SHSAT

Verbal Prep Book To Improve Your Score In Two Months

The Most Effective Strategies for Mastering Scrambled Paragraphs, Logical Reasoning and Reading Comprehension on the SHSAT

By Larry Ronaldson M.S. and Deirdre Storck B.A.

Edited by Dr. Steve Warner
Legal Notice

This book is copyright 2016 with all rights reserved. It is illegal to copy, distribute, or create derivative works from this book in whole or in part or to contribute to the copying, distribution, or creating of derivative works of this book.

We would like to thank James Frazier for editing the book; Rick Barrett for his essays on The Zone and Push Hands; Tom Speedling for his many insights; USA Ultimate for allowing us to use some of their sentences from their web page on Ultimate Frisbee.
BOOKS FROM THE GET 800 COLLECTION

28 SAT Math Lessons to Improve Your Score in One Month
   Beginner Course
   Intermediate Course
   Advanced Course
320 SAT Math Problems Arranged by Topic and Difficulty Level
320 SAT Math Subject Test Problems Arranged by Topic and Difficulty Level
   Level 1 Test
   Level 2 Test
320 ACT Math Problems Arranged by Topic and Difficulty Level
320 AP Calculus AB Problems Arranged by Topic and Difficulty Level
320 AP Calculus BC Problems Arranged by Topic and Difficulty Level
320 GRE Math Problems Arranged by Topic and Difficulty Level
The 32 Most Effective SAT Math Strategies
SAT Prep Official Study Guide Math Companion
Vocabulary Builder
Algebra Handbook for Gifted Middle School Students
555 Math IQ Questions for Middle School Students
555 Geometry Problems for High School Students
New SAT Math Problems arranged by Topic and Difficulty Level
New SAT Verbal Prep Book for Reading and Writing Mastery
SHSAT Verbal Prep Book to Improve Your Score in Two Months

CONNECT WITH DR. STEVE WARNER

www.facebook.com/SATPrepGet800
www.youtube.com/TheSATMathPrep
www.twitter.com/SATPrepGet800
www.linkedin.com/in/DrSteveWarner
www.pinterest.com/SATPrepGet800
plus.google.com/+SteveWarnerPhD
SHSAT Verbal Prep Book To Improve Your Score In Two Months

The Most Effective Strategies for Mastering Scrambled Paragraphs, Logical Reasoning and Reading Comprehension on the SHSAT

Larry Ronaldson  Deirdre Storck

Edited by Dr. Steve Warner

© 2016, All Rights Reserved
# Table of Contents

**Actions to Complete Before You Read This Book**

- Introduction: The SHSAT
  - What to Expect...
  - How Is This Test Different?
  - A Problem...
  - Getting into a Particular School
  - Do I Lose Points for Guessing Wrong Answers?

**Scrambled Paragraphs**

- Strategies
- Transition Words
- Easy Scrambled Paragraphs – Level 1-2 on the Exam
- Medium Scrambled Paragraphs – Level 3 on the Exam
- Difficult Scrambled Paragraphs – Levels 4-5 on the Exam
- Answers for Scrambled Paragraphs
- Practice Tests for Scrambled Paragraphs

**Logical Reasoning**

- Understanding Premises and Making Valid Conclusions
- Question Type I: IF \( \rightarrow \) THEN Statements
  - Practice Questions: IF \( \rightarrow \) THEN
  - Answers: IF \( \rightarrow \) THEN
  - Explanations: IF \( \rightarrow \) THEN
- Missing Premise
  - Practice Questions: Missing Premise
  - Answers: Missing Premise
  - Explanations: Missing Premise
- Question Type II: Nonsense Words
  - Practice Questions: Nonsense Words
  - Answers: Nonsense Words
  - Explanations: Nonsense Words
- Question Type III: Relationships
  - Practice Questions: Relationships
  - Answers: Relationships
  - Explanations: Relationships
- Question Type IV: Ordering
  - Practice Questions: Ordering
  - Answers: Ordering
  - Explanations: Ordering

**Logical Reasoning Practice Exam**

**Reading**

- How to Read the Passages
- Reading Practice Passages
Actions to Complete After You Have Read This Book 153

About the Authors 154

Books from the Get 800 Collection 155
The SHSAT (Specialized High Schools Admission Test) is a test taken by 33,000 students each year in New York City. Each borough has between one and three schools which are classified as specialized schools. Each of these schools requires students to sit for this two-and-a-half-hour exam in late October in order to qualify. Some schools are much more competitive than others, with only 1-2% of applicants being accepted for admission. Since it is so competitive, even a slight advantage that a course or book can offer you is very important. The examples, explanations and worksheets provided in this book have been carefully worked out to give you the extra advantage that you will need. This means that you have to be very diligent in using the book. Do not skip over sections, and you may even want to go through some sections more than once if you find yourself struggling the first time through.

