

Work **SMARTER**
Not HARDER
on the ACT!



2015

Did You Know?

ALL Juniors
across the state of
Missouri will be
taking the ACT on
April 28 at the
same time!

(makeup date is
May 12)



Did You Know?

- This **will count** as an **official** ACT
- Your score can be used for college admission, scholarships, etc.



Looking at the ACT

- ACT = American College Testing
- Over 1.84 million students took the ACT in 2014
- 36 is a perfect score



4 tests:

- English
- Reading
- Mathematics
- Science (Reasoning)

Plus Writing Section



Section	Number of questions	Time (minutes)	Score Range	Average score (2014)	College Readiness Benchmark	Content
English	75	45	1-36	20.3	18	Usage/mechanics and rhetorical skills
Mathematics	60	60	1-36	20.9	22	Pre-algebra, elementary algebra, intermediate algebra, coordinate geometry, geometry, elementary trigonometry, reasoning, and problem-solving
Reading	40	35	1-36	21.3	22	Reading comprehension
Science	40	35	1-36	20.8	23	Interpretation, analysis, evaluation, reasoning, and problem-solving
Optional Writing Test (not included in composite score)	1 essay prompt	30	1-12	7.1		Writing skills
Composite			1-36	21.0		Average (mean) of all section scores

Keep in Mind

- The ACT does not necessarily test how smart you are in the content (*except for the math test*)
 - Rather, it tests how well you can process information & manage your time
 - A snapshot of your learning



- The test is designed for you not to finish!



Keep in Mind

- Educated guessing is good on the ACT!
 - Your score is based on number of questions you answer correctly – no penalty for guessing
 - Try to eliminate as many answer choices as you can before making a guess
- Only the answer matters
 - Showing your work won't help on this test

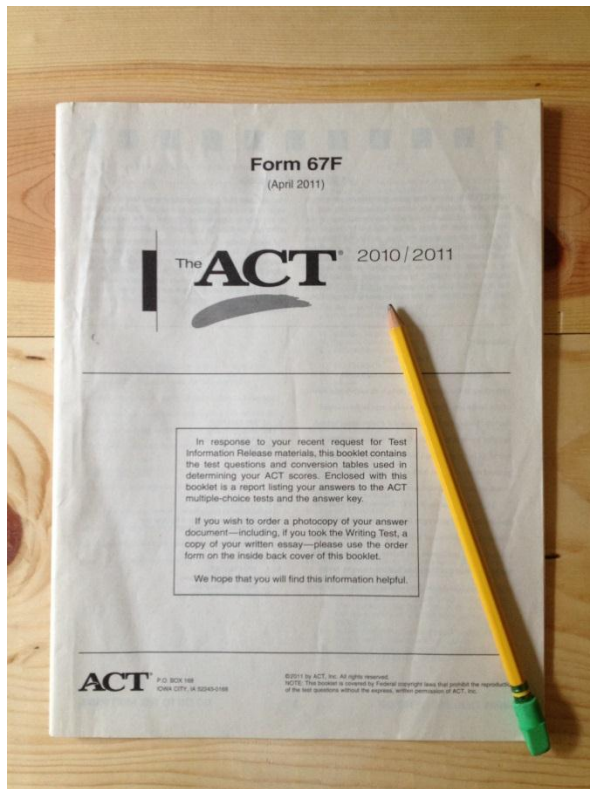
Strategies for Success

- Easy questions are not always first & hard questions last → scan through & answer the ones you know first.
- “C” is rarely the right answer to guess.
- Go quickly (but accurately) on easy questions so you have more time for the hard ones.

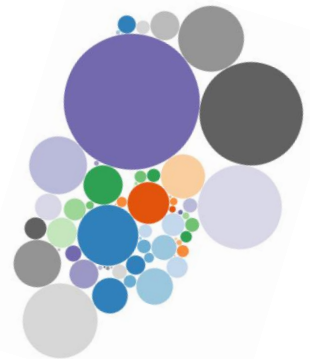
Strategies for Success

- Extreme Language in the answer choice, like ALWAYS, NEVER – this answer is almost always not the correct choice.
- You get no points for reading, you only get points for answering questions!

Answering the Questions/Bubbling: *What's the Best Strategy?*



- Answer all the questions on one page of the booklet → then bubble in all the answers.
- Turn the page & continue this way.



