

## Answers and Explanations

### The Essay

Your essays will be judged according to the scoring guide that is discussed in Chapter 1. Review it before looking at the sample student responses to the essay prompt.

#### Essay Scoring Guide

- 6** This score is reserved for *outstanding* essay responses. A student earning a 6 response has effectively and insightfully developed a point of view on the issue and demonstrates exceptional critical thinking, using appropriate examples and reasons within the response. These essays are well organized, clearly focused, and exceptionally coherent. This level of essay demonstrates skillful use of language, apt vocabulary, and a variety of sentence structure. Although not without flaws, a 6 response is relatively free of most errors of usage, mechanics, and grammar.
- 5** This score reflects an effective essay; it demonstrates *reasonable mastery* of composition skills. It may have occasional lapses in quality; overall it is a very successful response. A student earning a 5 response has effectively developed a point of view on the topic or issue, has demonstrated strong critical thinking skills, and generally has used appropriate examples to develop his or her point of view. The organization is focused, showing good coherence and progression of ideas. This essay will exhibit facility in the use of language and appropriate vocabulary for the task. A variety of sentence structure is present with a minimum of mechanical and grammatical errors.
- 4** This score reflects a *competent response*, which demonstrates adequate mastery, although it will have lapses, in contrast to the quality of the 5 and 6 responses. A student earning a 4 response has developed a point of view and demonstrates critical thinking on the issue. However, the examples and development of ideas are less strong or less consistent than 5 or 6 responses. General organization is evident, and progression and coherence is present, although not always consistent. Language and vocabulary skills may be more limited or less appropriate. Some sentence structure variety is used, although grammar, punctuation, and mechanical skills may be less evident.
- 3** This score reflects an *inadequate response* to the essay question. It does, however, demonstrate a developing mastery of composition skills. The point of view will be evident, along with critical thinking, but it may be inconsistent. Examples and support are often weak or inadequate to make the writer's point. Organization, coherence, and focus are less well developed, and lapses may be found in sentence structure and/or flow of ideas. Vocabulary may be limited. Grammar, usage, and mechanical errors are present.
- 2** This score reflects a *seriously limited* essay response, which demonstrates little mastery. The point of view is present but limited due to vagueness, weak critical thinking, or inappropriate or insufficient examples, reasons, or other evidence to support the writer's position. The essay is poorly organized; it has little coherence, and it displays little facility in the use of language. Sentence structure is not varied, and errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics are serious enough to obscure meaning.
- 1** This score reflects an essay that is *fundamentally lacking*. No mastery is evident as demonstrated by a lack of a viable point and/or little or no evidence to back a position. The essay is disorganized and/or unfocused, resulting in an incoherent response. Vocabulary is limited; sentence structure displays serious flaws; mechanical, grammatical, and usage errors are pervasive, seriously interfering with the meaning.

## Essay Prompt

Gandhi labeled close friendships as dangerous because “friends react on one another” and “sometimes loyalty to a friend will lead us into wrongdoing.”

Do you agree or disagree that friends react on one another and can lead us into wrongdoing? Support your position with reasoning and examples taken from your readings, experiences or observations.

## Suemee’s Response

*Friends can almost always convince or persuade you into doing something that you think is wrong. You feel pressure on you because you feel if you don’t do what they say, you could lose them, which may be a large portion of your life. The deeper and longer a friendship has lasted, the more that person knows your weaknesses that could possibly be used against you in negative ways.*

*For some people, friends are the only thing in their life they can depend on, and these friends are like an outlet from their other personal problems. Because friends are such a big part of their lives, these dependent people will risk many things in order to continue their relationships. Some may steal, get into drugs, break communication with their own families and become unsuccessful in school. Others may follow their friends because they think that without those people they’d be empty and feel insecure about themselves.*

*Friends can also react on one another in positive ways. Being able to tell friends things you couldn’t tell family and helping each other with school work are two positive impacts friends can make in an individual’s life. There are probably more positive effects friends have on one another than negative effects, or else friendships would not exist, and everyone would live for and by themselves.*

*I think keeping a few close friendships could be a definite benefit for you, but keeping too many could hurt and even damage you in the end. You lose track of what you have told this person and what another person knows about you. Also, some people may just be using the friendship as a stepping stone to get elsewhere, leaving you behind in the dust. Overall, however, keeping a few friendships that are close are pluses because these people are reliable and cause you to be in more control of your life.*

*Overall, I agree that close friendships can be dangerous, but if no one had friends, we would lose a lot of human interaction and trust. It would be hard to live in a world if we had no friendships or just slight, shallow acquaintances. Failing friendships where someone has felt betrayed make a person stronger and smarter by knowing how to better choose one’s next friend.*

## Comments

Suemee did an okay job on a subject that could very quickly garner a lot of trite responses. Within the very narrow time limit of 25 minutes, she puts forth her ideas and supports them well. There is nothing terribly clever about the response; it just does a good job. It flows well, and the writer does not just parrot Gandhi's ideas or anyone else's. In fact she makes it clear that yes, friendships might be problematic, but overall a few good friends are good for us, and without them we would be lonely indeed.

