



The
Princeton
Review®

SAT, ACT, OR BOTH?

SAT[®], ACT[®], or Both?

- 1 Truths and Misconceptions
- 2 Similarities and Differences
- 3 Improving Your Scores

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A person is sitting on a patterned rug, with their legs visible. A laptop is open in front of them, and a smartphone is lying on the rug nearby. The scene is dimly lit, with a warm, golden light source creating a soft glow. A black horizontal bar with yellow text is overlaid across the middle of the image.

TRUTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS

WHAT DO STANDARDIZED TESTS MEASURE

Do College Admission Tests Like the SAT and ACT	True	False
... measure a student's intelligence?		✓
... reflect a student's high school GPA?		✓
... predict a student's college GPA?		✓
... test what you've learned in HS?	?	?

STANDARDIZED TESTS ARE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM HIGH SCHOOL TESTS

HIGH SCHOOL TESTS

Limited Subject Matter

Content Knowledge

Plenty of Time

Partial Credit or Extra Credit

Human Graded

One Element of Overall Grade

STANDARDIZED TESTS

Years of Material

Memorization and Strategy

Rigorously Timed

Right or Wrong Answers

Machine Graded

Only Your Final Score Matters



TOP FACTORS FOR FIRST-TIME FRESHMEN

1. Grades
2. High School Curriculum
3. Test Scores

TOP FACTORS FOR FIRST-TIME FRESHMEN

Most Important:

- High School Transcript
- Test scores

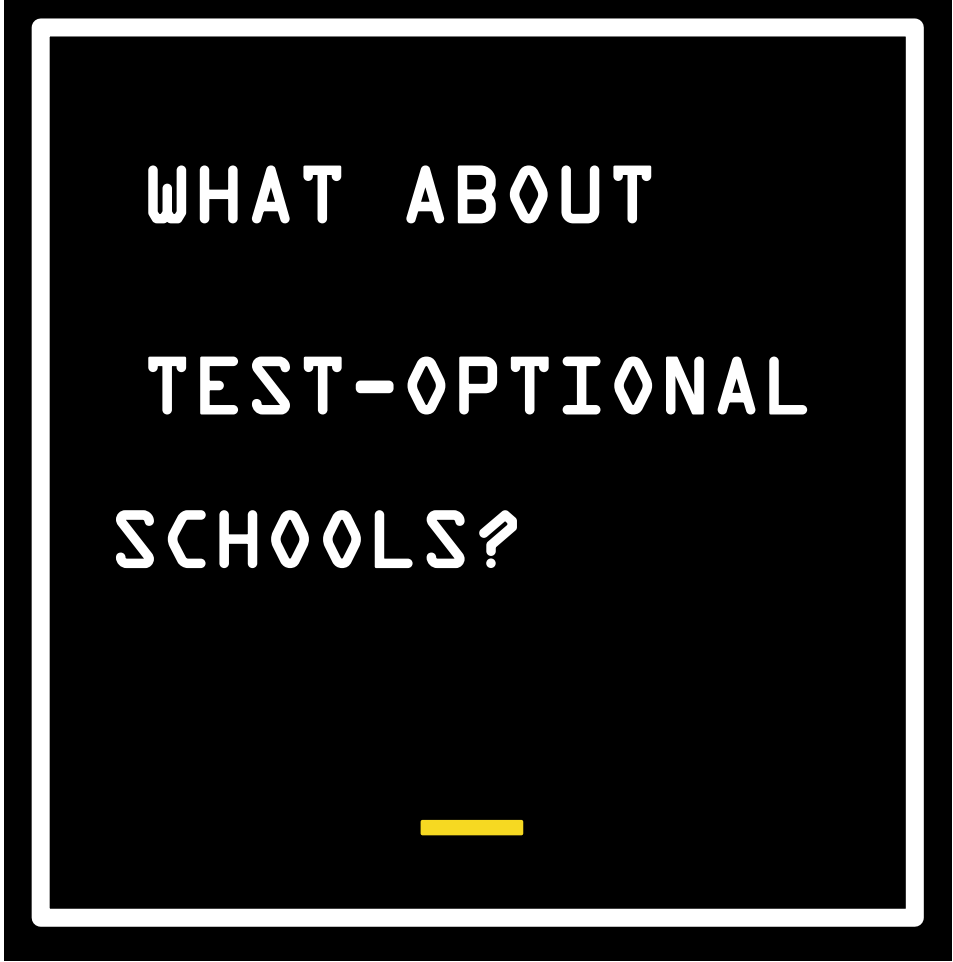
Less Important:

- Essay/writing samples
- Teacher & counselor recommendations
- Class rank

Smaller institutions are more likely to rank subject tests, portfolios, interviews, and work experience as important.

