

the new STANDARD



BY MAYA MURTHY

On March 25, College Board president David Coleman announced that the SAT would be completely redesigned for the spring of 2016. While many students are upset at what they believe is a huge change in the test, overall the SAT will remain as it is, with a shift toward students having to defend their answers using evidence. Read below to see the top three changes to the test.

1

Relevant vocabulary in context

The new emphasis placed on being able to identify relevant words in context of a passage, rather than memorizing definitions of obscure words, represents a shift in thinking for the SAT. The test now promotes the idea of students needing a deeper level of understanding to correctly answer questions rather than memorizing definitions of a word in the passage based on the context provided.



sophomore Stephanie Chao

"No one uses [current SAT vocabulary] anywhere except in Lit essays. If [students] learn practical vocabulary, then maybe they'll find the SAT useful."

2

Optional essay analyzing a source

The change in essay prompt to one which asks students to describe how the author of a passage creates their argument is a move that College Board hopes will stop students from focusing on lengthening their essays by adding incorrect facts and irrelevant quotes. By keeping the same prompt every year but using a different passage, the student mentality will change from memorizing random facts and quotes towards being able to analyze and take apart arguments.



freshman Anway Jawadekar

"I think [making the essay optional] is a good thing, because people from outside [the U.S.], might not know the [right] specifications to write a good essay."

3

No penalty for wrong answers

As opposed to its current 1/4 point penalty per wrong answer, the re-designed SAT will only add points for correct answers. One of the largest changes to the SAT, removing the guessing penalty, means that students will be able to answer all questions to the best of their ability, rather than deciding against answering what they fear would be an incorrect answer.



senior Vivian Chan

"[Without the penalty] I think I would have gotten a higher score on my SAT. Definitely [when] guessing I felt guilty, like I was being penalized."