Paragraph structure and development are good. Grammar and usage are, for the most part okay. The infamous voice of "YOU" is overused. Once in awhile she seems to realize what she is doing, and she will revert to "a person" or "one," but like so many of us, "you" comes creeping back into the essay.

Overall, this is a good response, and is likely to receive a five from the SAT readers.

## Sartu's Response

*I think some time close friendships can be dangerous because friends know you better than others. Sometimes they react to your instability. They can make a big deal out of some things; they pressure you to do something for them that you don't want to do.*

*Sometimes they encourage you to do something. For example, your friends want you to join the basketball team or other sport or club, and that is good. Sometimes, however, they ask you to break rules just for them. If you do something bad, they might turn around and say "my goodness, I can not believe you did (or said) that." Then they start to freak out and you become scared. But you won't be expecting this reaction from them because they are the ones who suggested it in the first place.*

*It is not okay that we sometimes commit sins for the sake of loyalty to others. Would you commit sin for the sake of loyalty to others? Sometimes, our friends want us to do extreme things. For instance, some people would tease others by saying they like someone else better. Sometimes it happens accidentally that we commit sins for the sake of our loyalty to others. We have to be alert, however, and keep ourselves from being sucked into something we don't want. Often when we do something that goes against our own beliefs, we later feel guilty and we wonder just how we ended up in such a situation.*

*Probably the best defense we have is to choose our friends wisely. We don't have to have a lot of friends, but a few loyal and trustworthy ones are what we need to find.*

## Comments

This response needs a bit of work. It is not a terrible response. In fact, it quite adequately fulfills the needs of the assignment. Nothing is expressed with much depth. Good statements are made, but they lack specifics to back up the ideas expressed. Nevertheless, this is an acceptable response. No doubt SAT readers would give this essay a four.

The essay demonstrates critical thinking on the issue of friendship. The last lines are particularly perceptive. However, the examples are few and not very strong, therefore limiting the development of the essay. The response is organized, and it demonstrates coherence. This is one of those essays that you now would grow stronger if the student had the leisure to step away from it and return to it with a strong revision and bolstering of ideas.

## Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 1

### Improving Sentences

1. **C.** Generally, the multiple-choice questions on the SAT start with easier questions, and they become progressively harder. This is certainly the case here. Did you catch the problem on the first reading? The word *outstanding* must have *an* in front of it, not *a*, therefore Choice **C** is the correct answer.
2. **D.** When a singular subject is followed by a prepositional phrase with a plural object of the preposition, sometimes we are “tricked” into thinking that the subject of the sentence is plural. In this case, *book* is the word we need to look at, not *photographs*. However, we also know that the pictures are the specific reminders, not the book, *per se*. Therefore, Choice **D** is the least confusing and the best response. In the second clause, *it* is the appropriate subject of the sentence, referring back to book, making Choice **D** the correct answer. The other choices either incorrectly use photographs as the subject or the wording is awkward. Also, the pronoun “both” needs to follow rather than precede the proposition *to*.
3. **C.** At first you might think number 3 is okay as it is. However, the second clause shifts to passive voice, not a good choice. Choice **C** is a better way of presenting the information—the director studied and made—this is the best presentation of the sentence.
4. **B.** The detective *chose* and *arrested*, so the suspect *boarded* is the best choice to put all the action in the past tense. Choice **B** is the answer.
5. **A.** The subordinate conjunction *which* always takes a comma before it. In this sentence, the underlined portion is an *interrupter* that needs commas on both sides of it. Therefore, Choice **A**, the sentence as it stands, is correct. If you thought that Choice **D** might work, it would have if there had been a comma before *whose*.
6. **C.** The key to the answer to this question is the word “already.” This indicates things that have taken place before now. The best choice indicating past is Choice **C**, the correct answer.
7. **A.** Jumbled or not? Actually, Choice **A**, is the only choice that doesn’t twist your tongue or your mind when you read it.
8. **A.** Although the other choices are not as jumbled as 7, Choice **A** is also correct for this response. What makes Choice **A** better than Choice **B** is that there is no need to repeat the word *movie*. The pronoun *it* works just fine.
9. **C.** Wow—we just don’t know who is doing the hoping in this sentence, do we? We understand that it is the student, but that is not stated. Therefore, either Choice **D** or **C** has to be correct since they include the word student. Choice **D** is too disorderly, making **C** correct.
10. **D.** How many times have you heard this sentiment? The most straightforward delivery of this sentence can be found in Choice **D**.
11. **C.** Parallel structure is critical in your writing. Here we have three infinitives (verbs) with their objects: to strengthen concentration, to tone muscles, and to provide camaraderie. Hear the balance? The only choice then is **C** because it establishes the rhythm and balance the sentence was lacking because of faulty parallelism.

