SAT TRENDS MATH ENGLISH

What came on the SAT, Aug to Nov 2026

The four autumn tests (22 Aug, 12 Sep, 3 Oct and 7 Nov), broken down by question type: what came in Math and in Reading & Writing on each date, which types kept coming back, and what that means for 5 December.

Inside

1 · The 6 trends that matter for 5 December
2 · Test by test: the Math and English types on each date
3 · The repeat map: which types showed up again and again
4 · 22 practice questions, one for every repeating type
5 · Answer key
6 · The types most likely on 5 December

How to use it

Read the trends and the repeat map first (10 minutes). Then try the 22 questions without help, and check the key. Any type you missed goes to the top of your list for the last week.

These are question types, not the exact questions. The SAT uses many forms on every date, so the same type comes with different numbers and settings.

The 6 trends that matter for 5 December

1 **Less Desmos, more thinking.** Each month, less of Module 2 could be solved with Desmos alone. In November, the harder US Math form was the least Desmos-friendly of the autumn. Desmos still helps, but you need the idea first.

2 **Letter constants are rising fast.** Questions like "a, b and c are positive constants. Which must be true?" were rare in August, common in October (one was the last question of Module 2) and back again in November.

3 **Geometry and trig take over Module 2.** On every date, the harder Math Module 2 forms leaned on circles, pyramids, spheres and right-triangle trig.

4 **Types come back.** The August parallel-lines question returned on 7 Nov. The September salt-mixture question came back in November. A cube-density question appeared in October and again in November.

5 **English: words in context lead every test.** Vocabulary was the biggest English type on all four dates. October had the hardest words of the autumn.

6 **English: graphs get longer, notes get fewer.** Graph and table questions became longer and more frequent each month. Notes (rhetorical synthesis) questions fell. In November, some forms had passages about AI.

Also seen: which section felt harder switched from month to month and between the US and international forms, so prepare both sections for a hard Module 2.

Test by test

22 August

Math felt easy until the last 5 or 6 questions of Module 2. The international Module 2 was the trickiest. English Module 2 was dense with vocabulary.

MATH

- Three parallel lines: range of an angle sum
- Two tangent spheres, combined diameter
- Circle arcs, circumference, circle equations
- Mean, median and outliers from histograms
- Find the constant inside a square root
- Quadratic: the larger zero (zoom out!)
- Compound percent change, percent of a percent
- Doubling over a fixed number of years
- Margin of error when the sample grows

ENGLISH

- Words in context (many hard words)
- How strongly the data supports a claim
- Flaw in a research design
- Long charts and tables
- Support / weaken a claim
- Transitions
- Semicolons in a complex list
- A data question inside English

12 September

Math was easier on most forms, but some US Module 2 forms were heavy on triangles and trig. US English vocabulary was very hard.

MATH

- Salt mixture: two percent solutions
- Two square pyramids, surface area
- Factor an expression with a common bracket
- Right-triangle trig, tan on a ramp
- Circle equation by completing the square
- Two-way table probability
- Means from two tables
- Exponential decay

ENGLISH

- Words in context
- A word's older meaning in a Shakespeare line
- Graphs
- Cross-text with poetry
- Long notes questions
- Colon and semicolon lists
- Verb forms

3 October

The hardest Math Module 2 of the autumn, with lots of geometry and some reading-style questions. International English Module 2 was brutal.

MATH

- Study design and sampling inside Math
- Letter constants: "not enough information"
- Right triangle: compare sines of two angles
- Circle with two tangents from a point
- Percent of a percent chains
- Pyramids, cones, a sphere in a cube
- Mean of the remaining values
- Cube density
- No solution / infinitely many solutions

ENGLISH

- Words in context (hardest of the autumn)
- Three graphs in a row
- Long international passages
- Transitions
- Colon, "though" and hyphen punctuation
- Cross-text
- Narrator and character questions

7 November

US Math Module 2 was geometry and trig heavy and the least Desmos-able. International Math was easier, but English Module 2 was hard.

MATH

- Parallel lines range (again)
- Last question: f(x)+k table, find the y-intercept
- Salt mixture by mass (again)
- Prism: lateral area to volume
- Trig: sin to tan, 45-45-90 triangles
- Rectangle from 3 points, triangle inequality
- Cube density (again)
- Nested radicals, exponential and percent

ENGLISH

- Words in context
- Graphs and a new two-hypotheses table
- Poems
- Support / weaken
- Cross-text
- Passages about AI (international)
- Subject-verb agreement

The repeat map

Which types came on each date. ●● came up heavily · ● came up · – rare or absent.