- “Test-Optional” does not mean test-prohibited, that is Test-Blind or Test-Free
- Test-Optional means different things at different schools
- If you don’t submit test scores, everything else matters even more
- If you have any school on your list that requires tests, your application process is *not test-optional*

WHAT ABOUT
TEST-OPTIONAL
SCHOOLS?

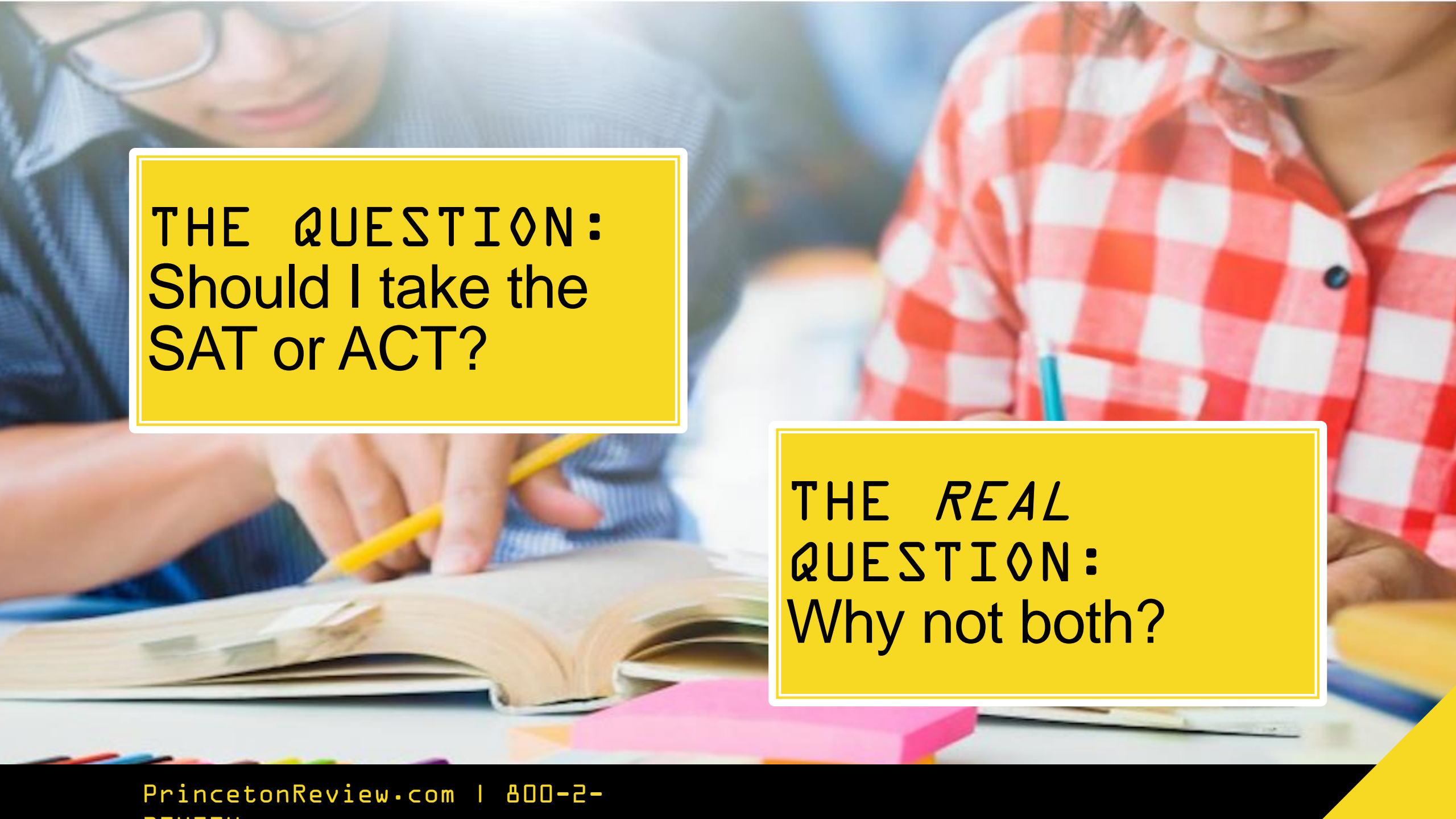
A blackboard with a white border. The text "WHAT ABOUT TEST-OPTIONAL SCHOOLS?" is written in white, all-caps, monospace font. A single yellow horizontal line is drawn at the bottom right of the board.



