

# SUMMER 2022 NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 3

WHERE **AMBITION**  
MEETS **ACHIEVEMENT**

## WEEK 5 & 6 HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Many test prep students started closing in or hitting their target scores.
- 2 HS honor students at this point have covered 50% of the curriculum they will encounter in their upcoming school year *or more!*
- 3 Teachers pushed students to keep their momentum going during these last few weeks.

### TEST PREP | Milestones & Achievements

<b>SAT 1500 Advanced</b>	During weeks 5 and 6, students focused on execution and aimed for a raw score of 58/58 on practice tests. Students were taught strategies to avoid careless mistakes and best approaches for answering questions.
<b>SAT 1400 &amp; 1500</b>	By the end of week 5, students have taken 13 simulation tests!
<b>SAT Foundation</b>	Students started taking tests this week. On their very first test Foundation averaged an improvement of 70-80 points on the English section of the test from their evaluation score.
<b>SAT Core Reading &amp; Writing</b>	In weeks 5 and 6, students have learned about how to tackle Purpose, Text Structure and Central Idea questions for reading, while also learning more about punctuation and pronouns for writing.
<b>Exam Prep 8</b>	Students have just finished reviewing their second simulation tests, which were their first ISEEs. They have taken their BCA Placement Tests. On the English side, students are delving into essay writing components and independent reading analysis.

## Welcome to our Summer Newsletter!

During week 5 & 6 of summer, many students hit major milestones while truly transforming into top performers! Read below to get up-to-date information on your child's summer courses.

### MEK REVIEW SUMMER NEWSLETTER

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ACT BOOT CAMP  
GOOGLE REVIEW, \$50 MEK CREDIT  
SUMMER NEWSLETTERS  
FALL 2022 BCA/BT PREP

## HIGH SCHOOL HONORS & AP COURSE PREP | Topics Covered

<b>AP Calculus AB</b>	Midterm: Review of the 1st half of the course Integration	<b>Honors Pre-Calculus</b>	Solving Trigonometric Equations More Trigonometric Identities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sum/difference of the angles formula</li> <li>• Double angle formula</li> <li>• Power reducing formula</li> <li>• Half angle formula</li> <li>• Product-to-sum/sum-to-product formulas</li> </ul>
<b>AP Physics 2</b>	Electric Force Conduction/Induction Transfer of Charge Superposition Principle	<b>Honors Biology</b>	Homeostasis and Cell Transport Cell Theory/Structure and Function Photosynthesis
<b>Honors Algebra II</b>	Simplifying and Solving Radical and Rational Expressions Exponential and Logarithmic Functions Polynomial Functions	<b>Honors Physics</b>	Circular Motion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Period/frequency</li> <li>• Tangential velocity</li> <li>• Centripetal acceleration</li> <li>• Centripetal force</li> <li>• Vertical circular motion</li> </ul> Gravitation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Force of gravity</li> <li>• Gravitational field</li> <li>• Orbit, orbital velocity, orbital period</li> </ul>
<b>Honors Geometry</b>	Properties of Parallelograms Special Quadrilaterals Similar Triangles	<b>Honors Chemistry</b>	Polyatomic Ions Naming Compounds Stoichiometry, Quantitative Analysis Lewis Dot Diagrams
<b>Honors Analysis I</b>	Complex Roots in Factoring Logarithm, Natural Logs Exponential Functions		
<b>Honors Analysis II</b>	Matrices Sequences and Series Counting Principle and Probability		
<b>Honors Advanced Analysis II</b>	Vector Math Conic Sections Sequences and Series		

## MEK LEARNING CIRCLES | Milestones & Achievements

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### **Critical Reading Circles**

By the end of Week 6, students have read and analyzed 11 articles/stories/poems, and they have written 11 5-paragraph literary analysis essays with a focus on identifying the main themes of the texts and the ways they apply to the world and the individual. They have also been exercising their own creativity by attempting to incorporate figurative language in their own writing, especially when analyzing poetry. Students in grades 7 and 8 are now well-versed at identifying and answering the different types of multiple choice reading questions such as basic fact, inference, main idea, and vocabulary.

