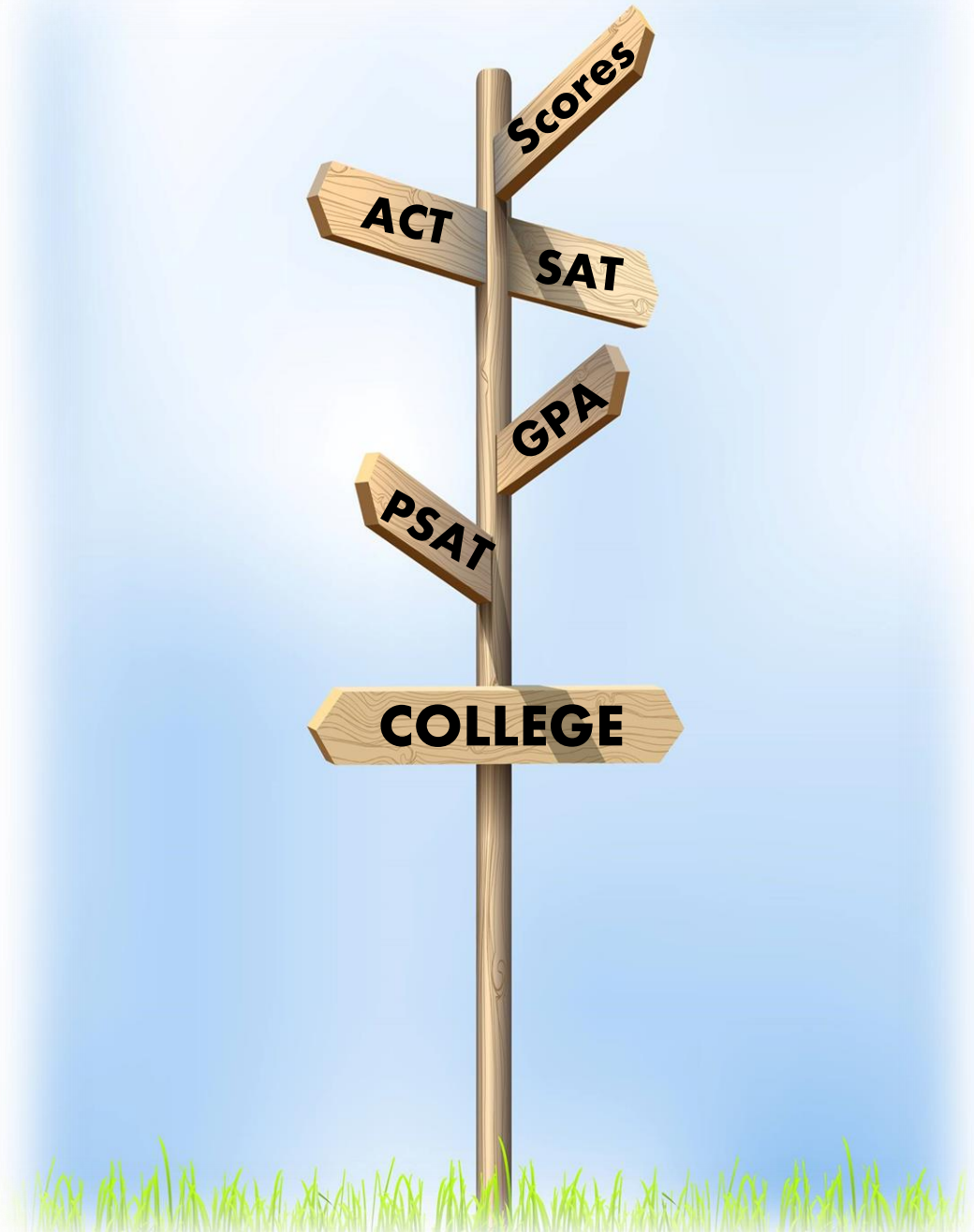




Roadmap to College: Highly Selective Schools

Presented by:
Loren Newsom



Understanding Selectivity

First - What is selectivity?

When a college is selective, that means it uses an application process to admit some students and reject others.

Next - Why are some colleges so selective?

