

About National and Texas Tests

PLAN

An ACT Program for Educational Planning

Source: www.act.org/plan/benefits.html

Why might you want to take the PLAN test as a tenth grader?

- Start thinking about life after high school:
Personalized career information gives you many fields to investigate. You can see from your results how ready for college you might be.
- Prepare for the ACT:
PLAN is a curriculum-based test that is similar to the ACT Assessment. It is a good predictor of a future ACT score. In fact, it is known as a “pre-ACT” test.
- See academic progress over time:
If you took the EXPLORE Test as an eighth grader, comparing scores between EXPLORE and PLAN will help the high school counselor recommend how best to prepare for college work and the ACT.

Note: EXPLORE is available at the ACT web site listed below.

ACT

Information for life's transitions

Source: www.act.org/aap

The ACT assesses high school students' general educational development and their ability to complete college-level work. You may take the ACT Assessment as often as you wish but most take it in either the 11th or 12th grade, prior to submitting college applications. The following areas make up the ACT:

- The multiple-choice tests cover four skills areas – English, mathematics, reading, and science.
 - The Writing Test, which is optional, measures the skills used in planning and writing a short essay.
-

PSAT/NMSQT ®

Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test

Source: www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/psat/about.html

PSAT/NMSQT stands for Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. It's a standard test that provides firsthand practice for the SAT Reasoning Test™. It also gives you a chance to enter the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) scholarship programs.

The PSAT/NMSQT measures

- critical reading skills (25 minute test with 48 questions);
- math problem-solving skills (25 minute test with 38 questions); and
- writing skills (30 minute test with 39 questions).

The most common reasons for taking the PSAT/NMSQT are

- to receive feedback on your strengths and weaknesses on skills necessary for college study in order to focus your preparation on those areas that could most benefit from additional study or practice;
- to see how your performance on an admissions test might compare with that of others applying to college;
- to enter the competition for scholarships from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation; and
- to help prepare for the SAT by becoming familiar with the kinds of questions and the exact directions you will see on the SAT.

You should definitely take the PSAT/NMSQT in your junior year. Many students benefit by taking it earlier, typically in their sophomore year. Sophomores will be provided with a sophomore percentile so that they can compare their performances to other sophomores who are also planning on going to college. If you take it as a sophomore, recognize that the PSAT/NMSQT is a junior-level test, so don't get discouraged if your score is low. Your score will usually increase as your years of study increase. If younger students focus on the skills, not the score, they can work to improve those skills. This will help improve performance in high school, as well as better prepare students for college, the junior-year PSAT/NMSQT, and the SAT. Juniors who take the test are eligible to enter the National Merit Scholarship Corporation's scholarship competitions as well as other programs that give special recognition to high-achieving Hispanic and African American students.

SAT ®

Source:www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/about.html

The SAT measures how well students apply what they have learned in school to analyze and solve problems as they would in college. The skills measured on the SAT are related to those problems as they would in college. The skills measured on the SAT are related to those skills needed for success in college. Many colleges required the SAT for college admission. Students may take the SAT as often as they wish, but most take the test in the 11th or 12th grade.

Skill areas tested include

- Writing: improving sentences, identifying sentence errors, improving paragraphs, and crafting an essay;
- Critical reading: sentence completions and passage-based reading; and
- Math: standard multiple choice questions and student produced responses.

SAT Subject Tests

SAT Subject Test scores can help you demonstrate your achievements. Many colleges that don't require Subject Tests will look at your Subject Test scores to learn about your academic background. The best idea is to find out when you are applying to a college whether they require these tests or not.

The SAT Subject Tests Learning Center gives you tips and strategies, talks about specific SAT Subject Tests and gives you other information about what you need to know to take a SAT Subject Test.

You can also read more about the SAT Subject Tests by downloading "Taking the SAT II: Subject Tests."

TAKS**Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills**

Source: www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/

As mandated by the 76th Texas Legislature in 1999, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS™) was administered beginning in the 2002-2003 school year. The TAKS™ measures the statewide curriculum in reading at Grades 3-9; in writing at Grades 4 and 7; in English Language Arts at Grade 10 and 11; in mathematics at Grades 3-11; in science at Grades 5, 10, and 11; and in social studies at Grades 8, 10 and 11. The Spanish TAKS™ is administered at Grades 3 through 6. Satisfactory performance on the TAKS™ at Grade 11 is prerequisite to a high school diploma. Individual student results give a scale score which is attached to student transcripts and gives a college-readiness score.

THEA Texas Higher Education Assessment

Source: www.thea.nesinc.com

The THEA is designed to provide information about the reading, mathematics and writing skills of students entering public colleges, universities, and educator preparation programs in public and private institutions. The THEA replaces TASP and covers the same content. The THEA has been approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, under Senate Bill 286, Texas Education Code, Section 51.3062: Texas Success Initiative, for use by Texas institutions of higher education as an assessment instrument for entering students. The THEA provides the diagnostic data required by this legislation.