Karin S. and Justin L. both scored a 6/6 on their essays! Way to go, Karin and Justin!

### **Writing Circles**

By the end of Week 6, the students have completed the fifth full essay cycle and half of the sixth cycle for a total of 11 essays, as well as 11 grammar lessons. At this point, they are able to form more detailed body paragraphs that include relevant examples and explanations and use effective transitions to improve the flow of their work. They have written explanatory, persuasive, descriptive, and narrative essays and helped their classmates clarify their wording and include more details through peer revision exercises.

### **Math: Operations & Number Sense Circles**

Students in Grade 5 completed unit 3 and cumulative test 3, and completed more than 350 problems on homework and in-class assignments. While students in Grade 6 completed unit 2 and cumulative test 2, and completed more than 300 problems on homework and in-class assignments. In both classes, students also began learning about and working with algebraic expressions.

### **Math: Problem-Solving Math Circles**

Students in Grade 5 completed unit 3 and cumulative test 3 and completed more than 330 problems on homework and in-class assignments. Students also began learning about and working with algebraic expressions.

### **Non-Fiction Reading**

The students have given five presentations on the following topics: lead poisoning, immigration, book bannings, teen mental health and the climate crisis. The students are working on their presentations for the topic, "Covid in Our Time." Additionally, the students have been steadily completing independent research on their final presentation topics and stating their progress.

### **Advanced Verbal Reasoning**

Students have learned various techniques to help them answer reading and analogy questions. They have learned techniques for basic fact, inference, main idea, purpose/function, tone, and vocab-in-context questions. They have also learned techniques for synonym/antonym, degrees/extremes, and cause/effect analogies. They have also completed 5 vocabulary quizzes, a midterm cumulative reading/verbal quiz, and they have learned one hundred words in total. Additionally, they have completed five in-class reading drills and 11 reading and verbal homework drills.

### **MAPC**

Students reviewed the first half of the course material and learned about subsets and factorial and counting.

# STUDENT OF THE WEEK

## HIGH SCHOOL HONORS



**VIVIAN HU**  
9<sup>TH</sup> GRADE  
HS PHYSICS

*“Vivian participates very well in class, answering questions and showing active listening. She also performs very well on homework assignments, making sure to show all her work and can communicate exactly how she got to her answer.”*

- Minjae Park, High School Physics Teacher

Out of over 600 students, Vivian was chosen by her teachers to be our High School Student of the Week because of her participation in class, hard work, and overall performance.

### Way to go Vivian!

Let's learn a little bit more about Vivian:

#### What do you like about your MEK classes so far?

In courses such as the one I am taking now, I enjoy learning in a smaller group where it is easier for me personally to participate during the lectures. Also, my teacher teaches at a comfortable speed and explains complex concepts thoroughly which helps prevent confusion.

#### What have you learned so far?

So far, my peers and I have learned about kinematics and dynamics which involve concepts of motion and forces that act on objects both on and outside of Earth.

#### What colleges or field of study are you interested in pursuing?

Though I have not seriously thought about what field of study I plan to pursue or what my passion is, one subject that I would say I am pretty invested in is science.

#### What do you like to do outside of MEK? Any hobbies or activities that you love?

Outside of MEK classes I enjoy visiting the library and painting various subjects around me all while listening to music.

## HIGH SCHOOL ADMISSIONS TEST PREP



**ARTUR FERREIRA**  
8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE  
SSAT/ISEE 8

*“Artur is always attentive and ready to learn and challenge himself and the material we are learning. He is an excellent example of a student that makes the most out of class, and is engaged and ready at all times.”*

- Iulia Boboc, SSAT/ISEE 8 English Teacher

Out of over 600 students, Artur was chosen by his teachers to be Student of the Week because of his consistent effort, dedication, and great participation.