Type	22 Aug	12 Sep	3 Oct	7 Nov
MATH				
Parallel lines, angle range	●●	●	●	●●
Letter constants, "must be true"	●	●	●●	●●
Circles: arcs, tangents, equations	●●	●	●●	●
Pyramids and prisms	●	●	●●	●
Spheres, cones, hemispheres	●●	●	●●	●
Right-triangle trig	●	●	●●	●
Mean, median, outliers	●●	●●	●	●
Percent of a percent	●	–	●●	●
Exponential growth and decay	●	●	●	●
Salt mixture	–	●●	–	●
Study design, sampling, margin of error	●	–	●●	●
Probability from a table	●	●●	●	●
ENGLISH				
Words in context	●●	●●	●●	●●
Graphs and tables	●	●	●●	●●
Transitions	●	●	●●	●
Punctuation joining clauses	●	●	●	●
Poems and literary passages	●	●	●	●●
Cross-text connections	●	●	●	●
Notes (rhetorical synthesis)	●	●	●	●

A type that shows up on all four dates is not a guess for December. It is the test's habit. The 22 questions on the next pages cover every type on this map.

Practice: every repeating type

Written in the Bluebook style. Questions 1 to 14 are Math, 15 to 22 are Reading and Writing. Aim for about 90 seconds each.

1 Multiple choice · Math **HARD**

The function f is defined by $f(x) = a(x - 4)(x + b)(x + c)$, where a, b, and c are positive constants. If $f(0) = p$, which of the following must be true?

(A) $p = -4bc$

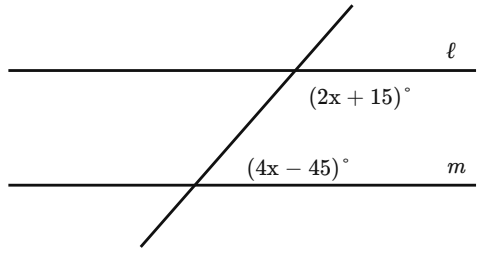
(B) $p < 0$

(C) $p > -4bc$

(D) $p = 4abc$

2 Student-produced response · Math **HARD**

In the figure, line ℓ is parallel to line m. What is the value of x?



Note: Figure not drawn to scale.

3 Student-produced response · Math — MEDIUM

A chemist mixes a 0.12% salt solution with a 0.04% salt solution, by mass, to make 200 grams of a 0.07% salt solution. How many grams of the 0.12% solution does the chemist use?

4 Student-produced response · Math — MEDIUM

The number A is 250% of the number B, and B is 0.4% of the number C. If A is $p\%$ of C, where A, B, and C are positive, what is the value of p?

5 Student-produced response · Math — HARD

In right triangle RST, angle T is a right angle and $\tan R = \frac{21}{20}$. What is the value of $\sin S$?

6 Multiple choice · Math — MEDIUM

A circle in the xy-plane has its center at $(3, -5)$ and is tangent to the x-axis. Which equation represents this circle?

(A) $(x-3)^2 + (y+5)^2 = 9$

(B) $(x-3)^2 + (y+5)^2 = 25$

(C) $(x+3)^2 + (y-5)^2 = 25$

(D) $(x-3)^2 + (y+5)^2 = 5$

7 Student-produced response · Math — MEDIUM

A right square pyramid has a base edge of 10 centimeters and a slant height of 13 centimeters. What is the volume, in cubic centimeters, of the pyramid?

8 Multiple choice · Math — HARD

A sphere has a volume of 36π cubic inches. A second sphere has a radius twice as long as the radius of the first sphere. What is the surface area, in square inches, of the second sphere?

(A) 36π
(B) 72π
(C) 144π
(D) 288π

9 Student-produced response · Math — MEDIUM

A solid cube made of aluminum has a density of 2.7 grams per cubic centimeter and a mass of 172.8 grams. What is the total surface area, in square centimeters, of the cube?

10 Student-produced response · Math — MEDIUM

A data set of 9 positive integers has a mean of 20. The greatest value in the data set is 92. If the value 92 is removed, what is the mean of the remaining 8 values?

11 Student-produced response · Math — MEDIUM

The mass, in grams, of a substance is modeled by $m(t) = 640(0.5)^{t/12}$, where t is the number of hours after the start of an experiment. After how many hours will the mass of the substance be 40 grams?

12 Student-produced response · Math — HARD

The price of a bike increased by 25% in January. In February, the new price decreased by $x\%$, and the bike was back at its original price. What is the value of x?

13 Multiple choice · Math — MEDIUM

A researcher selected 300 adults at random from all adults in one city who use a certain fitness app. Half of these adults, chosen at random, received daily reminders to exercise. On average, the adults who received reminders exercised more than those who did not. Which conclusion is best supported?

(A) Daily reminders cause all adults to exercise more.

(B) Daily reminders cause adults in the city to exercise more.

(C) Daily reminders cause adults in the city who use the app to exercise more.

(D) No conclusion about cause and effect can be made.

14 Student-produced response · Math **HARD**

The table shows how many students at a school took a full practice test before the SAT, by grade.

	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total
Took a test	48	72	120
Did not	32	48	80
Total	80	120	200

If one student who took a practice test is chosen at random, what is the probability that the student is in grade 12?