DID YOU KNOW?

Colleges have no preference between the SAT or ACT.

Many merit scholarships are directly tied to a student's SAT or ACT score.



THE QUESTION:
Should I take the
SAT or ACT?

THE *REAL*
QUESTION:
Why not both?

A student with long brown hair, wearing a white t-shirt, is sitting at a wooden desk and writing in a white notebook with a black pen. To the right of the notebook is a silver laptop, and to the left is a tablet. The background shows a window with a wooden frame and some greenery outside. A black banner with yellow text is overlaid across the middle of the image.

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES



THE TESTS

AT-A-GLANCE

BOTH THE SAT & ACT:

- Over **3 hours** of testing time
- **Limited time** per question
- **Multiple Choice** Questions (mostly)
- Math, Reading, Grammar, and Science Questions

ACT SECTION BY SECTION

English	45 minutes	75 questions
Math	60 minutes	60 questions
Reading	35 minutes	40 questions
Science	35 minutes	40 questions
Writing (optional essay)	40 minutes	1 essay
Total with Writing	3:35	215 questions

SAT SECTION BY SECTION

Reading	65 minutes	52 questions
W&L	35 minutes	44 questions
Math (No calculator)	25 minutes	20 questions
Math (calculator)	55 minutes	38 questions
Essay (optional)	50 minutes	1 essay
Total with Essay	3:50	154 questions

SAT

Reading and
Writing

200-800

Math

200-800

Total

400-1600

ACT

English

1-36

Math

1-36

Reading

1-36

Science

1-36

Total

1-36

SAT AND ACT

SCORING



Test writers
are trying to
trick you

If a store raises the price of an item by 20%, then decreases the new price by 15%, what was the percent change in the price of the item?

COMMON MISTAKES

- ✓ Answering questions too quickly
- ✓ Careless answers
- ✓ Doing work in your head
- ✓ Misreading the problem
- ✓ Don't understand what to do

WHAT IS A GOOD SCORE?

A good score is the score that
gets you into your dream

college

WHERE WILL
YOUR SCORES
TAKE YOU?

