3 Session 3: Going to College Starts Now: Curriculum and Testing

Activity # 3: Practice SAT and ACT Questions

Opening Discussion:

Standardized tests aren't fun for anyone. But the name of the game is "practice." With practice you will become more comfortable with the test and score better when it comes time to take the real test.

Activity/Handout:

Sample SAT and ACT Questions
Sample SAT Questions: Explanations
Sample ACT Questions: Explanations

Instructions:

1. Divide the students into groups of three and tell them that they will be receiving three practice SAT/ACT questions.
2. Tell the groups that they have three minutes to find the answer to the questions and will receive 5 points for each right answer.
3. The group with the most points will get to explain how they solved the problems. Let them see how closely their explanation comes to the one provided by the College Board/ACT.

NOTE: Depending upon the academic level of the students, the counselor may want to find more difficult questions by going to the College Board website and looking at "Practice Questions" in the section called "Prepare for the SAT." The website also posts a "Question of the Day" every day which is good practice for those students who have access to a computer. Practice ACT questions are located at **www.actstudent.org**.

Wrap-Up Discussion:

Remind students that practice is the best way to do their best on any test. If desired, bring sample questions to each subsequent session for this group. With the close of the topic of testing, remind the students that tests are only a small part of the college application and that in the following sessions they will learn about other important aspects of the application process, like the importance of extracurricular activities.

SAMPLE SAT QUESTIONS:

Sentence Completion:

The sentence below has two blanks, each blank indicating that something has been omitted. Beneath the sentence are five sets of words labeled A through E. Choose the word or set of words that, when inserted in the sentence, best fits the meaning of the sentence as a whole.

Hoping to ------- the dispute, negotiators proposed a compromise that they felt would be ------- to both labor and management.
(A) enforce . . useful
(B) end . . divisive
(C) overcome . . unattractive
(D) extend . . satisfactory
(E) resolve . . acceptable

Math Question #1:

A special lottery is to be held to select the student who will live in the only deluxe room in a dormitory. There are 100 seniors, 150 juniors, and 200 sophomores who applied. Each senior's name is placed in the lottery 3 times; each junior's name, 2 times; and each sophomore's name, 1 time. What is the probability that a senior's name will be chosen?
(A) $1/8$
(B) $2/9$
(C) $2/7$
(D) $3/8$
(E) $1/2$

Math Question #2:

$7-4x = 5$
$8x-3 = 1$
What value of x satisfies both of the equations above?

SAMPLE SAT QUESTIONS
EXPLANATIONS

Explanation of Sentence Completion:

One way to answer a sentence completion question with two words missing is to focus first on just one of the two blanks. If one of the words in an answer choice is logically wrong, then you can eliminate the entire choice from consideration.

- Look at the first blank in the example above. Would it make sense to say that "negotiators" who have "proposed a compromise" were hoping to enforce or extend the "dispute"? No, so neither (A) nor (D) can be the correct answer.
- Now you can focus on the second blank. Would the "negotiators" have proposed a compromise that they believed would be divisive or unattractive to "both labor and management"? No, so (B) and (C) can be eliminated, and only choice (E) remains.
- Always check your answer by reading the entire sentence with your choice filled in. Does it make sense to say "Hoping to resolve the dispute, the negotiators proposed a compromise that they felt would be acceptable to both labor and management"? Yes.