Strategies for Success

- The brain can only fully concentrate for 8 to 10 minutes at a time.
- After each page, put your pencil down, sit up straight, close your eyes, take a deep breath, rotate your neck, start back up!



Content: English

- **Period / semicolon** – there is no difference; they both separate independent clauses
- **Colon** – list or long, direct quote
 - **Before** a colon is a complete thought; **after** is specifics
 - ACT never tests lists
- **MUST HAVE** versus **MUST OF** – no such thing as “must of”
- **IT’S & ITS** – **It’s** means it is; **Its** is plural possessive pronoun (ex. the dog ate its dinner)

Content: English

- **WHO** versus **WHOM** – always on the test!
 - Who is at the door? (Who is subject)
 - The door is for whom? (Whom is object)
- **THEY'RE / THEIR / THERE**
 - **They're** is “they are” (ex. they're ready to go)
 - **Their** is possessive pronoun – belonging to people (ex. their books)
 - **There** is more of a location or abstract thing (ex. there is no right answer; look over there)

Content: Reading

Always 4 reading sections (in this order):

- 1) Prose fiction (literary narrative)
- 2) Social Science
- 3) Humanities
- 4) Natural Science



Content: Reading

- 1st section, Prose Fiction, is always the hardest section on the Reading test.
- Typically, students spend 20 minutes on prose, then only have 15 minutes for rest of test!
- Strategy: skip 1st passage – do other sections first.
- Find easiest questions first; get all the points you can!



Content: Reading

- Line Number Questions
 - Make sure to review lines before & after the lines mentioned in the question.
 - Do line number questions first because it tells you exactly where to go!



Content: Reading

- Half right/half wrong in answer choice – if one part is wrong, the whole answer is wrong.
- Remember: you get no points for reading, you get points for answering questions!



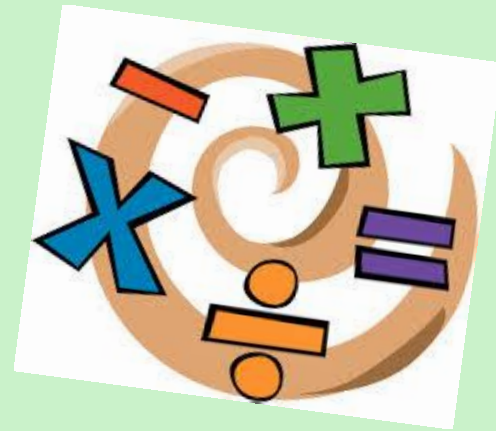
Content: Reading

- Natural Science section
 - Strategy: read question first then find answer in reading.



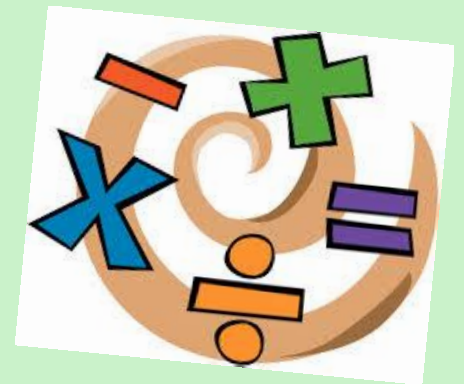
Content: Math

- Generally:
 - #1-20 easy
 - #21-40 medium
 - #41-60 hard
 - #51-60 really hard – designed to discriminate between students who will get a 33 & who will get a 36