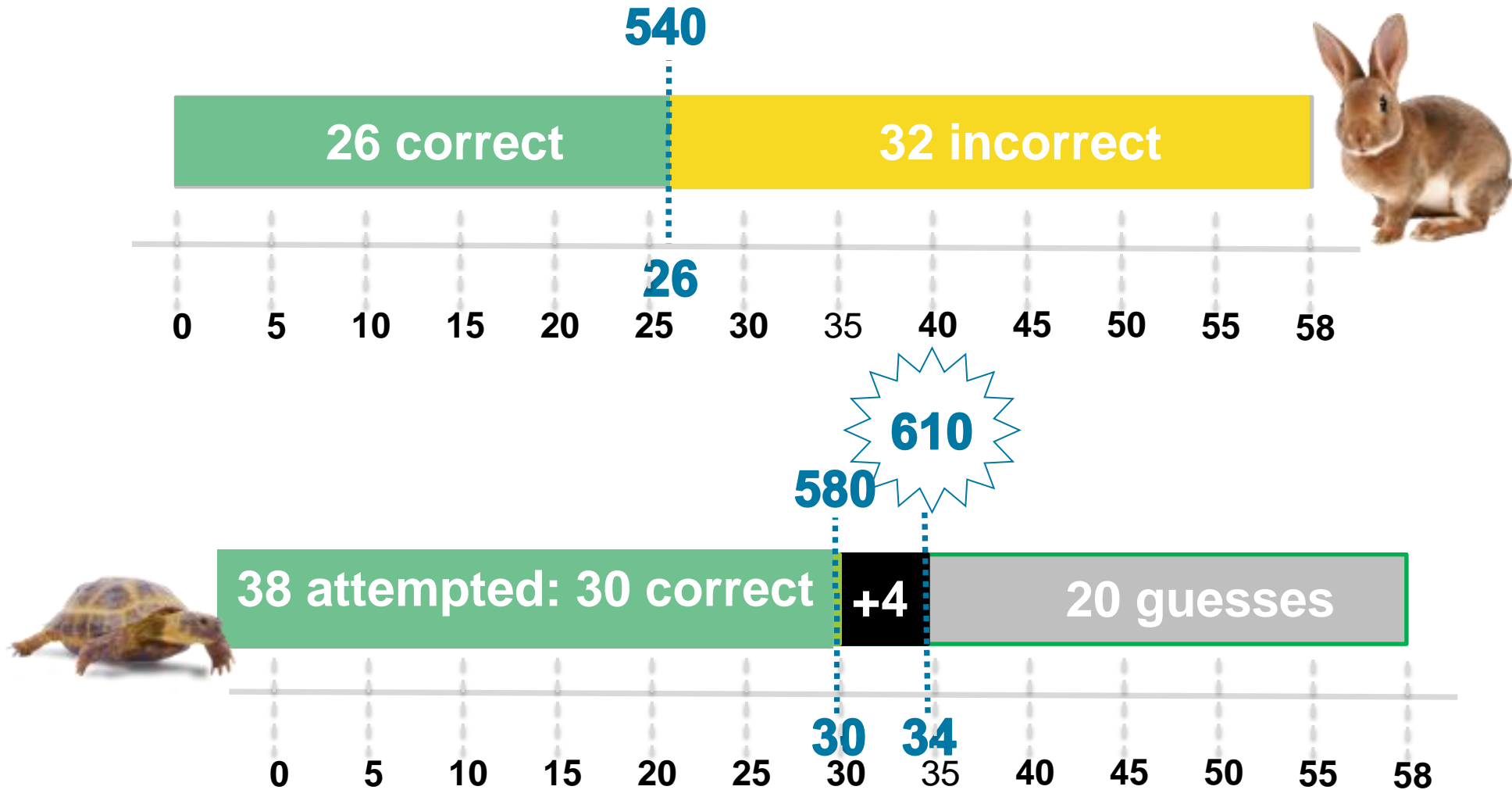
SCHOOL	SAT 25%	SAT 75%*	ACT 25%	ACT 75%*
Northwestern University	1440	1550	33	35
Amherst College	1410	1550	31	34
University of Virginia	1340	1520	30	34
Stanford University	1440	1570	32	35
Harvard University	1460	1570	33	35
University of Texas	1230	1480	27	33

* SAT scores are reflective of the Critical reading and Math scores. The data is self-reported from the schools and represents data during the 2018-2019 school year. * ACT scores are self-reported from the schools and represent data during the 2018-2019 school year.

A close-up photograph of a dark grey scientific calculator resting on a math worksheet. The calculator has a yellow LCD screen at the top, which is currently blank. Below the screen are various function buttons including 'MODE', 'DEL', 'VARS', 'CLEAR', 'CONST', and 'INTG'. The numeric keypad is visible at the bottom, featuring white buttons for digits 0-9 and a blue 'ENTER' button. The worksheet underneath contains several boxes with math problems, including multiplication and division problems like '4 x 10', '4 x 20', '484 ÷ 4', '10 x 27', '20 x 27', '30 x 27', and '825 ÷ 17'.

IMPROVING YOUR SCORES

STRATEGY: PACING



MATH STRATEGY: PLUGGING IN

10
If Claire is ~~C~~ years old and is 6
years younger than Alan, —————→ 16
~~in terms of C~~, how old will Alan
be in 3 years?

- 10
↓
A. $C - 6 = 4$
B. $C - 3 = 7$
C. $C + 3 = 13$
D. $C + 9 = 19$
E. $C + 5 = 15$

19

Target Answer

GRAMMAR STRATEGY: USING CONTEXT

The scientist's work in the field of physics continued to influence the public's understanding of the subject.

Watch the context.

- A. No change
- B. Continue
- C. Will continue
- D. Has the ongoing effect of continuing

GRAMMAR STRATEGY: USING CONTEXT

The scientist's work in the field of physics continued to influence the public's understanding of the subject. His research will redefine a common misconception held by many people. By conducting this experiment, the scientist will become more famous than Albert Einstein.