### Identifying Sentence Errors

12. **B.** Did you select Choice **D** for this one? Oops. What you have in this sentence is an incomplete comparison. The entire comparison would read “suffering from the same flu-like symptoms *as I am suffering.*” The correct response is Choice **B**. Most of the time people (and therefore patients) are referred to as *who* or *whom*, occasionally *that*. However, I don’t care to be referred to as a “that” do you? “Which happened” should read “who happened.”
13. **B.** Just don’t visit in the winter, at least not without your long underwear. This question should not have been too tricky for you. The expression is *reason / reasons why*, not *reasons of why*, making Choice **B** the correct answer.

- 14. A.** The answer to this question is Choice **A**. If you look just at the underlined section “members and *him*,” it sounds okay, doesn’t it? But you have to look at the entire sentence. What we have is a compound (two parts) subject. To make sure that you use the correct subject pronoun, take each part of the subject and put it with the verb. Both parts must sound right. *Members decided* sounds fine, but we rarely have a problem when a noun is the subject. However, when you take *him* and put it with the verb, *him decided*, you suddenly sound like a prehistoric cave dweller or something. So the correct pronoun would be *he*.
- 15. D.** Here comes parallel structure again. She will be taking Calculus, Physics II, Engineering 101, and *Creative Writing*, making Choice **D** the correct response. Items in a series need to be kept as parallel as possible when you list them.
- 16. D.** Idioms using prepositions are a pain. Most languages have idiomatic sayings and structures, it’s not just English. Would you believe the British even have some of their own, and they don’t always agree with ours? Nevertheless, a teacher was accompanied *by* an observer, not *with*; therefore, Choice **D** is the correct answer.
- 17. B.** Did this one catch you napping? Choice **B**, *is considerable*, is the incorrect wording. It should read *is considered*.
- 18. B.** This sentence is not a sentence. All you have to do is eliminate the subordinate conjunction *which* and change the verb to *raises* to make things correct. This makes Choice **B** the correct response.
- 19. E.** This sentence contains no errors, making Choice **E** your best bet. Choice **B** is okay because the *and* in this case is not being used as a coordinate conjunction; instead it is just combining two predicate adjectives—overworked and stressed. *Due to* is a correct expression of cause and effect.
- 20. A.** This sentence looks more difficult than it is. The correct response is **A** because content is the last word of an independent clause, and the next independent clause is not connected by a coordinate conjunction (BOY FANS), so the comma is incorrect. You need a semi-colon. The rest of the sentence is what draws your eyes, nevertheless, everything else is correct.
- 21. A.** Maybe you didn’t realize that Choice **A** was the problem here? If so, remember that *fewer* can be counted; *less* is a lump amount or a mass. Even though you will see food packages that say less calories, the packaging is wrong. Choice **B** is correct since *as* indicates something that is happening simultaneously with something else.
- 22. B.** Be careful with plurals and possessives. They can catch you napping. It’s the *city’s* historical society, and it’s the *society’s* efforts, so both need to be *apostrophe-s* (*’s*), possessive; this makes Choice **B** the answer. *Despite*, Choice **A**, is a good introductory word when you want to present a contradictory idea. Choice **D** is okay as well.
- 23. C.** This one is a bit tricky. You probably did not like Choice **A**, fully; it does sound odd, doesn’t it? Sorry, though, it’s used correctly, just not very often. Everything else in the sentence is fine except the verb, *had to be tore down*. Choice **C**. Although such an expression is considered acceptable colloquially in some parts of the country, it is incorrect English and should be *had to be trn down*.
- 24. C.** Research paper or not, Choice **C** is a faulty idiom in this sentence, making it the correct response. A better statement would be *for which*, but *in which* would probably also work.
- 25. E.** Perhaps you thought Choice **A** was not correct and should read DVD’s. You will see it spelled that way a lot. However, the apostrophe is not necessary, so Choice **A** is okay. In fact, there are no errors in this sentence, making Choice **E** your answer.
- 26. B.** The key to this sentence is the word “sole.” Hopefully, you recognized that this means that only one bodyguard was present. Therefore, **B** is the correct answer, because it is showing a plural possessive (apostrophe after the s), but it should be *’s* instead.
- 27. C.** This is another toughie—SAT usually makes the last few questions of a multiple-choice section more difficult. At a first glance, this sentence might seem to have no problems. However, you cannot have a *society when*, it has to be a *society where*. *When* indicates time; *where* indicates place or location. Choice **C** is correct.
- 28. D.** Eighth-grade boys—what else can you expect? Choice **D** is the correct response here. The sentence needs a break (a comma) between school and leaving. Otherwise, if you were to read it quickly, you might even think that school and leaving go together, but then that doesn’t make sense either. Choice **D** is the answer.