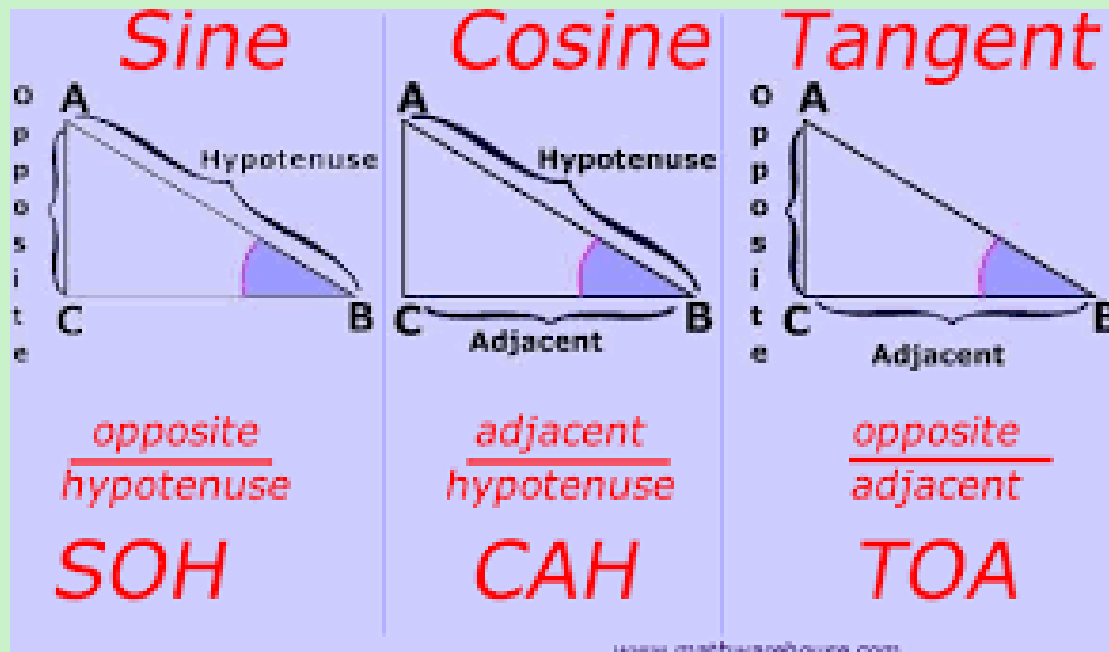
Content: Math

- If you have to guess, make sure it's an educated guess!
 - Example: if given length of legs of right triangle as 6 in & 7 in, the hypotenuse could not be 380 in!



Content: Math

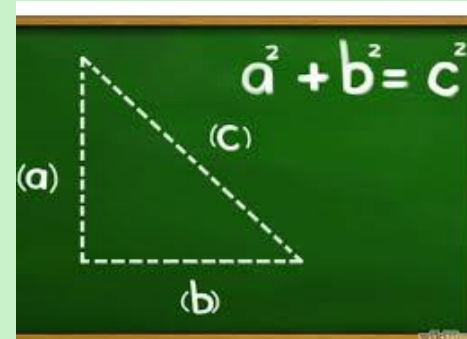
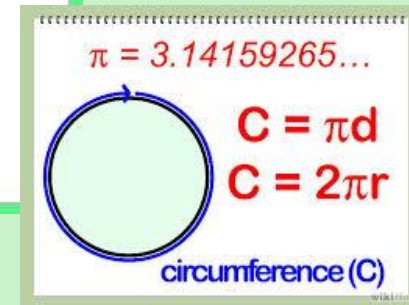
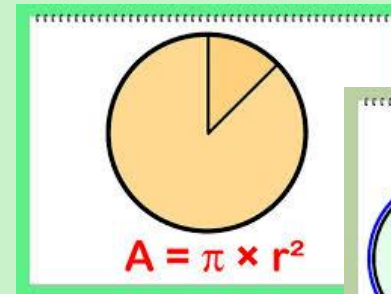
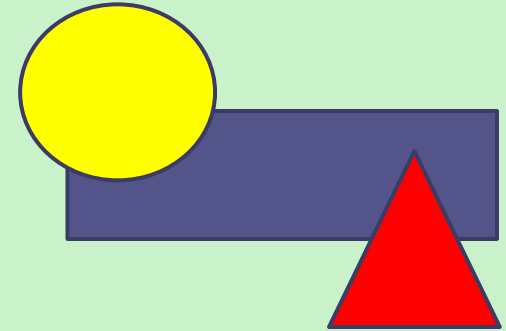
- Trigonometry—always fall between #25-40
- Always 4 questions
- 2 are always **SOHCAHTOA...**



Content: Math

- Geometry

- Must know area of circle, triangle & rectangle
- Must know difference between area & circumference of circle
- Pythagorean Theorem – always the smallest, non stupid answer



Content: Science

- Not content based!
- Score based on your ability to read charts, tables, graphs, etc. & use reasonable judgment
- 20 questions
- Do all the quick & easy first!