### Way to go Artur!

Let's learn a little bit more about Artur:

#### What do you like about your MEK classes so far?

I like that my classes prepare me for the SSAT and ISEE while challenging me to learn new things.

#### What have you learned so far?

I have learned about various analogy types, the multiple strategies for different reading questions, and quick ways to solve math problems.

#### What school subjects are you most interested in? What about those subjects interests you?

My favorite subjects are Math and Science. I am interested in Math because I like problem-solving and learning complicated equations. I am interested in Science because I am curious about how and why things work.

#### What do you like to do outside of MEK? Any hobbies or activities that you love?

Outside of MEK, I enjoy playing sports and practicing the violin. I compete in Triathlons, and I play Ice Hockey.

# STUDENT OF THE WEEK

## MEK LEARNING CIRCLES



**EDWARD SHIN**  
5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE  
MLC CRITICAL READING

*“Edward is an exemplary student who has shown dedication to our summer class. His scores are continually improving while always turning in assignments on time. He participates enthusiastically, even while on vacation and joining virtual classes with a 13 hour time difference.”*

- Rebekah Shore, MLC Math Teacher

Out of over 600 students, Edward was chosen by his teachers to be Student of the Week because of his outstanding performance and high engagement.

### Way to go Edward!

Let's learn a little bit more about Edward:

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#### What do you like about your MEK classes so far?

I like the classes and my teachers because they are very kind. My teachers are very good teachers. The classes are also sometimes hard, but they are fun too. I am really glad that I have good teachers.

#### What have you learned so far?

I have learned and reviewed many things. In math I reviewed things such as multiplying decimals and dividing fractions. In writing class I learned things that I didn't know. I found the class difficult, but I did well. It was harder to do a class in Korea. In Korea, I did the class from 11:30 to 1:00. I am honored to be the student of the week when I had a hard time.

#### What is your favorite subject in school?

In school, I am interested in math and science. In math sometimes when it is hard, I have a feeling that I don't want to do it, but I have the other feeling that makes me happy when I do the math. It is the feeling that I want to do it, and the problems also makes me interested and I want to solve it. In science, I am interested in space and the animals such as living things. I like these because my dream is to become a space scientist. If I keep learning, I can make my dream come true.

#### What do you like to do outside of MEK?

My hobbies are reading books and making LEGO's. It is really fun to read books and I can learn many things. So my plan of reading books are reading different kind of books. I have a ton of Legos because I like to collect them as well.

# TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

KATHY KIM



Kathy Kim, MEK English Teacher,  
Preschool Educator, Crafter

Kathy Kim is an English teacher at MEK, who teaches MLC Writing for Grades 4-6 and is currently teaching Critical Reading for Grade 6 this summer.

**The following is an interview between her and our content writer:**

**Interviewer:** *What is your favorite part of teaching at MEK?*

**Kim:** I am really proud of when my students are able to take what they learn in class and apply it to their writing independently. I love seeing my students progress.

I also really like the physical space of the Closter campus. It's newly renovated and is super comfortable, private, and clean.

**Interviewer:** *Do you teach outside of MEK?*

**Kim:** I work at a preschool with children between the ages of 3-5. They are a pretty mixed group, but they are very funny.

**Interviewer:** *How long have you been doing that for?*

**Kim:** I started working at the preschool and at MEK in 2017.

**Interviewer:** *What inspired you to become a teacher?*

**Kim:** When I was 5, it was my dream to become a teacher. I used to pretend to be a teacher all the time when I played. But as I was going through school, I actually found that I didn't want to pursue that path.

After college, while I was working at a home decor company, I started volunteering at my church. I taught Sunday School and helped out with events and with the youth group, which is when I realized that I loved working with kids. I found the experience really fulfilling.

Being able to make kids feel cared for is what propelled me to pursue a career in teaching.