29. C. Oh boy, this one has three pieces of punctuation underlined—alert! Let’s check them out: Choice A is correct, like raindrops needs to be separated. Choice B is a semi-colon, but don’t panic, you need them between two independent clauses when there’s no conjunction, and that’s exactly what the case is here, so the semi-colon is fine where it is. How about Choice C? This one has a comma, and since it comes after “Instead,” a transition word, that seems right, too. Choice D is good. Are you ready for Choice E then? Be careful. Yes, the comma is correct in Choice C, but look at *its*. Wrong word. It should be *it’s*. Hopefully, you weren’t so anxious about the punctuation that you missed something as basic as *its/it’s*. If you still aren’t sure, just remember that *it’s* means *it is*. The word *its* means *ownership*, like the dog ate *its* dinner.

## Improving Paragraphs

30. E. Sentence 2 is wordy and has the wrong verb form. The *collecting of* can be made simpler by just saying “collecting.” Although Beanie Babies is plural, it is used as the object of the preposition, not the subject. The subject is collecting, and that must be treated as a singular subject, *collecting was*. Therefore, Choice E is the best response.
31. B. Although it is not too often that SAT asks such a question, whether you are reading a passage or writing a passage, it is imperative that you understand the passage’s purpose. In this case, it is Choice B, exploring a particular collecting craze.
32. E. Paragraph two is a rather difficult to follow since its sentences are not in the best order. Sentence 5 does not go where it is originally, in the middle of a discussion of costs and money. Instead, it fits best following sentence 8, Choice E.
33. D. In the context of the passage, the best revision for sentence 10 is Choice D. This sentence does not require the markings of a direct quote. Instead, it is more of an internal musing, not really a direct question. Choice D is the correct response.
34. C. One more sentence at the end that maintains the “feel” of the passage is not difficult to determine given the other choices. The passage is not to be taken too seriously, yet many of these options are far too serious and critical for the tone of the actual passage. Choice C is the best choice for a final sentence.
35. C. Don’t you hate titles? Usually essays do not require them, but for this SAT question, you’ll have to think of something. Some ideas are presented to you. Recall the light tone of the piece and the somewhat optimistic note that these Beanie Babies might still pay off for their owners. With that in mind, Choice C is the best of these offerings.

## Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 2

### Improving Sentences

1. **E.** Actually, the sentence is fine as it reads except the word *principle* should be *principal*, making Choice **E** the correct response.
2. **C.** As it is now, this is not a sentence. The verb form distributing needs to be changed to distributed, Choice **C**. When used alone the word distributing is used as an adjective. By adding “is” you have a *bona fide* sentence. However, since *set up* a Web site indicates past, you need the past form of the verb, distributed.
3. **A.** This one requires you to read all the selections, but no one of the responses is better than the original, so you need to stick to Choice **A**, the repetition of the original.
4. **D.** This sentence lacks the right comparison combination of “not only. . .but also.” Therefore, Choice **D** gives us the correct combination to make the sentence work.
5. **E.** This sentence is awkward, even when it is correct, which is Choice **E**. This is an awkward but correct construction. If you take a close look and listen at the other choices, you will see/hear that none of them sounds any better. This is a situation where process of elimination should get you to the best response, given your choices.
6. **B.** Hmm, DVDs from a kiosk—what will they think of next? Anyhow, if you thought the sentence sounded fine as it was, you were right. However, after checking it out with your ear, then you need to check it out with your eyes. Here we have two independent clauses. They cannot be joined by anything but a comma with a coordinate conjunction (BOY FANS) or a semi-colon. Choice **B** is the only option here.
7. **D.** Sounds like an interesting workshop. The verb is the problem in the original sentence; “will be providing” is cumbersome and not correct. Choice **D** gives us a much better (and smoother sounding) sentence.
8. **E.** Chris Reeve’s passing was sad; let’s hope the research continues. The problem with this sentence is that even though we know that it was Christopher and not his wife and family who became paralyzed and that they were always there helping him, we have to inspect the options we are given carefully. The best and clearest of these is Choice **E**.
9. **C.** Among the many things you should be learning from this SAT Writing text, is the combination “not only. . .but also.” It has shown up numerous times in many forms. Here it is again. The original uses it correctly, but notice it says “not only *to study*,” therefore, the second should state “but also *to master*,” Choice **C**.
10. **E.** You know that subject-verb agreement is essential. Even if the subject is followed by a prepositional phrase whose object is different (singular versus plural) than the subject, you have to consider the subject itself. That’s the case in sentence 10: the verb “gets” should go with “readers,” which is plural, not “selection,” which is singular. The correct response, then is Choice **E**, *readers get*.
11. **A.** This is one of those rather obscure SAT sentences, and we rarely understand what they are talking about in the first place. Expect a few of these. In looking over the original and the Choices **B–E**, you should find that the original, Choice **A** seems to make as much, if not more, sense than the others. You are correct.
12. **C.** This is a difficult question. We are dealing with an idiom again, this one having to do with the word *criticism* plus a preposition. In the original, criticism toward just doesn’t sound right, and it is not. Usually we think of *criticism of* something or someone. However, you can also have a *criticism on* a process, in this case the administration of justice, making Choice **C** the correct response.
13. **B.** Airport security—don’t you love it? Better safe than sorry, however. Now the sentence. In its original format, it isn’t too bad, but it is stated in passive voice. Choice **B** is your best bet. It has the clearest presentation of ideas and uses the active voice.
14. **A.** Not only but also once again—see how it is used correctly. Here we have two independent clauses joined by “but,” which is properly preceded by a comma, making Choice **A** the best bet. Before you just jot down the first thing you see, however, be sure you eyeball and “listen” to your other choices. SAT might just have a better treasure hidden among the other options. That is not the case here, and Choice **A** is definitely a winner.

## Rating Your Performance

### Essay

Remember your essay will be read by two readers. So when you figure your **total points**, they will be out of 12, not just out of 6. It is best if you can have two different readers evaluate your writing, or at least you and another person for better accuracy. Evaluate your response using the Scoring Guide provided within the answers and explanations.

Essay subscore: \_\_\_\_\_

### Multiple Choice, Set 1

Improving Sentences                      Questions 1–11                      Number correct \_\_\_\_\_

Identifying Sentence Errors              Questions 12–29                      Number correct \_\_\_\_\_

Improving Paragraphs                      Questions 30–35                      Number correct \_\_\_\_\_

### Multiple Choice, Set 2

Improving Sentences                      Questions 1–14                      Number correct \_\_\_\_\_

Subtotal \_\_\_\_\_ (A)

### Wrong Answers (Do Not Count Unanswered Questions)

Section 2                                      Number wrong \_\_\_\_\_

Section 3                                      Number wrong \_\_\_\_\_

Subtotal \_\_\_\_\_ (B)

Subtract  $\frac{1}{4}$  (.25) from B for each wrong answer                      \_\_\_\_\_ (C)

minus (C) = \_\_\_\_\_ (D)

Round (D) to the nearest whole number for your multiple-choice

**Raw Score** \_\_\_\_\_

**Essay subscore** \_\_\_\_\_



## Conversion Table

This table will give you an approximation of what your score would be if this practice test had been an actual SAT Writing Test. The essay counts for about 30 percent of the final score; the multiple-choice questions count for about 70 percent.

For example: If your multiple-choice **raw score** was 35 and your **essay subscore** was 6, the table indicates that your final score on the test would fall between 500 and 710, or about 600 (out of 800).

<b>Multiple-Choice Raw Score</b>	<b>Essay Subscore 0</b>	<b>Essay Subscore 2</b>	<b>Essay Subscore 4</b>	<b>Essay Subscore 6</b>	<b>Essay Subscore 8</b>	<b>Essay Subscore 10</b>	<b>Essay Subscore 12</b>
40–49	520–690	530–720	550–740	580–770	620–800	650–800	680–800
30–39	430–630	450–660	470–680	500–710	530–740	560–770	590–800
20–29	360–540	370–570	390–590	420–620	460–650	490–690	520–710
10–19	270–460	280–490	300–510	330–540	370–580	400–610	430–630
0–9	200–380	200–410	210–430	240–450	270–490	300–520	330–560
–12– –1	200–280	200–310	200–330	200–350	240–390	270–420	300–450