It might not be the reason you think! Many think it's because some colleges have higher *standards*, or they have better professors, or they offer a more rigorous degree.

Answer: Schools are selective because *they receive more applications than they have seats in their freshman class.*

Highly Selective Schools

School	Acceptance Rate Fall 2014
Stanford University	5.1%
Harvard University	6%
Yale University	6.3%
Columbia University	7%
Princeton University	7.4%
Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)	7.9%
US Naval Academy	7.9%
Brown University	8.7%
California Institute of Technology (CalTech)	8.8%
University of Chicago	8.8%
US Military Academy	9.5%
University of Pennsylvania	10.4%

School	Acceptance Rate Fall 2014
Claremont McKenna	10.8%
Duke University	11.4%
Dartmouth College	11.5%
Pomona College	12.2%
Pitzer College	13%
Northwestern University	13.1%
Vanderbilt University	13.1%
Amherst College	13.8%
Cornell University	14.2%
Harvey Mudd College	14.3%
Johns Hopkins University	15%
Rice University	15.1%
University of California – Berkeley	16%

Highly Selective Admissions

Five qualities admitted students demonstrate:

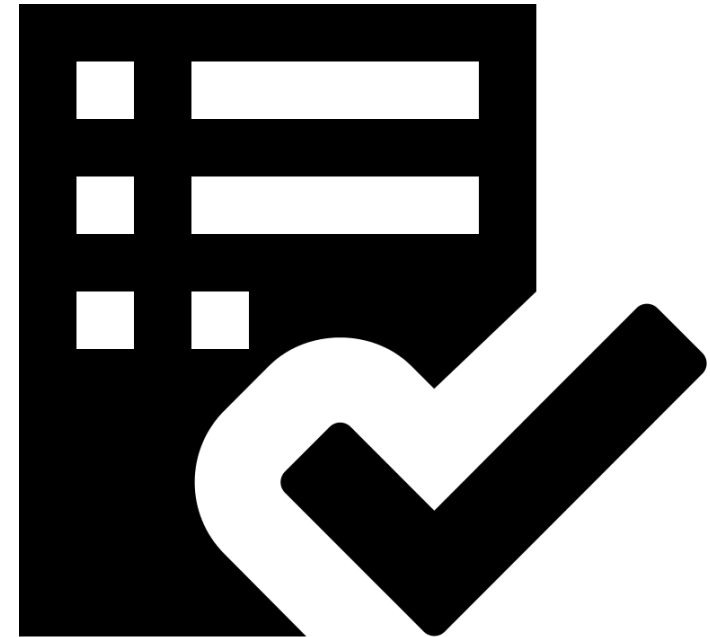
1. Passion
2. Initiative
3. Individuality
4. Love of Learning
5. Likeability

The college admissions process

 **Application Process**

 **Your Timeline**

 **How We Can Help**





Application Process



What's on a well-rounded application?

GPA



Application essays



Your Application



Standardized test scores

Letters of recommendation



Extracurricular Activities



College admissions isn't a competition for bragging rights. Focus on getting into the best school for you.

Highly Selective Admissions

How do highly selective colleges decide who gets in?

Part I: The Academic Ranking

1. Course selection
2. Class rank
3. Grades
4. Test Scores
5. Academic letters of recommendation

Highly Selective Admissions

How do highly selective colleges decide who gets in?

Part II: The Personal Ranking

1. Activities
2. Essays
3. The application
4. Interviews
5. Matchmaking

Highly Selective Admissions

An interesting new study on highly selective admissions shows:



The majority of colleges and universities group applicants into “pools,” based on their personal characteristics and exceptional talents; applicants are then chosen in comparison to others within their pool, but are no longer compared to applicants outside their pool. In addition, some pools receive significant preference over others. Students are most commonly grouped by such factors as minority status, athletic recruitment, level of financial need, and other variables that align with “institutional fit.” This finding sheds light on why some students are admitted to college who may have inferior academic merit, meaning lower academic variables such as their high school grade point average, than rejected students.



