

To get the most out of your SAT® Essay time, here's a strategy for dividing your 50 minutes into two stages: **Focused Reading** and **Organizing and Writing**.

1. Focused Reading



10–15 minutes

1–3 minutes: Before you read the passage, **read the prompt to find the author's argument**. Doing this will help you understand the passage and save you time.

10–12 minutes: With the author's argument in mind, **read the passage**. As you read:

- Ask yourself, "How does the author build this argument?"
- **Mark specific examples of persuasive strategies** the author uses.

2. Organizing and Writing



35–40 minutes

1–2 minutes: Look over the examples of persuasive strategies you marked while reading.

- Ask yourself: "Which strategies are clearly important for persuading the audience of the argument?"
- Use your answer to **decide which three strategies to analyze** in your essay.

2–5 minutes: Write your **introduction paragraph**, presenting the author's argument and listing the strategies you'll analyze.

25–30 minutes: Write three **body paragraphs**, one for each strategy. Spend 8–9 minutes on each paragraph, showing how the author uses each strategy to build the argument.

2–5 minutes: Wrap up with a 1–2 sentence **conclusion paragraph** summing up your main points.

Use any remaining time to proofread your writing.