

PSAT/NMSQT Percentiles and Mean Scores

can be used to compare students' performance with that of juniors and sophomores.

Points to Note

- Percentiles indicate the percentage of students whose scores fall below each specified score.
- On the score report, percentiles for juniors compare their performance with that of other juniors who took the test. For sophomores or younger students, percentiles compare their performance with that of sophomores.
- Percentiles are based on the critical reading, math, and writing skills scores earned by a sample of college-bound juniors or sophomores who took the PSAT/NMSQT in 2005.
- The *mean* score is the statistic that describes the *average* performance of a group.
- The *standard deviation* is a measure of the variability of a set of scores around their mean. If the test scores cluster tightly around the mean score, as they do when the group tested is relatively homogeneous, the standard deviation is smaller than it would be for a more diverse group.

Reliability
shows how consistently students would earn similar scores in repeated testings.

	Reliability Coefficient	Average SEM
Critical Reading	0.87	3.9
Math	0.89	3.7
Writing Skills	0.85	4.0

Points to Note

Data are based on a sample of sophomores and juniors who took the PSAT/NMSQT in the previous year (2004 Wednesday and Saturday forms).

- A *reliability coefficient* helps to show expected fluctuation in scores if a student takes a test more than once. The higher the reliability coefficient, the smaller the fluctuation of scores across repeated testings. A reliability coefficient of 1.00 would indicate perfect reliability, or no expected fluctuation.
- PSAT/NMSQT scores should be interpreted as ranges rather than points. The *standard error of measurement* (SEM) in the table above indicates that a student who took different forms of the test under identical conditions would be likely to earn scores within 4 points of one another.

JUNIORS			
Score	Percentiles		
	Critical Reading	Math	Writing Skills
80	99+	99+	99+
79	99+	99+	99+
78	99+	99+	99
77	99+	99	99
76	99	99	98
75	99	99	98
74	99	98	98
73	99	98	97
72	98	97	97
71	98	97	96
70	97	96	95
69	97	95	94
68	96	95	94
67	95	93	92
66	95	92	92
65	94	92	90
64	93	89	90
63	91	87	87
62	89	84	85
61	87	84	84
60	86	81	82
59	84	78	81
58	82	75	78
57	80	75	74
56	77	71	73
55	73	67	71
54	70	63	67
53	68	62	62
52	65	58	62
51	61	55	58
50	58	51	53
49	54	47	49
48	51	43	48
47	46	42	44
46	43	38	40
45	40	35	36
44	37	31	32
43	32	28	30
42	29	25	27
41	26	22	23
40	22	19	20
39	21	16	16
38	18	16	15
37	16	14	12
36	13	11	7
35	11	10	5
34	9	8	4
33	7	6	3
32	7	6	2
31	5	4	1
30	4	4	1
29	4	3	1
28	3	3	1
27	2	2	1
26	2	2	1
25	2	1	1
24	1	1	1
23	1	1	1
22	1	1	1
21	1	1	1
20	1	1	1
Mean score	47.6	49.3	49.4
Standard deviation	10.9	11.3	10.7
Number of juniors in sample	770,103	770,103	770,103

SOPHOMORES			
Score	Percentiles		
	Critical Reading	Math	Writing Skills
80	99+	99+	99+
79	99+	99+	99+
78	99+	99+	99+
77	99+	99+	99+
76	99+	99+	99+
75	99+	99+	99+
74	99+	99	99+
73	99+	99	99
72	99	99	99
71	99	99	99
70	99	99	98
69	99	98	98
68	99	98	98
67	98	98	97
66	98	97	97
65	98	97	96
64	97	96	96
63	96	94	94
62	95	93	93
61	94	93	92
60	94	91	91
59	92	89	90
58	91	87	88
57	90	87	86
56	88	84	85
55	85	82	83
54	84	79	80
53	82	78	77
52	79	75	76
51	76	72	73
50	74	69	70
49	71	65	66
48	68	62	65
47	64	61	61
46	61	57	58
45	58	53	54
44	55	50	49
43	50	46	47
42	47	43	44
41	43	39	39
40	39	35	35
39	37	31	30
38	34	31	28
37	30	27	24
36	26	23	15
35	22	20	11
34	20	17	9
33	16	13	6
32	16	13	4
31	12	10	2
30	9	10	1
29	9	7	1
28	6	7	1
27	6	4	1
26	5	4	1
25	5	3	1
24	3	3	1
23	3	2	1
22	2	2	1
21	2	2	1
20	1	1	1
Mean score	42.7	44.1	45.0
Standard deviation	10.7	11.1	9.8
Number of sophomores in sample	715,230	715,230	715,230