**Interviewer:** *Keeping younger kids interested in the lesson can be challenging. What's your key to student engagement in the classroom?*

**Kim:** Children in younger grades are energetic, and they are trying to figure themselves out. During my in-person classes I stand up and walk around. This makes it easier for me to monitor them. But no matter if I am with them in-person or in the virtual classroom, I engage them in the way I talk to them. I like to use humor and to joke around with them. This helps them relate to me, and also helps them to see their errors in a way that feels safe and comfortable.

**Interviewer:** *What does it take to be successful in an English class?*

**Kim:** I think attitude is important. As a student, you need to be open minded and understanding. You may be a decent writer, but there is always more to learn. For example, I sometimes get students who think they know everything, and then, after a class or two, they realize they don't. I have spent a lot of time writing, and there's still more for me to learn!

Another way to succeed in an English class is to understand the basics of writing. It takes repetition. Students need to repeatedly use the 5 paragraph essay structure. Once they have the basics mastered, then they can be creative and subvert the rules.

I always tell them that the strategies they learn in class may seem pointless, but these strategies are actually helping their brains build essential skills. There's a bigger picture. For example, when it comes to grammar, grammar isn't just about knowing how to use a comma or semicolon, it's about understanding basic structure, which helps your brain develop foundational skills that lead to later success.

## TEACHER SPOTLIGHT | KATHY KIM (CONT'D)

**Interviewer:** *How do you teach students to have confidence in their writing?*

**Kim:** I tell students that their scores don't correlate to their intelligence. I make sure to explain the grading parameters and expectations for essay writing very clearly, but I also explain that a low grade doesn't mean that they are a bad writer. A low grade on an essay simply means that you need to take into account what you're putting into your writing. Your writing needs to show the effort that you put into it.

For example, if a student earns a 3 on an essay, the grade does not reflect on him/her as a writer. It's that they simply didn't include one of the essential components of the essay. Alternatively, if a student is scoring a 4 or 5 on the essays, and he/she starts to score lower, it's because I want the student's writing to mature and because he/she is ready to add to his/her writing through compositional risks, such as using figurative language.

**Interviewer:** *Do you have a favorite writing assignment that you enjoy giving your students?*

**Kim:** I like when the older students have a chance to write about their favorite things. For an essay about their favorite place, two students actually wrote about their homes. The students did a beautiful job writing about how they felt safe and protected and how their parents made their homes feel comfortable. Another student wrote about his town.

I like the writing assignments that have to do with students talking about their life experiences. One assignment had students writing about whether it was best to focus on the past, present, or future. That prompt was very thought provoking and garnered good discussion.

**Interviewer:** *Any favorite class readings you enjoy teaching?*

**Kim:** I like the poetry assignments. They are a little different. We just did our first poem today. The students didn't understand why the poem was so short or how we were going to read it. They were confused, so I had to explain to them about figurative language. These are my favorite kinds of readings.

**Interviewer:** *What do you like to do outside of MEK?*

**Kim:** I love to make crafts. I even have a craft room at home. Recently, I made the lettering on coasters for a housewarming. I also emboss greeting cards, which I have sold on my Etsy shop. Other than that, I enjoy volunteering at church where I choreograph the worship dances.

**Interviewer:** *What book did you love when you were younger?*

**Kim:** When I was in 5th grade, I read *The Westing Game* by Ellen Raskin. The book is a mystery, and I thought it pieced together really well.

# TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

REBEKAH SHORE



Rebekah Shore, MEK Math Teacher, Private School Educator, International Non-Profit Volunteer

Rebekah Shore is a Math teacher and tutor at MEK, who teaches MLC Operations and Number Sense for Grades 5 and 6 and MLC Problem Solving Math for Grade 5. She also tutors for MLC Math and ISEE Prep.

**The following is an interview between her and our content writer:**

**Interviewer:** *What is your favorite part of teaching at MEK?*

**Shore:** One of my favorite parts of teaching at MEK is the curriculum. It's well structured and very thought out. And I think the pacing of the content is wonderful. As a teacher, I really like the consistency of using the same curriculum every year. Because of that consistency, my lessons get better each time I teach the curriculum since I am able to anticipate how well the students will understand the lesson based on my experience with the content.