-- [Who Gets In and Why? An Examination of Admissions to America's Most Selective Colleges and Universities](#) by Dr Rachel Rubin, Harvard Graduate School of Education, Spark Admissions LLC (2014)



Tips for Students Applying to Highly Selective Schools

- Get past prestige.
- Be a high impact player in and out of the classroom.
- Prove that you love to learn.
- Be more than a high GPA and SAT/ACT score
- Prove you can handle the competition at highly selective schools
- Involve yourself in national and international level activities
 - ✓ Ex. DECA, summer programs, academic competitions, publications



What's a “good” GPA?

Challenging Classes
+ Good Grades

Good GPA



It's important to maintain your grades from freshman year until graduation, but colleges will look closely at your grades and coursework during junior year.



Extracurricular activities



Join 10 clubs that you only attend once or twice a year.



Join 3 clubs, go to every meeting, and eventually take on a leadership role.

Schools would rather you be **heavily involved in a few activities** than marginally involved in a lot.

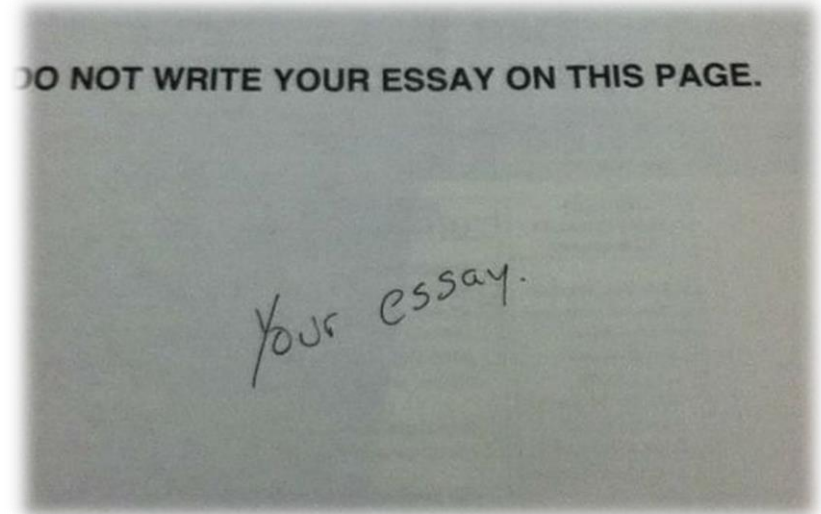
Pick a few clubs or activities you really like and plan to **stick with them** throughout high school.



Admissions Essays & Letters of Recommendation

Admissions Essays

- ✓ Express yourself!
- ✓ Avoid formulas.
- ✓ Proofread.
- ✓ Make sure you use the right school name.



Letters of recommendation

- ✓ Ask teachers or mentors who you know well.
- ✓ Ask for them early, and don't forget to thank the teachers/mentors who write them for you!



Interviews

Purpose of Interviews

- ✓ There is so much more to grasp about a person off paper
- ✓ **Colleges use this most often in highly selective programs**
- ✓ It is the most efficient and fair way of assessing a student's interpersonal skills

Tips for Students

- ✓ Make sure you read through the website and brochures
- ✓ Prepare your answers
- ✓ Prepare some questions
- ✓ Be comfortable
- ✓ Dress the part
- ✓ Keep your parents away!
- ✓ Do not talk about your numbers
- ✓ Save the best for last



Standardized test scores

- ✓ Almost **every school accepts the ACT and the SAT** for admission.
- ✓ Some schools require SAT Subject Tests.
- ✓ If you're in an AP course, you should take the corresponding AP test.
 - You can get college credit, and they look GREAT on college apps.





The SAT and ACT

- ✓ Used by colleges for **admissions** and **scholarships**.
- ✓ **Nearly every school accepts both**, so you can choose the best one for you or take both!
- ✓ Doing well on these tests is a **skill that can be taught**.





Which test is best for you?

SAT

ACT



There's no "right" test. Only the right test for you.