Content: Science

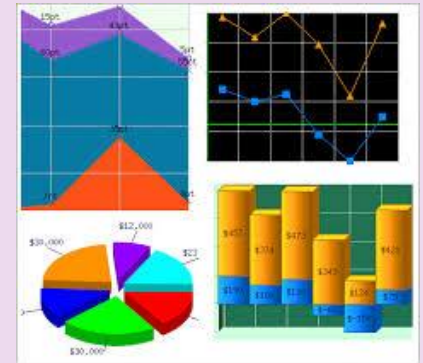
3 types of passages in random order:

- **Charts & Graphs (3) – do 1st**
- **Experiments (3) – do 2nd**
- **Conflicting Views-Reasoning (1) – do last**



Content: Science

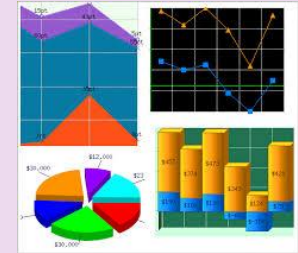
Charts & Graphs



- How to recognize...1 intro paragraph—then nothing but charts & graphs—followed by 5 questions
- Don't confuse with Experiments—they also may contain charts & graphs (experiments have 6 questions)

Content: Science

Charts & Graphs



- Strategy: do not read intro paragraph— typically only 1 of 40 questions based on info from intro paragraph
- Locate the correct chart/graph based on info in question
- Figure out what is different between charts/graphs – they will likely look similar

Content: Science

Experiments

- 3 passages
- Will include a table with results: experiment 1, experiment 2, etc. OR study 1, study 2, etc.
- Always have 6 questions
- **READ** the experiment—what did they DO? what did they FIND?



Content: Science

Conflicting Views

- 1 passage
- No charts/graphs
- Always 7 questions
- Why do this last?
 - Usually the hardest passage to read



Content: Science

Conflicting Views



- **Student 1 View :: Student 2 View**
 - 2 questions on Student 1's view
 - 2 questions on Student 2's view
 - 1 question on how views are similar
 - 2 questions on what they disagree on

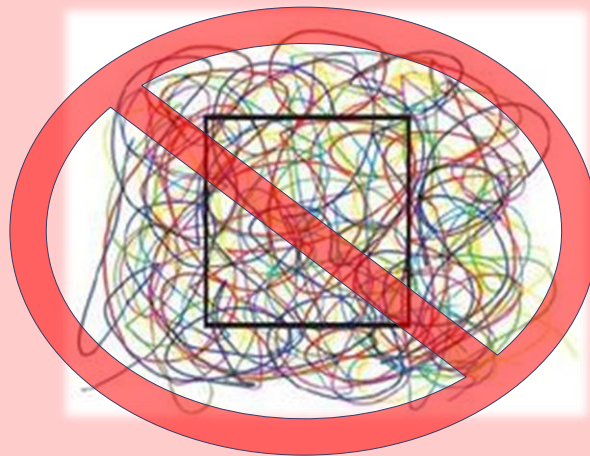
Content: Writing



- Writing score does not factor into your overall composite score
- No need to write the best essay of your school career – just do what is asked, nothing more
 - Graders will read 100s of papers – just make it easy for them to score yours

Content: Writing

- Colleges take a Pass/Fail approach to Writing Section
- Make sure to only write in the box – don't go outside the lines



Content: Writing

- If question asks you to pick a side & provide evidence...
 - Mistake: students don't take a position
 - Mistake: students don't provide evidence
- Okay to write essay in 1st person (I)



Content: Writing

- Make it easy for Grader to grade your essay:
 - **Intro** – layout topic; take position
 - **Body** – reasons & examples
 - **Conclusion** – restate intro





KEEP
CALM
AND
TAKE THE
ACT TEST

Успехов!
Bonne Chance!
Buena Suerte!
In bocca al lupo!!
Viel Glück!
Alles Gute!
موفق باشيد
Sto Lat!
Boa sorte!
祝你好運
Held og lykke!



행운! 
בהצלחה
Maika'i Pomaika'i!
Go n-éirí an t-ádh leat!
Ádh mór ort!
Bona fortuna!
ขอให้โชคดี!
Chúc may mắn!
Sterkte!
Bonŝancon!