Outside of curriculum, I love seeing and working with the same students year after year. This summer, I have some students who I taught last summer. It's wonderful to watch them make progress in their studies.

**Interviewer:** *What inspired you to become a teacher?*

**Shore:** My teachers in elementary, middle, and high school inspired me to become a teacher. I had many phenomenal teachers who made class fun and who left lasting

impressions on me. I really respected my math teachers for making math class enjoyable. They never stopped trying to find new ways to make math fun and easy, even when the content was tough. I was intrigued by the challenge of making math fun for students.

**Interviewer:** *Do you teach outside of MEK?*

**Shore:** I've been teaching middle and high school math at a private school in White Plains, New York for the last five years.

**Interviewer:** *What's your key to student engagement in the classroom?*

**Shore:** My main strategy to help engage students is to give each student personalized attention and praise. I make sure to acknowledge when students do something really well in front of the other students. I've found that this boosts their confidence in their math skills and is a strategy that I can employ in both the virtual and in-person classrooms.

Students are motivated when they see one of their peers being praised. They want that praise for themselves. So, it reinforces positive skills both in math and in the classroom. For example, if I praise a student for remembering what we learned in a prior class and applying it to our current lessons, the other students will be inspired to do what that student did.

**Interviewer:** *You mentioned boosting confidence in math. Do you have advice for middle schoolers on becoming successful math students? How do you give students confidence in math?*

**Shore:** It's very important to meet the students where they are skill-wise. As a teacher in a group setting, knowing each students' abilities requires you to pay close attention to and to analyze student scores. That way you are able to give students the extra time and attention they may need. At MEK, we have office hours outside of class where students can meet one-on-one with their teacher for individualized support.

Growth mindset is also essential for becoming confident in math. If you meet students at their current level, whether that's above or below grade level, and give them experiences where they are successful at that level, then you can begin to build up their skills.

## TEACHER SPOTLIGHT | REBEKAH SHORE (CONT'D)

The pacing of the summer curriculum moves quickly. Sometimes it's hard for students to keep up. But if you give them practice with math problems at their current level, they build confidence and persistence.

**Interviewer:** *Persistence is also key for succeeding on tough admissions exams. Do you have any advice for students taking the ISEE?*

**Shore:** Every student, but especially younger students, need to be cognizant and reflective of their progress. Students should be looking at their scores and tracking their progress with each practice test they take. They need to track patterns within their scoring and recognize what's creating those patterns. Then, they need to ask themselves whether or not they are improving and what's causing their scores to go up or down. They can create a plan that addresses the answers to those questions.

For example, if a student is exhausted by the time they get to section four of the ISEE, and that is what's causing their score to be low, they need to think of ways to prevent that test fatigue from occurring. Do they need to take more little mental breaks throughout the first sections of the test? Students need to track and be reflective about their progress, especially younger students.

**Interviewer:** *Where did you go to college?*

**Shore:** I went to a small college on a full scholarship in South Carolina called North Greenville University where I majored in Secondary Mathematics Education. Then, I went to Purdue where I graduated with a Masters in Curriculum and Instruction with a focus in Math.

**Interviewer:** *How did you like going to a small college?*

**Shore:** I loved it! I went to a really big high school. And while I never felt overwhelmed by attending a large high school, I was overwhelmed by the idea of attending a large university. I enjoy being social, so the smaller campus was nice because I was able to get to know my peers on campus better than at a large university. I even tutored math on campus for students taking freshman math.

**Interviewer:** *The size of a school is definitely an important factor in choosing the right college. Do you have any other advice for students applying to college?*

**Shore:** Students applying to college should definitely research schools for the specific program they want to go into. If you know what you want to major in or if you know what program you want to apply to, make sure the school has accreditation in that program or major.

For example, I had to make sure that the education program at my college was accredited within the state and also nationally. So, make sure the license or certification you will graduate with is from a nationally accredited program.

