

# Prep Smarter

## How to Make the Most of SAT/ACT Preparation



What makes test prep **effective**? How can students **improve their chances of a higher score**? Take a look at these **cutting-edge research findings**, published by our founder and CEO, Dr. Jed Applerouth, along with his colleagues in educational psychology. <sup>[1]</sup> **This research informs all that we do at Applerouth –from curriculum design to tutor hiring and training.**

### Time Investment Matters



Students who spend more time in tutoring sessions and complete more homework have greater score gains.

### Prepping Early in Junior Year Benefits Students

Maturation effects over the course of junior year do not significantly affect SAT performance. In fact, students who start prepping earlier in junior year have a greater opportunity to reap the benefits of repeat official testing.



### Repeat Testing (within reason) is Advantageous

Students saw steady gains from their 1st, to their 2nd, to their 3rd official SAT. The effects of repeated official tests were more profound than those from repeated practice tests. Students picked up 5 points for each additional practice test and 22 points for each official exam.



### Distributed Study Enhances Retention



Longer gaps between sessions contribute to greater score increases. Distributed study gives students time to practice and allows the material to sink in, enabling students to recall it better on test day.

### Individual Instruction has the Edge

An hour of private instruction has a 57% greater effect on score gains than an hour of group instruction. Sessions dedicated to the needs of an individual student enable the tutor to optimize time and attend to unique growth areas.



<sup>[1]</sup>This research is based on testing outcomes for over 1900 Applerouth students who prepared for the old SAT. In our experience, these findings apply equally well to the ACT and new SAT. We encourage interested readers to review the full article: Appelrouth, J. I., Zabrocky, K. M., & Moore, D. "Preparing students for college admissions tests." Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice 24.1 (2015): 78-95. Print.