The best way to pick the right test? Take a practice test for each and see how you score. Find free practice tests at PrincetonReview.com/Events



Comparing Tests

Old SAT (no longer available)

Current SAT

ACT

Math
Critical Reading
Grammar and a Mandatory Essay

Math
Evidence-Based Writing and Reading
An Optional Essay

English
Math
Reading
"Science"
An Optional Essay

Wrong answers cost $\frac{1}{4}$ of a point

No wrong answer penalty

No wrong answer penalty

Shorter sections alternating between subjects

Longer sections testing each subject all at once

Longer sections testing each subject all at once

Three section scores 200-800
Total score between 600-2400
(average 1550)

Two section scores 200-800
Total score between 400-1600

Four section scores (1-36)
Total score between 1-36
(average 21)



Learn more and compare the SAT and New SAT in depth at PrincetonReview.com/SATChanges.



Wait...what about the PSAT?



- ✓ Doesn't count towards your college admission.
- ✓ Practice for the real SAT.
- ✓ High scores can qualify you for a National Merit® scholarship (among others).



First Impressions



SAT and ACT scores provide a quick way for schools to compare applicants, but they don't tell an applicant's whole story. **There's a lot more to your app than just your score.**



SAT Subject Tests

- ✓ 1 hour exams (up to three in one day)
- ✓ Administered in January, May, June, October, November, and December
- ✓ Basic registration fee is \$26, plus \$20 for each additional test
- ✓ Scored from 200-800
- ✓ Most selective schools require at least 2 Subject Tests for admissions.

SAT Subject Tests

These are used for more competitive college admissions.

- ✓ Math: Math Level 1 and Level 2
- ✓ Science: Biology E/M, Chemistry, Physics
- ✓ Social Science: U.S. History, World History, Literature
- ✓ Language (Listening): Chinese, German, Spanish, Japanese, Korean, French
- ✓ Language (Reading): French, German, Hebrew, Spanish, Latin, Italian

SAT Subject Tests

Test	50 %ile	75 %ile
U.S. History	660	800
World History	630	710
Literature	620	690
Math Level I	630	690
Math Level II	690	770
Ecological Biology	640	700
Molecular Biology	680	740
Chemistry	680	750
Chinese	790	800
Spanish	690	760

SAT Subject Tests

- ❑ Students should only take these exams if they are in Honors, Pre-AP, AP, or Dual courses.
 - ❑ Students should only take these if required or requested by the colleges to which they apply.
 - ❑ Scores can be used for funding/scholarship decisions.
- Examples:
- Harvard: requires 3 of any kind
 - UT Austin Engineering: requires Math L1: 560 or Math L2: 530
 - Rice: requires 2 related to field of study



Application Process



Admission tests...	True	False
... measure intelligence?		✓
... can be used to award aid?	✓	
... reflect your GPA in high school?		✓
... predict your college GPA?		✓
... can be prepared for?	✓	
... should be prepared for?	✓	
... test what you've learned in HS?	?	?



Your Timeline



Breaking down college admissions year-by-year



Grades
Activities



Prep for
SAT/ACT



Visit schools



Work on your college
essays

Freshman

Sophomore

Summer

Junior

Summer

Senior



Grades
Activities
A practice PSAT
SAT Subject Test(s)



Grades
Activities
SAT/ACT
SAT Subject Tests



Grades
Activities
SAT/ACT
(if needed)