**Interviewer:** *What do you like to do outside of MEK?*

**Shore:** I love doing volunteer work. I'm currently part of an international non-profit where I work with a team on educational initiatives. The non-profit also works on environmental and health initiatives.

**Interviewer:** *What's one of the initiatives you're working on now?*

**Shore:** Currently we are working on an educational initiative to donate book bags and school supplies to students in schools who qualify for free and reduced lunch. This is especially useful for students with a financial need or who have multiple siblings. Our aim is to relieve financial burdens for families and students in need.

# RESOURCES FOR PARENTS & STUDENTS

## WHY YOUR SAT AND ACT SCORES MATTER IN 2022

By Jaehee Ahn, Director of Academic Counseling Services

The importance of SAT and ACT scores is not a thing of the past.

While there are a select number of colleges, or test blind schools, that do not look at test scores, there are far more schools that will take your test scores into account if you submit them.

A strong SAT or ACT score provides a good opportunity for students with less competitive GPAs to provide a separate metric of academic performance. And for students with top GPAs, an SAT or ACT score shows that they can handle rigor on all fronts. Plus, higher test results may get you scholarships from your university or academic program.

We know a high SAT or ACT score can turn a good college application into a great college application. But what else can a top SAT or ACT score do for your college admissions package?

### WHY ARE SAT OR ACT SCORES IMPORTANT TO COLLEGES?

If you've read MEK Review's Top 10 Admission Factors, you know that your college test scores rank second only to your GPA as the most important factor on your college application. This can place a lot of pressure on students to perform well on the SAT or ACT, especially if your top choice is known for being highly competitive or selective.

The college admissions board has a lot of reasons to inquire about your SAT or ACT scores, and not all of them are what you think.

Here are three important reasons why you have to include your test results on your college application:

#### ***REASON #1: Test scores help them review applications faster.***

Scores can make or break whether your application is even reviewed!

The number of students applying to colleges keeps growing every year, even though the number of admissions staff that must review applications stays mostly the same.

This means admission officers have hundreds of applications to review and are looking for quick ways to place applications into the rejection pile. Glancing quickly at test scores is one of the main ways admission officers decide if your application will even receive a serious review.

In fact, according to Forbes magazine's college admissions expert Steve Cohen, "at the very selective colleges and universities, there is a very scary reality: if you don't have a 800/800 [SAT score], you're just not getting on the table."

#### ***REASON #2: High test scores make THEM look good.***

You might think colleges care about test scores because they want to see your aptitude and mastery of high school material.

This is not completely true.

Most colleges report publicly the average SAT and ACT score of their freshmen class. The higher the average the more prestigious they appear.

Colleges care deeply about increasing their reputation and exclusivity, and test scores are a key way they can accomplish this. So much so that even schools that purport to not care about test scores, do care!

This is one of the key reasons schools allow SuperScoring – a score process in which they only formally review your highest score in each section of the SAT or ACT. It's not a kindness, it's so they can report higher average test scores!

It's the same for test-optional schools. Usually, the students who choose to submit test scores are those who scored high. The result? Usually the year after a school becomes test-optional, their average SAT score for incoming freshmen goes up. And consequently, they look good.

#### ***REASON #3: Test score ranges encourage future applications.***

A school's average SAT or ACT score range doesn't tell the whole story.

When colleges report the range of SAT or ACT scores that their freshmen class achieved, they usually give the 25th and 75th percentile. This reflects the average score range for that incoming class.

For example, you might see a university whose entering class had a 25th-75th SAT range of 1300-1500. If you earned a 1330, you might think you have a great shot at acceptance.

In truth, unless you have other outstanding parts of your application, your chances of admission are fairly small.

The bottom half of a school's test score range reflects students with other decisive application factors such as athletics, performing arts, or other special distinctions. For a strong chance, you need to score closer to the 75th percentile.

Why don't colleges make this clear?

