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Sample PSAT Comprehensive Syllabus 16 sessions

Student: Nick Carraway
Tutor: Jay Gatsby

This syllabus offers complete coverage of the PSAT: critical reading, writing, and math. General test strategy and time management techniques are built into each session and applied specifically to the content covered. Homework should be completed in the order presented on the syllabus below (i.e. first complete the item listed first, second, complete the item listed second). This syllabus includes 12 practice exams, one of which is a 2012 practice exam from CB and 11 from KP, MH, PR, BP. During practice testing weeks, we will both review advanced content and focus on test taking methodology.

Required Texts

- CB: The Official Student Guide to the PSAT/NMSQT¹ 2012 (College Board)
- PR: Cracking the PSAT/NMSQT 2014 (Princeton Review)
- BP: Barron's PSAT/NMSQT 16th Edition (Barron's)
- GB: The Grammar Bible: Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Grammar but Didn't Know Whom to Ask
- CC: Cambridge Coaching Vocabulary Lists, 2013 (Cambridge Coaching)
- IR: An independent reading book of the student's choosing. The book should mimic the density and rigor of SAT reading comprehension passages (for examples, see Session One)

Optional Texts

- CB: The Official Student Guide to the SAT 2009 (College Board)
- 11: 11 Practice Tests for the SAT and PSAT, 2014 Edition (Princeton Review) KP: Kaplan PSAT/NMSQT Premier 2014 (Kaplan)
- MH: McGraw-Hill's PSAT/NMSQT, 2nd Edition (McGraw-Hill's)

Before the First Session

- CB: read page 8-32, familiarize yourself with the format, timing and content for the exam
- MH: read chapters 1-2, familiarize with the most basic strategy on how to take the test.
- MH: Do diagnostic test chapter 3
 - Complete the test under timed/test conditions
 - Enter your incorrect problems and problems that were difficult into the shared
 - online question log provided by your tutor – this is very important!
 - Your tutor can then review your test before your first session and make ad-



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Sample Sessions

Every PSAT student's aptitude and learning style is different, so the focus and pacing of sessions will be set according to student data on problem sets and practice tests. However, the sample sessions below map out the typical progression of a tutoring relationship, including in-session content coverage and related homework assignments.

Session 1: Introduction, General Strategy, Diagnostic Test, Reading Comprehension

In session

- Walk through syllabus and discuss academic/PSAT history and goals. Finalize session cadence and scheduling through test date
- Vocabulary building methodology (student will have received the CC List via email, suggest making flashcards at 10 words per day) and daily reading schedule (30 minutes, uninterrupted, begin with e.g anything by George Orwell, James Joyce's A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre, Stephen Hawking's A Brief History of Time)
- Discuss problem areas in diagnostic exam and what went wrong/right, timing issues, work through some problems together.
- Introduction to reading comprehension question types and methodology

Homework

- MH: Read and complete chapter 5
- PR: Read and complete chapter 6
- CC: Complete notecards for the first 100 words
- IR: 30 minutes daily continuous reading
- GB: Read Chapter 1

Session 2: Math (I): Pre-Algebra Skills

In session

- Review critical reading questions from shared online question log
- Introduction to math fundamentals: numbers and operations, laws of arithmetic, fractions, ratios and proportions, percents, negatives, divisibility (MH gives a good overview of these, PS has drills)
- In addition to content detailed above, focus on methodology derived from PS chapter 8 ("Math Techniques"), page 136-146.

Homework

- MH: Read and complete chapter 7, 8
- BR: Read and complete chapter 7 A-E
- CC: Complete notecards for words 100-200
- IR: 30 minutes daily continuous reading



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Session 3: Writing (I) - Introduction to major question types

In session

- Review math questions from shared online question log
- Introduction to writing: improving sentences, identifying sentence errors, improving paragraphs
- Review grammar I (MH 294-312)

Homework

- MH: Read and complete Chapter 12 and half of Chapter 13, page 294-312
- PR: Read chapter 10 Writing Skills, complete drill 1,2, page 186-200
- CC: Complete notecards for words 200-300
- IR: 30 minutes daily continuous reading
- GB: Read Chapter 3

Session 4: Sentence Correction (I)

In session

- Review writing questions from shared online question log
- Introduction to algebra: operations on algebraic expressions/ equations, factoring, exponents, roots, radicals, solving equations, absolute value, inequalities, systems of linear equations, quadratics and factoring, rational equations and inequalities

Homework

- MH: Read and complete chapter 9, page 186-201
- PR: Read Math Basics Chapter 7, page 98-112, complete drill 1, 2, 3; Read Advanced Math Principles Chapter 10, page 162-170, complete drill 1.
- BR: Read and complete chapter 7 F-G
- CC: Complete notecards for words 300-400
- IR: 30 minutes daily continuous reading
- GB: Read Chapter 4

Session 5: Critical Reading (II) - Advanced techniques

In session

- Review math questions from shared online question log
- Advanced critical reading techniques.

