

'Tweens & Teens



It's the time of year where college admissions talk is everywhere from the checkout line at the supermarket to last night's cocktail party down the street. You just can't seem to get away from it. Things have changed so much since you went to college that you don't know what to believe. We caught up with Lisa Jacobson, Founder and CEO of the renowned tutoring and test preparation company Inspirica, who agreed to help us help our readers debunk the most common 5 SAT myths:

The 5 Biggest S.A.T. Lies of All Time

MYTH #1 KIDS DO BETTER ON THE ACT THAN THE SAT Not true! 1/3 of kids do better, but 1/3 do the same and 1/3 do worse. Have your child take a real practice ACT and see how the scores compare. If the ACT seems like the right test for your child, then he should take it very seriously: schedule some ACT training to maximize the score.

MYTH #2 THE PSAT IS A GOOD INDICATOR OF MY CHILD'S SAT SCORE Oh, no! There is a common misconception that as kids mature, they do better. Not necessarily. The PSAT is so much longer than the SAT that you have to figure in a huge "fatigue factor." Plus, there is an essay on the SAT, but not on the PSAT. Speak to the person who will be assisting your child for the SAT's about what you can honestly expect from your child's PSAT scores.

MYTH #3 THE MAY TEST IS EASIER THAN THE MARCH TEST This myth is nutty. Some people mistakenly believe that the more "advanced" students take the test early, in March, so the pool is harder and the curve is harder than when the more "typical" child takes it in May. The truth is that each test

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is different at each administration and ultimately which one your child gets and how the pool does is nothing anyone can predict.

MYTH #4 THE WRITING SECTION DOESN'T COUNT It might, it might not, or it might be somewhere in the middle. Assume the writing section counts. Every college is different and every admissions person is different. Take the opportunity to accrue another great score to make your application look even better.

MYTH #5 ALWAYS TAKE THE SAT TWICE If your child knocks it out of the park the first time, she is done. If she takes it twice and the score is in the desired range, great. If she takes it a third time, no problem. However, there is really no reason to take it more than three times since that means your child is just taking it over and over with no instruction between sittings.

If I could give only one piece of advice for parents regarding college admissions it is this: keep perspective even when everyone else makes you feel as if whatever you are doing to help your child is not enough. Colleges are so competitive that there is a feeling that nothing is ever enough and no edge is great enough. Forget getting an "edge." You want your child to be authentic. Trust me, after 25 years I know that most kids end up perfectly happy at the college they attend after this whole crazy process is over. You have to believe!



If you're looking for an SAT preparation product that combines fun with the gains of group study then **SAT GAME FOR**

DUMMIES is for you. This trivia-style board game includes 500 questions that represent all five SAT categories, along with reading passage booklets for the critical reading and writing skills sections. Questions are timed so that players experience the test pace, and because the game is played in a group, players learn tips and tricks from each other. SRP \$39.99.