Keep it Consistent

A. No change

B. Continue

☒ C. Will continue

D. Has the ongoing effect of continuing

Step One: Choose Your First Test

Step Two: Prep For Your First Test

Buy a Book Self-Prep Online
Take a Class Work With a Tutor

Step Three: Take Your First Test

Get an Official Score

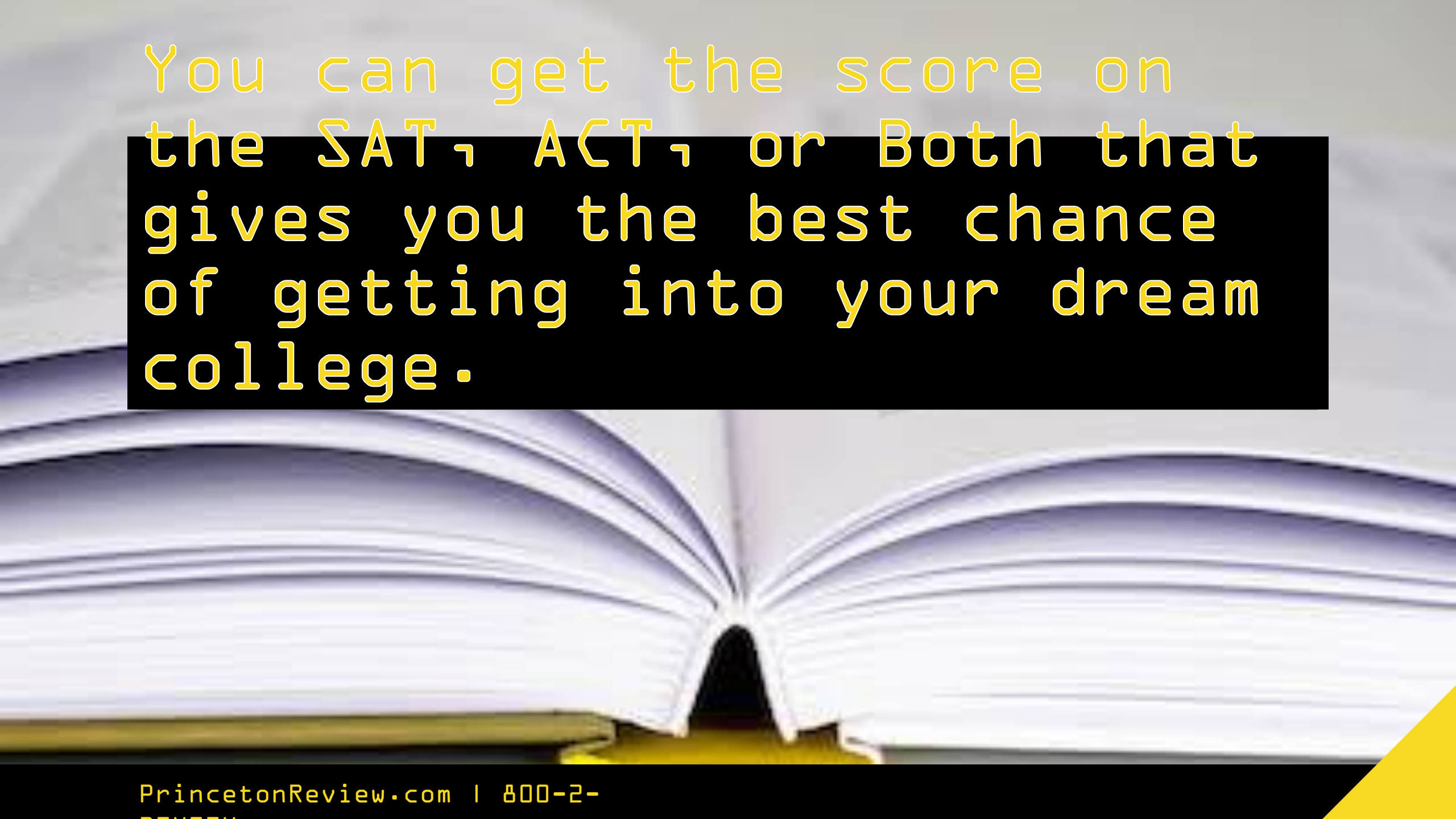
Step Four: Prep For Your Second Test

Take a Different Test or the Same Test *Readjust Your Plan*

Step Five: Take Your Second Test

Step Six: Take Another Test to Get the Score You Need

CREATING YOUR TEST PREP PLAN

An open book with white pages is shown from a top-down perspective. A large black rectangular box is superimposed over the upper portion of the book, containing yellow text. The text is in a monospaced, typewriter-style font. The book's pages are slightly curved, and the binding is visible in the center.

You can get the score on
the SAT, ACT, or Both that
gives you the best chance
of getting into your dream
college.

QUESTIONS?

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