

College Preparation Quiz for Parents

College & Retirement Solutions
667 Shunpike Rd, Suite 3
Chatham, NJ 07928
(973) 514-2002



www.college-retirement.com

Take the quiz below to see how (or if) you should invest your time and money:

1. How eager is your child to prepare for college entrance tests? She/he...
 - a. is the one who insists on doing something.
 - b. is willing to do what we suggest.
 - c. thinks it's probably a waste of time.
 - d. makes gagging noises when we bring it up.
2. How much time do you think she/he can devote to taking a class?
 - a. Three hours a week or more
 - b. Two hours a week
 - c. One hour a week
 - d. Every second is already scheduled
3. How much time will she/he spend preparing at home?
 - a. About eight hours per week
 - b. About four hours per week
 - c. About two hours per week
 - d. About 10 minutes per week
4. Does she/he tend to see projects through to completion?
 - a. Yes, sometimes compulsively
 - b. Most of the time
 - c. Only if they are interesting
 - d. If we threaten
5. Does she/he get anxious at test times?
 - a. Extremely—the whole family is off the wall
 - b. Usually—these college tests seem to do it
 - c. No, test scores are often above class achievement
 - d. No, as long as the mall will still be open when the test is over
6. What is his/her approximate junior or senior year average?
 - a. A
 - b. B
 - c. C
 - d. Don't ask
7. What were his/her combined PSAT scores? (Or use 'PLAN' or "ACT" scores & conversion formula or SAT scores with a 0 added to choices below.)
 - a. Between 80-110
 - b. Between 110-140
 - c. Over 140
 - d. Below 80 or didn't take them yet
8. Which statement comes closest to your child's reaction to the PSAT (or other entrance tests already taken)?
 - a. It took a while to get in the swing of it.
 - b. I kind of went blank.
 - c. It was easy.
 - d. It was too hard.

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9. What's the likelihood that you (or another adult) could prepare with your child on a regular schedule of two to four hours per week, over 10 weeks?
- a. we could probably pull that off.
 - b. If we really made an effort and organized in advance.
 - c. Sounds like a long shot.
 - d. We haven't finished that soapbox racer we began in 1997.
10. How big of a bite would \$900 take out of your budget?
- a. It's small change compared to what college will cost.
 - b. It's a big chunk of change, but we've spent more money for worse reasons.
 - c. It would mean some real creative financing.
 - d. Are you crazy? We had to borrow to buy this book!
11. Your child seems to absorb information best when:
- a. in a classroom situation.
 - b. reading independently.
 - c. working one-on-One.
 - d. watching the Home Shopping Channel.

The best time to get serious about SAT or ACT preparation is in the winter of junior year, before the 'real' test is taken for the first time. (For practical purposes, the summer of that year works better for many, and tests can be retaken in the fall.)

If you answered "a" or "b" to questions 1 through 8 above, then your child is probably a good candidate for some sort of preparation program. (We can make arrangements for you if you are interested in discussing with our Test Prep specialist) Despite raging debate over the effectiveness of such programs and the validity of claims of titanic score surges, common sense can tell you that preparation means practice, and practice makes...well, if not perfect, then at least improvement. We believe that one on one tutoring or a very small group leads to the highest degree of success. The student is held accountable for their effort.

Especially helpful is the administration of an entire timed test. This can be done at home, but it's one area where coaching classes clearly have the edge because they can best simulate genuine testing conditions (complete with sneezing, belching, groaning, and furious scribbling).

Source: Petersons Panicked Parents' Guide to College Admissions, 3rd Edition