not accurately measured and acceptances would not align with a student's passion or skill set. The SAT is a standardized test that follows a "one size fits all" much like that store with clothes that just don't fit quite right.

The SAT suppresses the individual and should be completely optional or revoked altogether due to its lack of ability to gauge college readiness, financial discrimination, and its formulaic nature which restricts student's creativity and individuality. Works Cited Goldfarb, Zachary A. "These Four Charts Show How the SAT Favors Rich, Educated Families." The Washington Post. WP Company, 05 Mar.

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