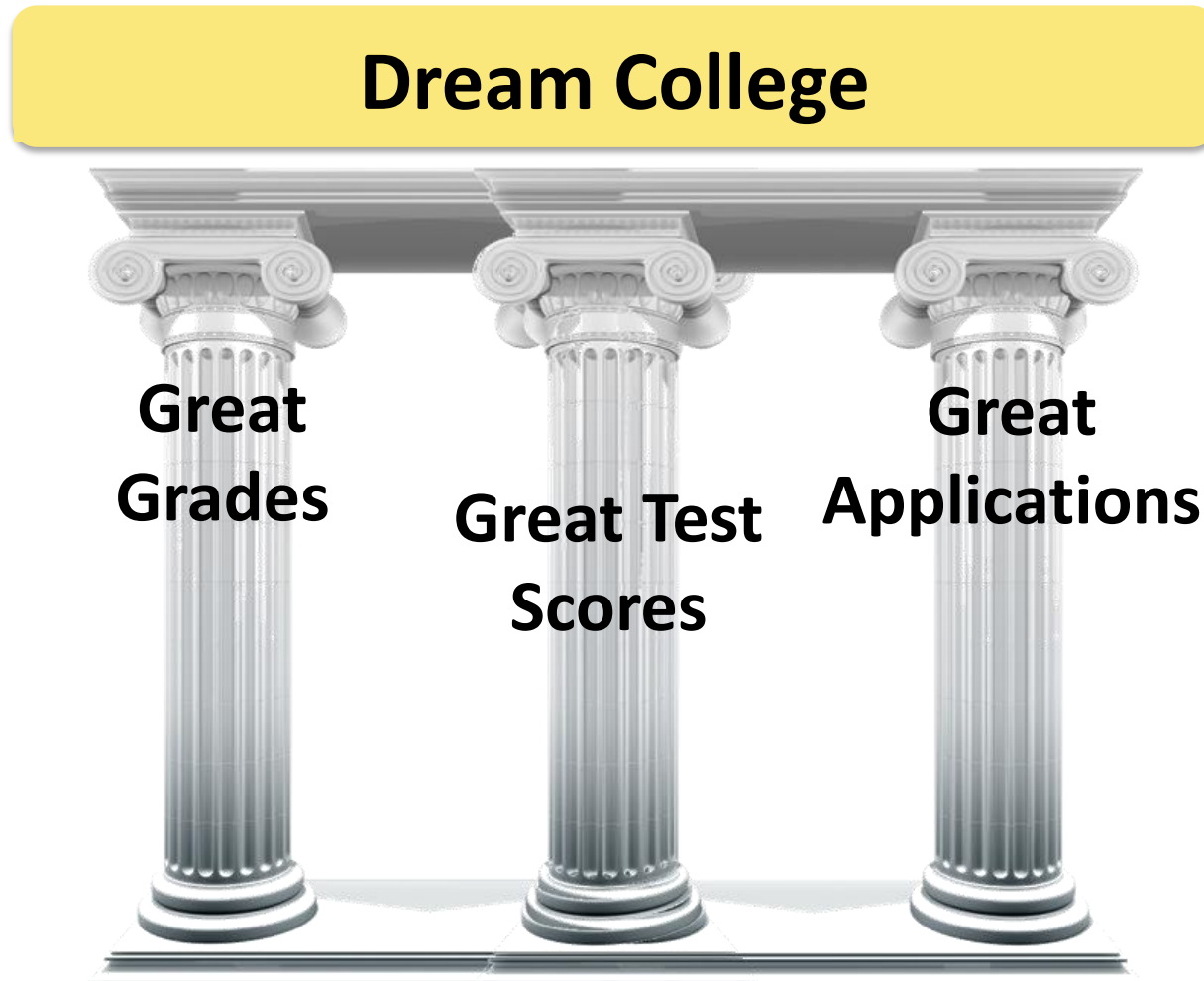


*Watch for early
Application
Deadlines
(some start as
early as Oct 1)*



How We Can Help

3 Pillars of Admission

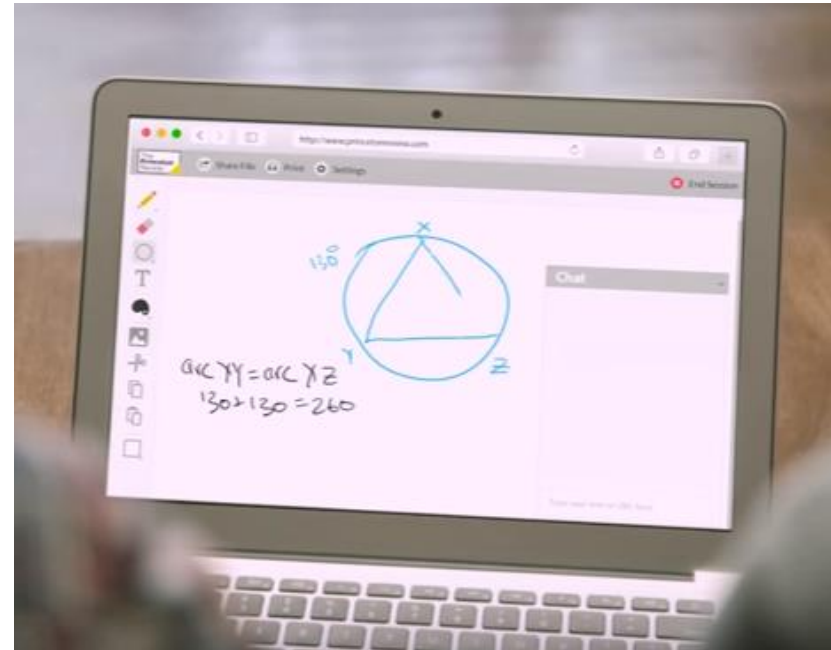


Great Grades – Homework Help

- 40 subjects, 3,000 tutors

6,000
students get help
every night from
The Princeton
Review.™

96%
