The SSAT: three levels, the sections and the scoring

Secondary School Admission Test, published by E3n (formerly The Enrollment Management Association), since 1957. Elementary Level for grades 3 and 4 (scales 300-600 per section, 900-1800 total); Middle Level for grades 5 to 7 (440-710; 1320-2130); Upper Level for grades 8 to 11 (500-800; 1500-2400). Formats: paper (Standard or Flex), SSAT at Home, Prometric centres.

Middle and Upper Level: 185 minutes with two breaks

Section	Questions	Minutes	Scored?
Writing sample	1 prompt (Middle: a creative or personal prompt; Upper: a personal or a general essay, choose one)	25	Unscored; a copy goes to the schools
Quantitative 1	25	30	Scored
Reading	40, on passages	40	Scored
Verbal	60: 30 synonyms, 30 analogies	30	Scored
Quantitative 2	25	30	Scored; the two quantitative sections make one score from 50 questions
Experimental	A short set of trial questions	15	Unscored

Elementary Level: 125 minutes with a break

Section	Questions	Minutes	Scored?
Quantitative	30	30	Scored
Verbal	30: 15 synonyms, 15 analogies	20	Scored
Reading	28, on seven passages of 100 to 300 words	30	Scored
Writing sample	Look at a picture and write a story	15	Unscored; sent to the schools
Experimental	A short set of trial questions	15	Unscored

The scoring rule

[ ] Middle and Upper: +1 for each correct answer, minus a quarter point for each incorrect answer, 0 for a blank. Guess once a choice is eliminated; leave blank only when none is.

[ ] Elementary: +1 per correct answer, no penalty.

[ ] Raw scores are converted to scaled scores and equated across forms; the three section scores add to the total.

[ ] Percentiles compare the student with first-time same-grade Standard test takers over three years in the US and Canada: a strong, self-selected group. Only scaled scores compare individuals.

[ ] The writing sample is unscored; a copy goes to every school that receives the scores.

Retakes and fees

Middle and Upper: up to six Standard tests and one Flex test a year; Elementary: up to three (two Standard, one Flex). Middle and Upper fees at the time of writing: paper Standard or school Flex US$177, Prometric $250, at Home $263, consultant Flex $272; fee waivers available.

From sciencewithshobha.com/blog/ssat-explained-elementary-middle-and-upper-level-sections-questions-and-timings-how-it-is-scored-the-scaled-score-ranges-and-percentiles-by-grade-what-a-good-ssat-score-is-ssat-vs-isee-and-how-to-prepare/ · 1-on-1 online tutoring for US families, Grade 3 to 12, free 30-minute first class.

Percentiles by grade from the official tables, and the planner

8th grade, Upper Level

Total	Percentile	Section score	Verbal	Quantitative	Reading
2265	94	800	99	99	99
2175	84	752	90	84	97
2100	71	710	74	66	84
2040	58	680	58	49	65
1950	38	665	50	41	56
1875	23	635	34	25	36
1815	13	605	20	13	19
1725	4	575	9	5	7

6th grade, Middle Level

Total	Percentile	Section score	Verbal	Quantitative	Reading
2103	99	710	99	99	99
2067	95	683	89	89	91
2040	91	656	73	70	78
2004	84	629	53	49	60
1926	66	602	33	30	39
1872	50	575	18	16	22
1836	40				
1800	31				
1722	14				
1650	5				

4th grade, Elementary Level

Total	Percentile	Section score	Verbal	Quantitative	Reading
1800	99	600	99	99	99
1710	92	570	84	83	94
1650	82	540	72	67	83
1590	73	510	62	60	66
1530	64	480	51	52	50
1490	57	450	35	42	35
1430	46	420	25	29	20
1370	36	390	14	10	11
1310	26				
1250	17				

Sample-report averages in the guides: 9th grade Upper Level total 2036 (verbal 672, quantitative 701, reading 663); 4th grade Elementary total 1453 (484, 488, 481). Schools set their own expectations and see the student against their own applicants.

Eight weeks

Test date, level, format; schools and their preferred test: _____

Practice 1: section percentiles, and the costliest section: _____

Vocabulary plan (daily) and the maths topics to fix: _____

Practice 2 and 3 dates; guessing rule rehearsed: _____