Correct answer: (E)

Explanation of Math Question #1:

To determine the probability that a senior's name will be chosen, you must determine the total number of seniors' names that are in the lottery and divide this number by the total number of names in the lottery. Since each senior's name is placed in the lottery 3 times, there are 3 • 100 = 300 seniors' names. Likewise, there are 2 • 150 = 300 juniors' names and 1 • 200 = 200 sophomores' names in the lottery. The probability that a senior's name will be chosen is

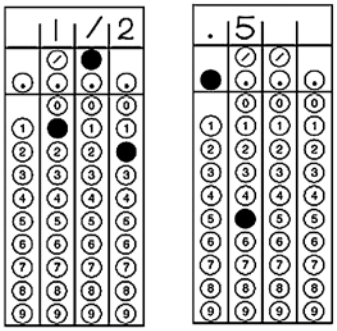
$$\frac{300}{300 + 300 + 200} = \frac{300}{800} = \frac{3}{8}.$$

Answer to Math Question #2:

OR

Correct Answer:

1/2 or .5



SAMPLE ACT QUESTIONS

Passage I:

Measles is an extremely contagious viral infection spread by the respiratory route. Figure 1 shows the course of measles from time of exposure to recovery from the infection.

After recovery from measles, the infected individual develops immunity or resistance to reinfection. Figure 1 shows the development of immunity indicated by the antibody level.

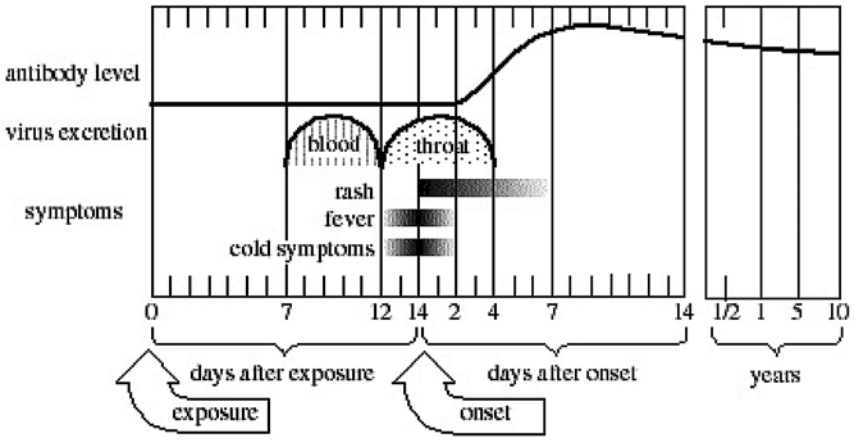


Figure 1

Figure 1 adapted from D. M. McLean, Virology in Health Care. ©1980 by Williams and Wilkins.

Based on the information presented in the passage and in Figure 1, would it be possible to determine that a person had immunity against the measles virus six months after exposure?

A. Yes; the level of protective antibodies against measles would be elevated 6 months after exposure.
B. Yes; the virus would still be present in the respiratory tract to protect against reinfection.
C. No; the level of protective antibodies against measles would be undetectable 6 months after exposure.
D. No; the virus would no longer be present in the blood to protect against reinfection.

SAMPLE ACT QUESTIONS: EXPLANATIONS

The best answer is A.

Figure 1 depicts the progression of the measles from time of exposure until 10 years after exposure. Figure 1 also indicates the antibody level in the body.

A. Yes; the level of protective antibodies against measles would be elevated six months after exposure.
   Correct. Figure 1 indicates that six months after exposure, the antibody level is elevated. Since this level is not elevated prior to infection, it would be possible to determine that a person had immunity against the measles virus six months after exposure by measuring the antibody level and determining that it was elevated.

B. Yes; the virus would still be present in the respiratory tract to protect against reinfection.
   Incorrect. Figure 1 indicates that the virus excretion is present in the throat two to three weeks after exposure. However, the virus excretion is not present in the throat after six months.

C. No; the level of protective antibodies against measles would be undetectable six months after exposure.
   Incorrect. Figure 1 indicates that the antibody level remains elevated for at least 10 years. Thus, the protective antibodies against measles would be detectable six months after exposure, making C incorrect.

D. No; the virus would no longer be present in the blood to protect against reinfection.
   Incorrect. Even if the virus was no longer present in the blood, other factors could be measured to determine that a person had immunity against the measles virus six months after exposure. For example, the antibody level remains elevated for at least 10 years.