of students say
they **improved**
their grades.†



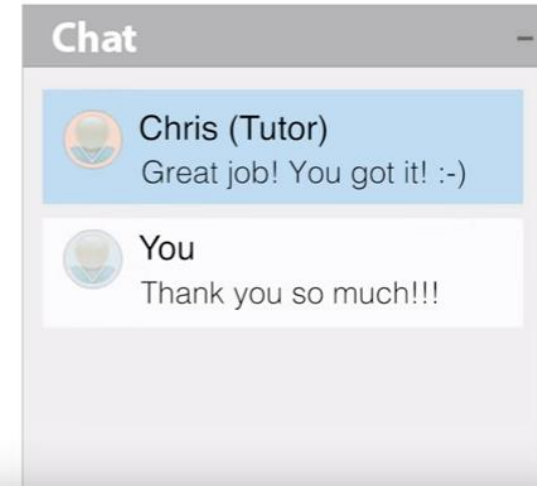
Better Grades. Guaranteed.
Sign up for 30 minutes free tonight

Great Grades – Homework Help

- 40 subjects, 3,000 tutors

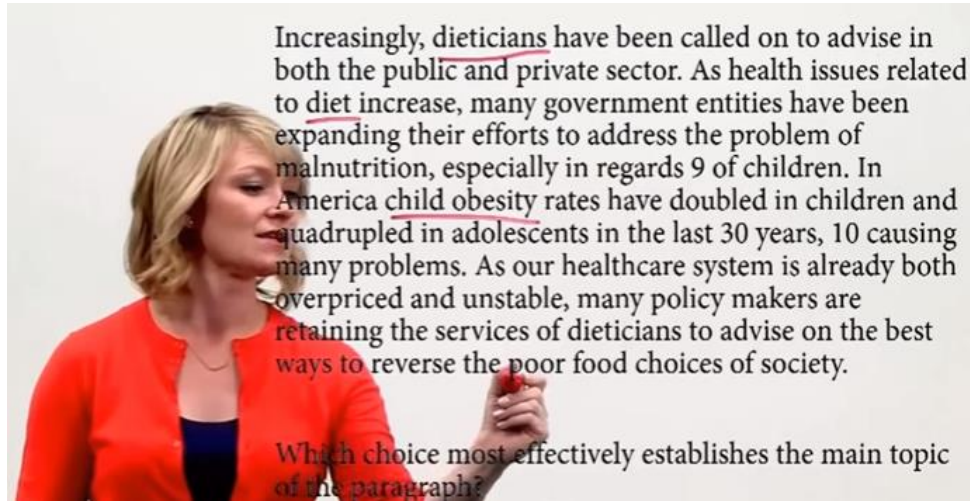
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Great Test Scores – *Test Prep*



