

## About the SSAT:

<https://ssat.org/>

### What is the SSAT?

The SSAT is a standardized test used by admission officers to assess the abilities of students seeking to enroll in an independent school. The SSAT measures the basic verbal, math, and reading skills students need for successful performance in independent schools. It's an indispensable tool that gives admission professionals an equitable means to assess and compare applicants, regardless of their background or experience.

### What is a standardized test?

A standardized test is a test that is developed, administered and scored in a consistent (or standard) manner. The SSAT is not an achievement test, which is a test created to determine a level of skill, accomplishment, or knowledge in a specific area. It does not measure the personal characteristics such as motivation, persistence, or creativity, that also contribute to success in school. Your SSAT score is just one part of your complete application to an independent school and while it is important, it is not the only criterion used in admission decisions.

## What's on the SSAT?

Test Section	Timing
Writing Sample	25 minutes
<i>Break</i>	<i>5 minutes</i>
Quantitative (Section 1)	30 minutes
Reading (Section 2)	40 minutes
<i>Break</i>	<i>10 minutes</i>
Verbal (Section 3)	30 minutes
Quantitative (Section 4)	30 minutes
Experimental (Section 5)*	15 minutes
<b>Total Testing Time:</b>	<b>3 hours, 5 minutes</b>

\*Experimental section is not given during the Flex test

## How is the SSAT Given?

From the moment you are admitted to the test center until the time of dismissal, your test administrator follows precise instructions for the proctoring of the SSAT. Any deviations from these uniform testing conditions are reported immediately. Of course, a student with a disability may apply for testing accommodations, but the processes and procedures for the test's administration remain the same for every student.

There are two types of SSAT administrations:

1. **Standard** - The Standard SSAT is given on eight designated Saturdays during the academic year at test sites around the world.
2. **Flex** - The Flex SSAT is given to an individual or group on any date other than the eight Standard dates.

## Levels of the SSAT

There are three SSAT levels:

1. Elementary Level SSAT - For children currently in 3rd and 4th grades who are applying for admission to 4th and 5th grades.

2. Middle Level SSAT - For children currently in grades 5-7 who seek admission to grades 6 through 8.
3. Upper Level SSAT - For children currently in grades 8-11 who are applying for admission to grades 9 through PG (Post Graduate).

## Who Writes the SSAT?

The SSAT is written and reviewed by independent school educators and content and testing experts. Once a test question is written, it is thoroughly reviewed by a committee that reaches consensus regarding the question's appropriateness. It then goes through a rigorous standardized process to analyze the question and its answers. Once questions are proven statistically sound, they are assembled into test forms. The distribution of question difficulties is set so that the test will effectively differentiate among test takers who vary in their level of ability.

## Is the SSAT Reliable?

The SSAT is highly reliable. According to recent studies, SSAT scaled score reliability is higher than .90 (out of a possible 1.0) for both the verbal and quantitative sections and is approaching .90 for the reading section, which is considered quite high.

How are my Scores Compared to Others?

There are two ways in which test scores are referenced: *norm referencing* and *criterion referencing*. The SSAT uses norm referencing.

**Norm-Referenced Tests** report whether test takers performed better or worse than a hypothetical average student, which is determined by comparing scores against the performance results of a statistically selected group of test takers (the norm group), who have already taken the exam.

**Criterion-Referenced Tests** are designed to measure a tester's results against a fixed set of predetermined criteria or learning standards and interpret a test taker's performance without reference to the performance of other test takers. (For example, your percent correct from a classroom math test is 90% because you answered 90% of the questions correctly. Your score is not referenced to the performance of anyone else in your class.)

## Why is this important?

It's important to remember that your SSAT scores are being compared to those of a very specific group of students. The SSAT norm group consists of all the test takers (same grade/gender) who have taken the SSAT for the first time on one of the Standard Saturday or Sunday administrations in the United States and Canada over the past three years. SSAT score reports feature percentile ranks, which are referenced to the performance of this norm group. For example, if

you are an 8th grade boy and your gender/grade percentile rank on the March 2016 verbal section is 90%, it means that your scaled scores are higher than the scaled scores of 90% of all the other 8th grade boys who took a Standard SSAT in the United States and Canada between 2012 and 2015.

An SSAT scaled score may have a different percentile rank from year to year, depending on the pool of students who take the SSAT, and the SSAT percentile ranks should not be compared to those you may receive on other types of standardized tests, because each test is taken by a different group of students.

The SSAT norm group is highly competitive; your results are compared only with other students (same grade/ gender) who take the SSAT to apply for admission to some of the most selective independent schools in the country.

## SSAT Candidate Handbook & SSAT Candidate Agreement

The SSAT Candidate Handbook sets forth all of the policies and procedures that apply to the Secondary School Admission Test (SSAT). The *Handbook* includes policies and procedures for examination registration and scheduling, examination administration, scoring, retesting, violations, investigations, errors, and dispute resolution. The policies and procedures in the *Handbook* help protect SSAT examination content, maintain the integrity of the school application process, and ensure test fairness and validity for all candidates.

All candidates and their parents or legal guardians must read and familiarize themselves with the *Handbook* and agree to all of the policies and procedures contained therein. All policies and procedures contained in the *Handbook* are part of the SSAT Candidate Agreement, the text of which is also included in the *Handbook*. The SSAT is made available to candidates exclusively under the terms of the Agreement, which constitutes a legally binding agreement between The Enrollment Management Association, on the one hand, and candidates and their parents or legal guardians, on the other hand.

## Testing Accommodations

A student with a disability may apply for testing accommodations for the SSAT. You must be approved for testing accommodations BEFORE you can register for a test. Accommodations may include:

- Permission to mark answers directly in test booklet
- Large print test booklet and materials
- Use of laptop computer with spelling aid (for writing sample only)
- Extra time (1.5x standard time per section)
- Other accommodations required by the student

Visit [ssat.org/TA](http://ssat.org/TA) for more complete information, testing accommodation application requirements, and deadlines.

## How to Get Started

Visit [ssat.org](http://ssat.org) and create an account. Then:

- Register for a Test: Select a test day and test center.
- Prepare and Practice: The best way to prepare to take the SSAT is to become familiar with its format and practice using questions and sample tests developed by the same team that writes the SSAT.
- Prepare for Test Day: Print out your admissions ticket and review test policies.

Contact Us

<http://www.garretteducationalconsulting.com>

[info@garretteducationalconsulting.com](mailto:info@garretteducationalconsulting.com)

980-677-0311