They want to encourage many students to apply because the more applicants they have, the more they can reject, and the more their prestige grows.

This is even true of test-optional schools. When a college doesn't require students to submit test scores, the number of applicants increases. However, they do not similarly raise the number of acceptances. The lower acceptance rate (the

## WHY YOUR SAT AND ACT SCORES MATTER IN 2022

percentage of total applicants a school accepts) raises their reputation as “exclusive” and “selective.”

### **KEEP IN MIND: TEST-OPTIONAL COLLEGES DO LOOK AT YOUR SCORES.**

Just because a school is “test-optional” doesn’t mean that they will not look at test scores that are submitted to them.

It simply means, you are not required to submit scores.

Admissions officers are, first and foremost, people. If they see two students who have identical GPAs, but one has submitted high SAT or ACT scores, it is only natural for them to gravitate toward the safer bet.

That’s why, if you submit an SAT or ACT score that corroborates your GPA, your application will be much stronger, as your GPA will have more credibility, and on top of that, you are showing how well you performed in a timed and standardized testing setting.

To reiterate: not submitting a test score will not hurt you. But submitting a high test score will do wonders for your application!

### **HOW CAN YOU BEST PREPARE FOR THE SAT OR ACT?**

As long as your circumstances allow you to, you should definitely take the SAT or ACT.

As you prepare, keep these 3 tips in mind.

#### ***TIP #1. Prepare well and do well on your next test date.***

Being prepared is the key to success on the SAT or ACT. Make sure you use your study sessions to the fullest. Get expert help, take several practice tests, and aim to hit your goal score at least twice on practice tests before you take the official exam.

#### ***TIP #2. Consider more selective colleges if you have strong grades.***

In 2022, the average SAT score was 1060, while the average ACT score was 24.8. This means that the overall applicant pool will likely have a lower average SAT or ACT scores.

This doesn’t mean you should relax. However, this does mean that if you have a less-than-great SAT/ACT score and a high GPA, this may be your opportunity to take your swing at some more selective colleges!

#### ***TIP #3. Research colleges’ unique test policies.***

Some schools have especially unique testing policies. For example, Carnegie Mellon University prefers SAT and ACT scores from after 10th grade, as they believe that test scores from 9th and 10th grade are not accurate markers of student performance.

So when you decide that you want to apply to a school, make sure to look up its specific testing policies to make sure that you have everything you need to apply to it.

### **KEY TAKEAWAY**

Your SAT and ACT scores will provide a college admissions officer with greater reason to believe that your GPA and AP test scores are accurate reflections of the type of student you are, giving them more reason to grant you acceptance!

If you want to boost your admission chances to elite schools check out our ACT Boot Camp! Our expert instructors will lead you through 8 days of intensive lectures and full-length practice ACT exams to help you sharpen your test-taking skills, boost your confidence, and reach that 36!

# RESOURCES FOR PARENTS & STUDENTS

## SAT RECOMMENDED READING LIST

By Rachel Erwin, Director of Exam Prep English

For many students, the reading section of the SAT can be a formidable undertaking.

The passages might be on topics that the students are unfamiliar with, the vocabulary might be old-fashioned or above the student's grade-level, and the syntax of the passages might be complex and confusing.

While taking practice tests and studying vocabulary can help students with the reading section, one of the best things a student can do is to become more familiar with these types of texts in general.

Think about it: the average SAT reading passage is only 750 words. The average number of words in a scientific article is 4,500-7,500 words. The average book is 70,000 to 120,000 words. You would have to take almost 100 SAT practice tests to get the exposure that one book will give you.

By reading longer works, such as full articles, historical essays, and even entire novels, you will be able to increase the ease with which you read and comprehend the SAT reading material. This will not only increase your accuracy with the questions, but it will also improve your time management, as you can spend less time struggling to get through the passage!

Here's a reading list below to get you started. It's divided by category based on the 4 types of SAT reading passages—Fiction, Natural Science, Social Science, and Founding (Historical) Documents—so that you can pick and choose a little of everything or focus on your biggest weakness. Don't worry about reading them all! Go with what interests you.

