



Assess Content & Time Management Issues

Not every student is alike. Some don't have effective strategies for solving questions, and others run out of time before the exam is complete. A key part of this course design is to assess particular student weaknesses and address them. For example, students should record a timed score and an extra time score for every timed exam going forward -- assuming the student takes more than the allotted time. Comparing results will be an insightful exercise in most cases. Did you run out of time before completing Exam 1? If given all the time in the world, did you improve your score or are there underlying content and strategy issues to address?

If you score 80% or better on Exam 1, you are in an excellent position to excel at the SHSAT exam. You demonstrate an ability to comprehend the content and deliver accurate responses under exam-like time constraints. If not, it is worth assessing whether your issues are broadly time related or content issues.

If your extra time results are a substantial improvement for Exam 1, it is likely you have significant time management issues. Are you using the best passage reading strategy for you in the reading section, for example? Does it take you too much time to get the answer to each question? Time management issues are not always the first to address, and they do not improve overnight in many cases. However, students will have to get to the core of the problem to excel on the SHSAT or any standardized exam. As a result, you will see various time management related suggestions throughout the course. For example, students will experiment with different reading techniques in the course to identify their best strategy. Many books will highlight different strategies like skimming text or marking passages or reading questions first, and students too frequently never experiment with the different options. If you follow this course, you will methodically practice different techniques and assess for yourself -- or with the aid of an instructor -- your best reading strategy.

If your exam 1 timed and extra time scores are similar, and below your target goals (a target percentile score of close to 70% is commensurate with the cut-off scaled scores of specialized high schools), then chances are you have strategy and content issues that no amount of extra test time will overcome. Fortunately, additional preparation time will help overcome these issues. Your main goal of analysis throughout the course will be to identify those problem areas and address your weaknesses.