

SAT Practice: Essay

Objective: Students learn about the SAT® Essay and practice writing rhetorical analysis essays for sample SAT prompts.

Duration: 3–4 class periods, or fewer with homework

Learn

1 class period



Tutorial: [Writing the SAT Essay](#)

Students learn or review the basics of a rhetorical analysis essay, the genre tested on the SAT.

5–10 minutes



Try projecting this tutorial and having students vote on the “Try it out!” question.



Prompt and Sample Essays: [“Let There Be Dark”](#) (from the College Board)

Have students read this SAT Essay prompt and identify the features of the text that make it persuasive. Then, walk students through low- and high-scoring sample essay responses.

30–40 minutes



Try projecting the samples and discussing students’ observations as a whole class!



In the next task, students will apply what they learned to respond to a new prompt.

Try

1-2 class periods



Guided Draft: [SAT Essay Practice](#)

Students write a full essay for an SAT prompt, supported by targeted tips and scaffolding.



Prompt: [SAT Practice Essay “Arctic National Wildlife Refuge”](#)

Provide students with this SAT Essay prompt from the College Board as a printed hand-out or link.



A Guided Draft gives students scaffolding, exemplars, and targeted tips as they write. For this assignment, allow students more time than the standard 50 minutes for the SAT Essay so that they can take advantage of these supports and internalize the requirements of the rhetorical analysis essay genre.

60-100 minutes



For this assignment or the one below, feel free to replace the prompt with a different one from the SAT (check out [our prompt library](#) for more)!

Apply

1 class period



Quick Write: [SAT Essay Practice](#)

Students write a full, timed essay for an SAT prompt, without scaffolding.



Prompt: [SAT Practice Essay “The Digital Parent Trap”](#)

Provide students with this SAT essay prompt from the College Board as a printed hand-out or link.

50 minutes



Give students 50 minutes to read the prompt and write their essay. Limiting this Quick Write activity to 50 minutes will let students practice in test-taking conditions.