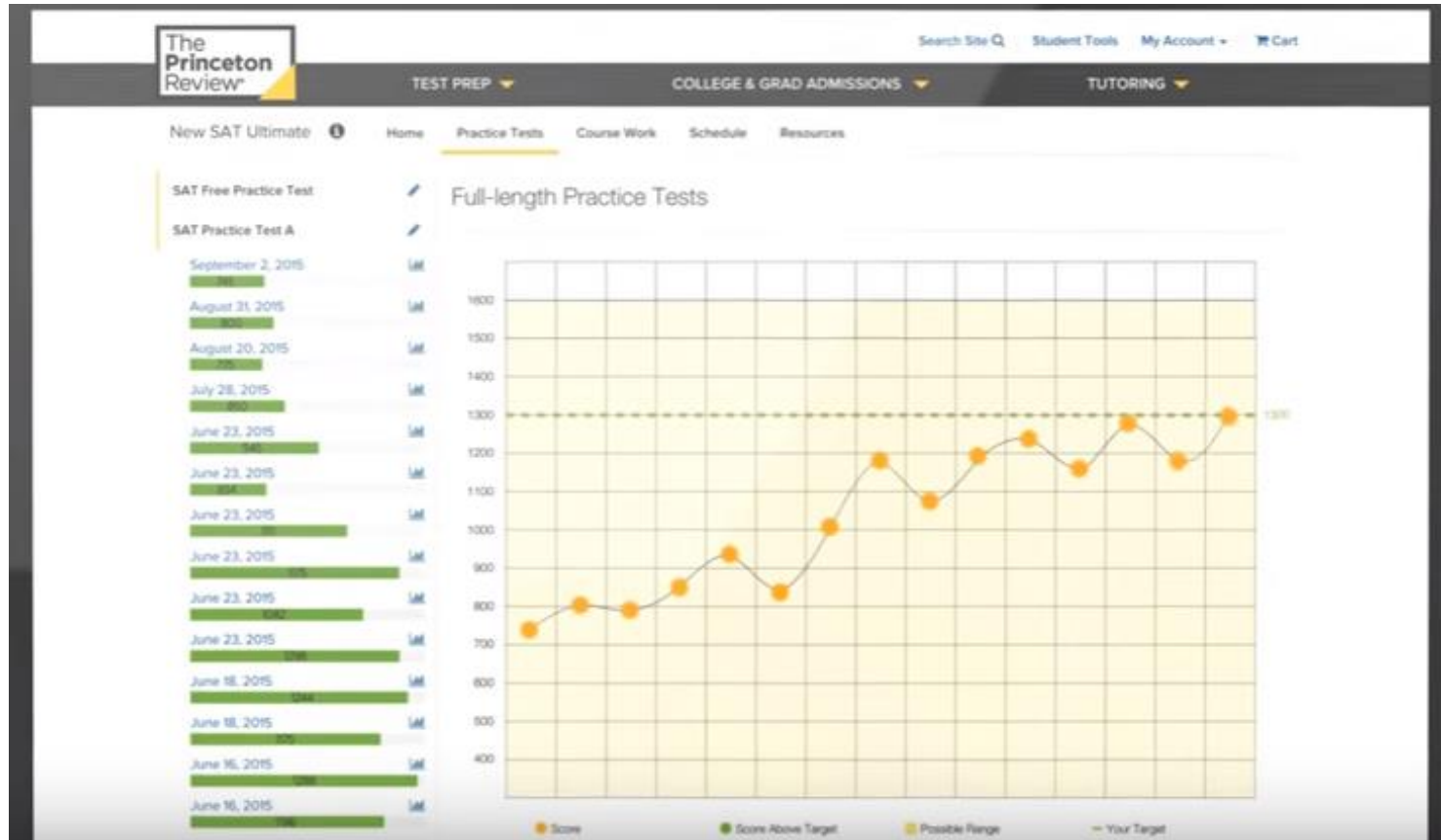
Increasingly, dieticians have been called on to advise in both the public and private sector. As health issues related to diet increase, many government entities have been expanding their efforts to address the problem of malnutrition, especially in regards 9 of children. In America child obesity rates have doubled in children and quadrupled in adolescents in the last 30 years, 10 causing many problems. As our healthcare system is already both overpriced and unstable, many policy makers are retaining the services of dieticians to advise on the best ways to reverse the poor food choices of society.

Which choice most effectively establishes the main topic of the paragraph?



