# SAT vs. ACT Tip Sheet for West Springfield High School

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<th>SAT</th>
<th>ACT</th>
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| **Main Focus** | - Verbal and quantitative reasoning  
- Problem solving | - Academic achievement  
- Subject-based test |
| **Types of Questions** | - Tricky questions containing attractors  
- Critical and analytical thinking skills | - Straightforward and content driven  
- Fast paced, less time to answer |
| **Time** | - 10 sections  
- 3 hours and 45 minutes | - 5 tests  
- 3 hours and 25 minutes |
| **Incorrect Answers** | - Lose a quarter point for wrong answers | - No penalty for wrong answers |
| **Math** | - Algebra 1, Algebra 2 and Geometry  
- Mostly non-standard and tricky problems  
- Formulas are provided | - Pre-Algebra, Algebra 1, Algebra 2,  
- Geometry and Trigonometry  
- Formulas are not provided |
| **Reading** | - Vocabulary based sentence completions  
- 7 short and long reading passages  
- Focus on interference, tone and purpose  
- Questions follow the order of the passage | - Focuses little on vocabulary  
- 4 long reading passages that require the student to read closely  
- Less time per question  
- Order of questions is random |
| **Science** | - SAT does not contain a Science section | - Focuses on analyzing and interpreting data from charts and tables  
- Rarely requires any specific knowledge from Science classes |
| **Essay** | - Always the first section of the test  
- 25 minutes to complete an essay on a broad topic  
- Essay can be creative or formulaic | - Always the last test and is optional  
- 30 minutes to complete an essay on a narrow topic  
- Topic is relevant to high school students |
| **Format** | - 3 Critical Reading sections  
- 3 Math sections  
- 3 Writing sections (includes essay)  
- 1 experimental section that is not scored | - 1 English test  
- 1 Math test  
- 1 Reading test  
- 1 Science test  
- 1 Writing test (optional essay) |
| **Scoring** | - Combined score of 600-2400  
- Critical Reading 200-800  
- Math 200-800  
- Writing 200-800  
- Writing score is comprised of multiple choice and essay sub scores  
- Essay counts for approximately 30% of the Writing score | - Composite score of 1-36 (Average of the 4 tests that excludes the essay)  
- English 1-36 (Test 1)  
- Math 1-36 (Test 2)  
- Reading 1-36 (Test 3)  
- Science 1-36 (Test 4)  
- English/Writing provided separately 1-36  
- Essay counts for approximately 30% of the combined English/Writing score |