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A+ Test Prep and Tutoring Newsletter

July, 2008

Summer Reading & Vocabulary-Building Tips



Students of all ages can take advantage of the long summer break to catch up on fun reading that they have missed out on during the school year due to homework and extracurricular activities. Some schools have required summer reading. If your school does not impose such a requirement, there are many resources that can spark your child's interest in reading and vocabulary.

* **Public libraries:** For younger children, many libraries offer story hours and summer reading

programs, usually built around a theme, that offer incentives and rewards for youngsters to read. The children's librarian or the reference librarian can offer suggestions about books that are age-appropriate and match your student's interests. Visit the library with your child frequently so he can browse the bookshelves and look at the latest magazines.

* **Recommended reading lists:** The American Library Association (ALA) and Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) are both well-known organizations that provide through their respective websites a wealth of specialized reading lists for all age groups and areas of interest. Check out the following links:

<http://www.ilovelibraries.org/booklovers/recreading>

http://www.rif.org/educators/books/book_list_index.msp

* **Freerice.com:** This philanthropic and educational website is a fun way for children, teens and adults to test and build their vocabulary knowledge. The website is designed to automatically adjust to the user's level of vocabulary. It begins by asking you the definition of a word, giving you four answers from which to choose. Based on how you answer a series of such questions, the program will adjust the level of difficulty upward or downward. When you correctly get three words in a row, the level of difficulty automatically increases. Another interesting feature is that when you define a word incorrectly, you will be asked that same word a few turns later in order to "re-test" you. You can also click on an icon to the right of a word to hear how it is pronounced. FreeRice describes itself as a website that is designed to end world hunger. For every correct answer a player gets, 20 grains of rice are donated to the United Nations World Food Program (WFP). Sponsors make all payments to the UN World Food Program directly. Beware: This is an addicting site!

* **The SAT Game for Dummies:** >From the well-known "For Dummies" series, this trivia-style board game is touted as a fun and interactive way to prepare for the SAT. The game is designed to be played with multiple players who all have incentives to answer each other's questions so everyone gets involved on every turn. Competition between players mimics the competitive environment of test day and questions are timed.

* **SAT Vocabulary Novels:** These free on-line novels, produced by the folks at SparkNotes, incorporate 1,000 of the most frequently tested vocabulary words and provide definitions. An interesting-dare we say "novel" -alternative to boring old flashcards!

Featured Tutor



Barbara Lommer

A+ Test Prep and Tutoring is proud to highlight one of our exceptional tutors, Barbara Lommer. Barbara has been tutoring for A+ for two years, specializing in chemistry (high school and college-level), physics, math, and SAT/ACT prep. Barbara especially enjoys the A+ one-to-one tutoring format. It is always challenging to discover what makes each student "tick" and to

SAT & ACT Test Dates



Listed below are the upcoming 2008-2009 testing dates for both the SAT and ACT.

2008-09 SAT Test Dates

October 4, 2008
November 1, 2008
December 6, 2008
January 24, 2009
March 14, 2009
May 2, 2009
June 6, 2009

develop an individualized approach to address the specific needs of each student.

Barbara holds a Ph.D. in microbiology from the University of Alabama at Birmingham where she worked on drug-discovery for the treatment of influenza. While in graduate school, Barbara fell in love with science teaching and communication when she taught laboratory courses for high school students and science teachers as a facilitator at the McWayne Center in Birmingham. She continued her involvement with teaching and community outreach while she worked as a research fellow at the Max Planck Institute in Dresden, Germany.

Barbara now balances a freelance career as a medical writer with her work as an A+ tutor. She is a member of the American Medical Writers Association and she is currently working on her core certificate in medical writing. In addition to her busy work life, Barbara enjoys hiking, camping, and traveling the byways of the tristate area in search of historical places. She lives with her husband and 3-year-old son in Plymouth Meeting.

2008-09 ACT Test Dates

September 13, 2008
October 25, 2008
December 13, 2008
February 7, 2009
April 4, 2009
June 13, 2009

Note: Check the [SAT](#) and [ACT](#) websites for registration deadlines (typically 4 to 5 weeks in advance of the test date).

We encourage your student to do some research on each test to see which one may be a better match for his or her strengths. As a starting point, check out our point-by-point [comparison](#) of the tests.

Next, we suggest visiting the SAT and ACT websites to answer practice questions and take some sample tests. In addition, The College Board offers a unique service called The Official SAT Question of the Day(tm) which can be emailed to your student daily. This is a fairly painless way to familiarize oneself with the format of some of the questions on the SAT.

If you still have questions about the SAT vs. the ACT, please feel free to call our office at 215-886-9188 to speak with a member of our knowledgeable staff.

School and Community Partnerships



A+ Test Prep and Tutoring provides in-home One-to-One Test Prep and Academic Subject Tutoring throughout the Delaware Valley.

We also partner with schools and social service agencies to provide test preparation, remedial reading and math, and study skills courses to students throughout the region. For more information please contact me at 215.886.9188.