Homework

- KP: Read and complete chapter 5
- CC: Complete notecards for words 400-500
- IR: 30 minutes daily continuous reading
- GB: Read Chapter 5



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Session 6: Writing (I) - Introduction to major question types

In session

- Review critical reading questions from shared online question log
- Introduction of word problems: rate problems, age problems, money problems. Focus on MH chapter 9, page 204 and BR chapter 7, page 311.

Homework

- MH: Read and complete chapter 9, page 204
- BR: Read and complete chapter 7 H
- CC: Complete notecards for words 500-600
- IR: 30 minutes daily continuous reading
- GB: Read Chapter 6

Session 7: Writing (II) - Essay and Grammar review

In session

- Review math questions from shared online question log
- Introduction to the essay
- Finish grammar review (MH page 314-329)

Homework

- MH: Finish chapter 13 page 314-329
- KP: Read and complete chapter 7
- PR: Read chapter 10 Writing Skills, complete drill 3, 4, page 201-215
- CC: Complete notecards for words 900-1000
- IR: 30 minutes daily continuous reading
- GB: Read Chapter 7

Session 8: Critical Reading (II) - Advanced techniques

In session

- Review writing questions from shared online question log
- Introduction to basic geometric concepts: lines and angles, triangles, quadrilaterals, polygons, circles, three-dimensional solids, area, volumes
- Introduction to coordinate geometry: reading graphs, slope,

Homework

- MH: Read and complete chapter 11
- PR: Read Math Basics Chapter 7, page 113-124, Complete drill 4; Read Advanced Math Principles Chapter 9, page 168-183, Complete drill 2.
- BR: Read and complete chapter 7 I-N
- CB: Read and complete chapter 17
- CC: Complete notecards for words 700-800
- IR: 30 minutes daily continuous reading
- GB: Read Chapter 8



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Session 9: Math (V) - Data analysis, Statistics, and Probability

In session

- Review writing questions from shared online question log
- Introduction data analysis, statistics, and probability: data analysis, average/median/mode, counting problems, sequences (review), probability (review), overlapping sets (review)

Homework

- MH: Read and complete chapter 10
- PR: Read Math Basics Chapter 7, page 125-131, Complete drill 5; Read Math Techniques Chapter 8, page 147-160, Complete Drill 3.
- BR: Read and complete chapter 7 O-R
- KP: Read and complete chapter 6
- CC: Complete notecards for words 900-1000
- IR: 30 minutes daily continuous reading
- GB: Read Chapter 9

Session 10: Practice Testing (I)

In session

- Review math questions from shared online question log
- Math Review (topics TBD)

Homework

- MH: Test one (untimed)
- BR: Test one (untimed)
- CC: Complete notecards for words 1000-1100
- IR: 30 minutes daily continuous reading
- GB: Read Chapter 10

Session 11: Critical Reading (II) - Advanced techniques

In session

- Review practice tests

Homework

- MH: Test two (untimed)
- BR: Test two (untimed)
- CC: Complete notecards for words 1100-1200
- IR: 30 minutes daily continuous reading
- GB: Read Chapter 11



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Session 12: Math (V) - Data analysis, Statistics, and Probability

In session

- Review practice tests

Homework

- MH: Test three (timed)
- BR: Test three (timed)
- CC: Complete notecards for words 1200-1300
- IR: 30 minutes daily continuous reading
- GB: Read Chapter 12

Session 13: Practice Testing (I)

In session

- Review practice tests

Homework

- MH: Test four (timed) Test four and 5 will be online, can download pdf.
- BR: Test four (timed)
- CC: Complete notecards for words 1300-1400
- IR: 30 minutes daily continuous reading
- GB: Read Chapter 13

Session 14: Critical Reading (II) - Advanced techniques

In session

- Review practice tests

Homework

- MH: Test five (timed)
- PR: Test one (timed)
- CC: Complete notecards for words 1400-1500
- IR: 30 minutes daily continuous reading
- GB: Read Chapter 14! Done with book!



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Session 15: Math (V) - Data analysis, Statistics, and Probability

In session

- Review practice tests

Homework

- MH: Test three (timed)
- BR: Test three (timed)
- CC: Complete notecards for words 1200-1300
- IR: 30 minutes daily continuous reading
- GB: Read Chapter 12

Session 16: Practice Testing (I)

In session

- Review practice tests

Homework

- CC: Review vocabulary cards
- IR: 30 minutes daily continuous reading