

WHAT SHOULD A MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT DO TO PREPARE FOR COLLEGE?

BE INFORMED. Students should know what colleges expect of them in terms of achievement. Grades, extra-curricular activities, class rank, and admission tests such as ACT and SAT I are all factors considered by colleges. Students should find out what qualifications are needed for admissions and scholarships.

BE FOCUSED. Middle school students should set their goals now for their educational future and seek information on how to reach their goals. Students begin with the established goals in mind and take steps to accomplish them.

BE PREPARED. Middle school students should study hard, make good grades, and become involved in school activities. Students should go to the websites and take the practice tests for college admission. When taking a practice test, students should try to simulate the testing time and special conditions as closely as possible to those they will experience on testing day.

WHERE CAN ADDITIONAL INFORMATION BE OBTAINED?

1. Check with your Guidance Department.
2. Visit the following websites:

PASS, EOCEP <http://ed.sc.gov>

PSAT www.sat.org/psat

SAT I www.collegeboard.com

A MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT'S GUIDE

TO

**TerraNova, InView, Raven, MAP,
PASS, PSAT, SAT, EOCEP**



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What is TerraNova?

The TerraNova is a set of achievement tests that assesses student achievement in science and social studies. The TerraNova tests are norm-referenced tests. This means that students' scores are reported in comparison to a norm group, which is a sample of students chosen from around the country. The test results are reported in terms of a student's national percentile rank (NPR), a number that ranges from 1 to 99 and is used to indicate a student's standing relative to other students in the same grade who took the tests within the same window of time.

The TerraNova is administered each fall to all nominated students in grades 6, 7, and 8 as an achievement test to meet part of the state requirements for screening students who qualify for Academically Advanced Programs.

What is InView?

The InView is a cognitive abilities test that measure student skills and abilities that are important for academic success. The test measures three critical cognitive factors: verbal, nonverbal, and memory. The InView is given to all nominated students in grades 6, 7, and 8 as an aptitude test to meet part of the state requirements for screening students who qualify for the Academically Advanced Programs.

What is Raven?

The Raven's Progressive Matrices is a nonverbal ability measure that assesses abstract reasoning skills. It is administered each fall to nominated students in grades 6-8. The test items are in the form of geometric pictures, or matrices, which have a piece of their design missing. The student is to choose, from six to eight alternatives, an appropriate piece that best completes or fits into the matrix. The task requires an understanding of the relationships among abstract items, the ability to reason by analogy, and the ability to form comparisons.

What is the MAP?

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) is a state-aligned computerized adaptive assessment system, which adjusts the difficulty of the assessment based on the student's performance. MAP tests have the ability to identify skills and concepts that individual students have learned, monitor academic growth over time independent of grade level, and provide teachers with information they can use to enhance teaching and learning. MAP is administered in the fall and spring to all students in grades 2 through 9 in the content areas of reading and mathematics. A Language Usage test is optional. A winter administration is also optional.

What is PASS?

The Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS) is a standards-based assessment developed and administered in South Carolina each March and May. The tests measure student progress toward the state's curriculum standards in the areas of writing, English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies. PASS is administered statewide to all students in grades 3 through 8. Based on their scores, students are placed into one of three performance levels in each subject tested: Exemplary, Met, and Not Met. For students with severe disabilities, the South Carolina Alternate Assessment (SC-Alt) is administered instead.

What is PSAT/NMSQT?

The Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT)/ National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (NMSQT) is a two-hour and ten minute multiple-choice test that measures critical reading and mathematical reasoning abilities important for academic performance in college. PSAT scores can be used to estimate performance on the Scholastic Aptitude Test, SAT. For eleventh grade students, the PSAT is also the qualifying test for entry into competitions for National Merit Scholarships. It consists of two 25-minute Critical Reading sections, two 25-minute Math sections, and a 30-minute Writing section.

Educated guessing, whereby students can rule out one or more answers for multiple-choice questions, is encouraged. However, students are penalized for incorrect answers, therefore wild guessing is discouraged.

Selected 7th and 8th grade students are invited to take the PSAT in the fall. Students who score 50 or higher on Verbal, Math, or Writing Skills are qualified to be designated as a South Carolina Junior Scholar.

What is SAT?

The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) is a three-hour and forty-five minute, multiple-choice aptitude test. It consists of three Critical Reading sections (two 25-minute sections and one 20-minute section), three Math sections (two 25-minute sections and one 20-minute section), and two Writing sections (one 35-minute multiple-choice section and one 25-minute essay). The critical reading portion assesses vocabulary acquisition, critical reading strategies, and reading comprehension. The math portion assesses problem solving including arithmetic reasoning, algebra, and geometry. The writing portion assesses effective writing abilities, including understanding of the English sentence structure and defining, as well as supporting, a viewpoint. Scores for each section are reported on a scale ranging from 200 to 800 with a composite score range of 600 to 2400.

Similar to the PSAT, educated guessing, whereby students can rule out one or more answers for multiple-choice questions, is encouraged. However, students are penalized for incorrect answers, therefore wild guessing is discouraged.

Selected 7th grade students are invited to take the SAT to determine qualification for the Duke University Talent Identification Program (TIP).

What is EOCEP?

The End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP) is a set of examinations administered to students in grades 7 through 12 who are also enrolled in gateway or benchmark courses. The courses are Algebra 1/Algebra 1 Part B, English I, Physical Science, Biology, U.S. History and Constitution. All secondary school students enrolled in any of the courses must participate in the examination program. Each examination will be administered to the students at the end of the semester in which they are scheduled to complete the course. The results from all examinations, except Biology 1, will count as 20% of the students' final grades in the courses.