This test looks very different from every test you have taken in the past, and in fact it is very different. There is a verbal section which has 45 questions with a suggested time of 75 minutes. The math section has 50 questions, also with a suggested time of 75 minutes. A student who is very strong in either math or verbal questions can go through one of these sections in less time giving him or her more time for the other section. For example, a student that can complete one of these sections in 65 minutes will have 85 minutes for the other section. This would give those students a distinct advantage, of course.

The verbal section consists of scrambled paragraphs, logical reasoning and reading comprehension. The math section covers topics such as arithmetic, algebra, geometry, probability and statistics. The answer choices for questions alternate between ABCDE and FGHJK.

What to Expect

You may find yourself working hard without showing any improvement at first. Many students experience this and then give up. Do not be one of them. You will improve in spurts rather than here and there. It will be a series of epiphanies that result in that AHA moment. Once you really get one of the logical reasoning types of questions, it will be yours for good. You will no longer have any fear that you will miss one of those. That will build your confidence – one of the most important factors for performing well on any exam. If you step to the plate with full belief that you will hit the ball well, then that is much more likely to actually happen. If you approach the plate in fear and without believing in yourself, you might as well not show up.
How Is This Test Different?

Briefly, this test asks students in almost every question to think on a level that most other tests seldom do. The test consists of many types of questions that you may be unfamiliar with. For instance, in the first section, you are given the first sentence in a paragraph (placed correctly) and then the next five sentences are rearranged or scrambled. Your job is to arrange these sentences in the most logical, coherent way so that they would be the same as they were before they were scrambled. This can be very difficult at first, but once you learn the technique and practice it, it will feel more like playing a game – and that is exactly the mindset we want you to have. Our minds function much better when we are playing games and having fun. We therefore encourage you to see this as entertainment both when practicing and when taking the actual test. The test will be throwing roadblocks in your way and you need to find ways to overcome them.

The test also asks you to solve ten logic questions. This is something that many of you have not dealt with before. Once you learn the techniques that Deirdre has given you, most of these questions will seem very doable.

A Problem

This test has been historically one of the most guarded tests in America. Once it is administered, all copies of the exam are collected and placed back in a vault. Consequently, very few copies of actual exams have ever been made public. This gives students who want to practice actual tests very little opportunity to do so. All students in public schools can ask their counselors for a copy of the Specialized High Schools Student Handbook. This is free and can be obtained by non-public school students by contacting their local public junior high school or by calling the department of education directly. It contains two full exams to practice on. We recommend using these tests towards the end of your preparation so that you can get comfortable with the way they ask questions.

Getting into a Particular School

Each school has a cut-off score for admission. The most difficult schools, together with their cut-off scores are:

- Stuyvesant – 565
- Bronx High School of Science – 535
- Staten Island Tech – 510

Although each school has a cut-off number, these numbers are not written in stone. They vary each year depending on the difficulty level of the test, how many students applied to the school, and the number of seats they have available. If you choose a school as your first choice and you get in, you must go to that school. If you do not make your first choice, then you can go to your second or third choice, etc. Make sure you get your application in by early September.

The following are estimates of how many questions you have to answer correctly to get into some of the top schools:
- Stuyvesant – 89-92
- Bronx High School of Science – 78-82
- Staten Island Tech – 75-78

These numbers also vary from year to year.

**Do I Lose Points for Guessing Wrong Answers?**

No. There are no deductions for wrong answers. However, we strongly recommend that you DO NOT rush through the test. Take your time on each question. Some of our students use a strategy of just doing the first 80-90% of questions in a particular section and then going on to the next section. They then go back to those sections where they left questions out in order of how well they usually score on them. They do this because the hardest questions on the test are always the final few in each section. They know that they can get the easy and medium questions correct as long as they are careful, so they don’t rush to the hard ones. This ensures that they have enough time to do all the easy and medium questions in both sections. Some students don’t like this strategy because they don’t like to leave questions out at all. However, unless you always finish with lots of time to spare, this is a solid technique to use.
There are five scrambled paragraphs on the SHSAT and they always appear first. For each paragraph, you will be given a topic sentence followed by five sentences that have been scrambled. Your job is to put these five sentences into a logical, coherent, grammatically correct order. You will use the letters Q, R, S, T and U to indicate the correct ordering of the sentences. Each sentence that is ordered correctly will earn you two points instead of the one point allotted for each of the other questions on the exam.

Scrambled paragraphs are, for most test takers, the most difficult part of the exam. This is why we ask you to consider in your testing strategy to do them last instead of first. The advantage is that, if you do not get to them, you have not spent your time on the hardest part of the test, which you may have had trouble with anyway. The disadvantage is that you will be less tired at the beginning of the exam and might have a clearer head then. Another option is to swap out the logic questions with the scrambled paragraphs. Use the logic questions, which are the most fun anyway, to rev up your mind and then go right into the scrambled paragraphs. By the time you finish reading this section of the book, you may get so good at these that you can just start with them right from the get-go.

**Strategies**

1. **Link into couples.** As you read through the sentences, you will notice that logically one sentence must follow another. You do this by observing that words like “this, that, these, those, them,” etc. are used, but the term they are connected to has not been introduced yet. If you see the antecedent (the word that “this, that, these, those” words refer to) in a sentence, then that word must come before the other sentence.