15 Multiple choice · Reading and Writing **MEDIUM**

Early critics dismissed the novelist's spare style as careless, but later readers came to see its _____ as deliberate: the short sentences and missing adjectives were choices, not oversights.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

(A) extravagance
(B) austerity
(C) sentimentality
(D) inconsistency

16 Multiple choice · Reading and Writing **MEDIUM**

The council's decision to delay the vote was not a sign of indifference; rather, it reflected the members' _____: they refused to act until every neighborhood had been heard.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

(A) prudence
(B) apathy
(C) haste
(D) defiance

17 Multiple choice · Reading and Writing **HARD**

Ecologist Ana Ruiz hypothesized that bees in a meadow prefer yellow and purple flowers to blue and white flowers. She counted bee visits to each flower color.

Flower color	Average visits per hour
Blue	14
Yellow	22
White	9
Purple	18

Which choice best describes data from the table that support Ruiz's hypothesis?

(A) Yellow flowers had more visits per hour than any other color.
(B) White flowers had the fewest visits per hour.
(C) Blue flowers had more visits per hour than white flowers.
(D) Yellow and purple flowers each had more visits per hour than either blue or white flowers.

18 Multiple choice · Reading and Writing **MEDIUM**

A team of ecologists expected oxygen levels in Lake Tarn to fall as summer water temperatures rose. _____ the readings stayed steady through August, a result the researchers later traced to a bloom of oxygen-producing algae.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical transition?

(A) Similarly,
(B) Therefore,
(C) However,
(D) For example,

19 Multiple choice · Reading and Writing **MEDIUM**

Marine biologist Ayana Brooks studies coral reefs in the Red _____ reefs there have survived water temperatures that would bleach corals elsewhere.

Which choice completes the text so that it conforms to the conventions of Standard English?

(A) Sea;
(B) Sea,
(C) Sea
(D) Sea and

20 Multiple choice · Reading and Writing **MEDIUM**

The following text is from a poem.

The old house keeps the hours we left behind:
the kettle's hush, the stair that learned our weight,
each room a pocket where the years unwind,
and every door a hinge on something late.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

(A) The speaker regrets leaving a house that needed repairs.

(B) The speaker describes how the house was built over many years.

(C) The speaker argues that old houses are quieter than new ones.

(D) The speaker suggests that the house holds traces of the lives once lived in it.

21 Multiple choice · Reading and Writing **HARD**

Text 1

Some economists argue that a four-day work week must reduce output: fewer hours, they say, simply means less work gets done.

Text 2

Trials at several firms found that output held steady under a four-day week. Employees cut unproductive meetings and took fewer sick days.

Based on the texts, how would the author of Text 2 most likely respond to the economists in Text 1?

(A) By agreeing that output falls but arguing that the loss is worth it

(B) By claiming that sick days are the main cause of lost output

(C) By arguing that fewer hours do not necessarily mean less work gets done

(D) By suggesting that four-day weeks work only at large firms

22 Multiple choice · Reading and Writing **MEDIUM**

While researching a topic, a student has taken the following notes:

- The Atacama Desert in Chile is one of the driest places on Earth.
- Some weather stations there have never recorded rain.
- Astronomers have built several major telescopes in the Atacama.
- Dry, clear air makes telescope images sharper.

The student wants to explain why astronomers chose the Atacama for telescopes. Which choice most effectively uses relevant information from the notes to accomplish this goal?

(A) Because dry, clear air makes telescope images sharper, astronomers have built several major telescopes in the extremely dry Atacama Desert.

(B) The Atacama Desert in Chile is one of the driest places on Earth, and some of its weather stations have never recorded rain.

(C) Astronomers have built several major telescopes in Chile.

(D) Some weather stations in the Atacama have never recorded rain, but astronomers still work there.

Answer key

#	Answer	Type	Most common slip
1	B	Letter constants	A: only true when a = 1
2	35	Parallel lines	Setting the angles equal (x = 30)
3	75	Salt mixture	125: that is the 0.04% solution
4	1	Percent of a percent	0.01: that is A ÷ C, not p
5	20/29 (.6896, .6897)	Right-triangle trig	21/29: that is sin R
6	B	Circles	A: radius 3 uses the y-axis
7	400	Pyramids	Using 13 as the height (433.3)
8	C	Spheres	B: doubling the area instead of ×4
9	96	Cube density	64 (the volume) or 16 (one face)
10	11	Mean and outliers	Removing 92 from the mean, not the sum
11	48	Exponential	4: that is the number of halvings
12	20	Percent change	25: a 25% drop overshoots
13	C	Study design	B: only app users were sampled
14	3/5 (.6)	Probability from a table	72/200: the wrong total
15	B	Words in context	D: the text says the plainness was chosen
16	A	Words in context	B: the text rules out indifference
17	D	Graphs and tables	A: says nothing about purple vs blue/white
18	C	Transitions	B: the result was the opposite of what was expected
19	A	Punctuation	B: comma splice
20	D	Poems	A: no repairs or regret in the lines
21	C	Cross-text	A: Text 2 says output did not fall
22	A	Notes	B: dryness alone does not explain the choice