Fun and engaging online lessons and drills led by The Princeton Review instructors

Great Test Scores – *Test Prep*



Online student portal to track your progress

Great Test Scores – *Test Prep*

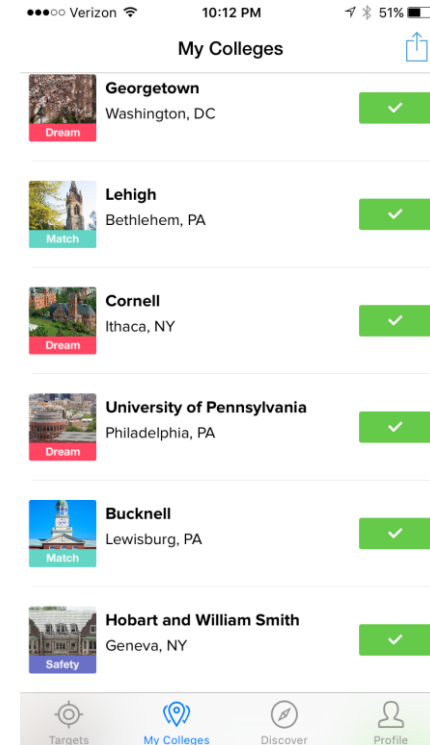
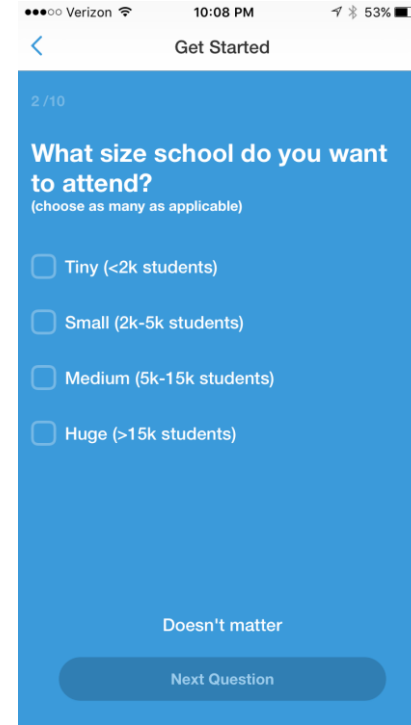
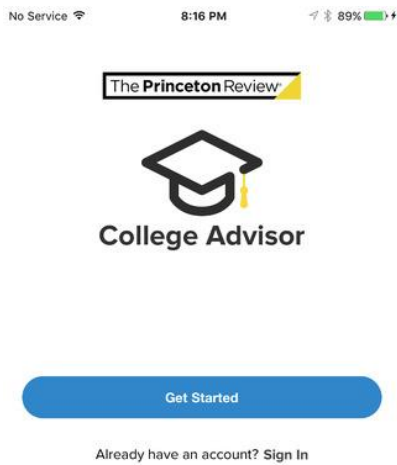
The Princeton Review is **#1 at getting students into top colleges.**[†]

4 out of 5 Princeton Review students get into their top-choice school.^{**}

- **Better Scores. Guaranteed.**
 - SAT: 100 point score guarantee
 - ACT: 3 point score guarantee

Great Applications – *College Advisor*

- Get started identifying your Dream, Match and Safety schools with The Princeton Review College Advisor app



Great Applications

College acceptances this year include:

- Harvard University
- Princeton University
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Duke University
- Dartmouth College
- Cornell University
- Rice University
- Washington University in St. Louis
- New York University
- Stanford University
- Yale University
- University of Pennsylvania
- Johns Hopkins University
- Tufts University
- Columbia University
- University of Michigan
- Emory University
- Boston College
- Brown University
- Harvey Mudd College
- Northwestern University
- Wesleyan University
- University of Virginia
- University of California – Berkeley
- University of California – Los Angeles
- University of Southern California
- University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill

The Princeton Review College Admissions Consulting
earned a 96% happiness score!



Important Links



SAT vs. ACT

PrincetonReview.com/college/sat-act

HS Timelines

PrincetonReview.com/college-advice/college-prep-timeline

Free Practice Tests and Events

PrincetonReview.com/Events

Free 30 Minute Tutoring Session

PrincetonReview.com/academic-tutoring

Questions?