   **Example:** Additionally, they promote good health. **Sports** are a lot of fun.

   It is easy to see that the first sentence must follow the second one as “they” refers to sports. There are lots of reasons that sentences follow each other. Cause and effect, chronological order, and general to specific are the most common reasons.

   We will provide you with a list of transitional words, which will allow you to make these connections more easily. As you see these connections, write the letters in the right-hand margin. For example, if you notice that sentence Q follows sentence T, just write TQ in the margin. Soon enough you will have 2-3 of these couples in the margin and you will begin to see which couple should precede the others.

   **Example:** Roger *Federer*, the greatest tennis player ever, uses a brilliant combination of power and finesse coupled with ballet-dancer movement to overwhelm his opponents. **This** combination has allowed him to win 18 majors, more than anyone in history.

   In the above example the sentences are already in a logical order. **Your job is always to find that order.**

2. **Use your pen or pencil to find a word or phrase in one sentence that connects it either chronologically, by cause and effect or by general to specific.** Then, circle it and draw a line to the antecedent or the phrase from another sentence that must follow it. Observe the sample connections and writing in the margin on the first 6 easy problems beginning on page 13.
Words Indicating Emphasis

again        truly        for this reason

Others

this, that, these, those, them

Personal pronouns: he, she, they, its, etc.

Easy Scrambled Paragraphs – Levels 1-2 on the Exam

Scrambled Paragraphs (Easy) 1-2

1. Table Tennis seems like such an insignificant sport, but in 1971 it played an important part in the cold war between China and the United States.

   ___ Q. Table tennis no longer seemed so “insignificant.”
   ___ R. That year the US table tennis team was invited on an all-expense paid trip to play in China.
   ___ S. The New York Times called the event the “pong heard round the world” and the name “ping-pong diplomacy” was born.
   ___ T. They were the first group of Americans to be allowed into mainland China since the communist take-over in 1949.
   ___ U. It was shortly followed by a visit to China by President Richard Nixon.

2. With its rich pungency and smell, garlic has been both extolled and vilified during its 4000 year history.

   ___ Q. Later the Greeks and Romans used it for dog bites and bladder infections as well as cures for asthma and leprosy.
   ___ R. The ancient Egyptians used it as medicine for more than twenty different ailments including heart disease and tumors.
   ___ S. The Israeli slaves when fleeing the Egyptians for the Promised Land complained of not having garlic.
   ___ T. Although it is sometimes referred to as “the stinking rose” and certainly its smell is off-putting to many, it still thrives today with even a garlic ice cream available in San Francisco.
   ___ U. They even fed it to their slaves to give them more strength to build the pyramids.

Explanations

1. By skimming along the first third of each sentence quickly, we can easily see that Q (no longer) and T (They) make unlikely first choices. R (That) is tempting to also select as no good, but it does refer to a year and a year is mentioned in the primary sentence, so we should hold onto it. We can get rid of S because it refers to an event and no event has been mentioned so far. That leaves just R and U as possible first sentences to follow the primary. R is a fairly easy choice as U refers to something specific having happened and there has been no mention of that yet.
We place R as our first sentence and now start looking for couplings, sentences that must follow each other. Since no other sentence mentions the team other than T, we can assume that RT will be a coupling. That was a nice, easy start, but now we have our first problem. There are no words at the end of one sentence and then a repeat of paraphrasing of those words at the beginning of another sentence. This happens quite commonly, but not in this example. As we practice these paragraphs, we will start to develop a sense of the type of comment or sentence that concludes a paragraph. Look at the three we have left. Do any jump out at you? Eventually, a sentence like Q, which brings back a key word from the primary sentence to add coherence to the paragraph, will do just that for you. So, now all we have to do is decide between U and S. Since S refers to his visit, it must follow U. Thus, we have RTUSQ.

1. Table Tennis seems like such an insignificant sport, but in 1971 it played an important part in the cold war between China and the United States.

   Q. Table tennis no longer seemed so “insignificant.”
   R. That year the US table tennis team was invited on an all-expense paid trip to play in China.
   S. The New York Times called the event the “pong heard round the world” and the name “ping-pong diplomacy” was born.
   T. They were the first group of Americans to be allowed into mainland China since the communist take-over in 1949.
   U. It was shortly followed by a visit to China by President Richard Nixon.

2. In trying to find our first sentence, we can knock off Q (Later) and U (They) right off just by holding our hand over the right side of the page again. Each of these words informs us that there had to be a prior mention. If you sense that your paragraph might be chronological, start with that right away. Here we can start with the ancient Egyptians (R) and then go to a further comment that (They) fed it to their slaves (U). Then, The Israeli slaves (S) would logically follow U. Later (Q) would naturally follow and then we can pull it all together by bringing it up to the present day with the comment from T. This was fairly easy. The first three, in fact, are usually straightforward.

This is the end of this free sample. To order this book from Amazon click the following image.