But, remember, you don't want to just read these texts; you want to comprehend them. To do this:

- Take note of any unfamiliar vocabulary and create your own vocabulary database.
- Utilize online resources to clarify parts of the texts you are unclear about.

### FICTION / NARRATIVE PROSE

*Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen (or any of Austen's novels!)

*Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte

*Native Son* by Richard Wright

*The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* by Arthur Conan Doyle

*The Pearl* by John Steinbeck (or any of Steinbeck's novels!)

*The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan

*Dracula* by Bram Stoker

*Anna Karenina* by Leo Tolstoy

*Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini

*Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro (or *Remains of the Day*)

*House of Mirth* by Edith Wharton

### SHORT STORIES OR NOVELLAS

*Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad

*The Awakening* by Kate Chopin

"The Yellow Wallpaper" by Charlotte Perkins Gilman

"The Dead" by James Joyce

"A Rose for Emily" by William Faulkner

"Interpreter of Maladies" by Jhumpa Lahiri

"Winter Dreams" by F. Scott Fitzgerald

"To Build a Fire" by Jack London

### NATURAL SCIENCE BOOKS

*The Origin of Species* by Charles Darwin

*Hyperspace* by Michio Kaku

*Gravity in Reverse* by Neil DeGrasse Tyson

*A Brief History of Time* by Stephen Hawking

*Packing for Mars: The Curious Science of Life in the Void* by Mary Roach

*The Man Who Mistook his Wife for a Hat and Other Clinical Trials* by Oliver Sacks

*The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot

*In the Shadow of Man* by Jane Goodall

*Storm in a Teacup: The Physics of Everyday Life* by Helen Czerski

*The Story of Science* by Joy Hakim

## SAT RECOMMENDED READING LIST

*Stuff Matters: Exploring the Marvelous Materials That Shape Our Man-Made World* by Mark Miodownik

*This is Your Brain on Music: The Science of Human Obsession* by Daniel J. Levitin

### NATURAL SCIENCE MAGAZINES & SCIENTIFIC JOURNALS

*National Geographic*

*Scientific American*

*Smithsonian*

*Science Magazine*

### SOCIAL SCIENCE BOOKS

*The Tipping Point* by Malcolm Gladwell

*The Signal and the Noise: Why So Many Predictions Fail—But Some Don't* by Nate Silver

*Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal* by Eric Schlosser

*The Omnivore's Dilemma: The Secrets Behind What You Eat* by Michael Pollan

*Freakonomics* by Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner

*Naked Economics: Undressing the Dismal Science* by Charles Wheelan

*The Paradox of Choice: Why More is Less* by Barry Schwartz

*The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by Michelle Alexander

*One Billion Americans: The Case for Thinking Bigger* by Matthew Yglesias

*This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*

### SOCIAL SCIENCE MAGAZINES & ACADEMIC JOURNALS

*The Atlantic*

*The Economist*

*Time Magazine*

*The New Yorker*

### FOUNDING (HISTORICAL) DOCUMENTS BOOKS & COLLECTIONS OF ESSAYS

*Walden* by Henry David Thoreau

*On Liberty* by John Stuart Mill

*Society and Solitude* by Ralph Waldo Emerson

*Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule* by Mahatma Gandhi

*Democracy in America* by Alex de Tocqueville

*Second Treatise of Civil Government* by John Locke

*Reflections on the Revolution in France* by Edmund Burke

*A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* by Mary Wollstonecraft

*By Any Means Necessary* by Malcolm X

*The Social Contract* by Jean-Jacques Rousseau

*The Federalist Papers* written by John Jay, Alexander Hamilton, and James Madison

### FOUNDING (HISTORICAL) DOCUMENTS INDIVIDUAL ESSAYS OR TEXTS

United States Declaration of Independence

Declaration of Sentiments

“On Civil Disobedience” by Henry David Thoreau

“Letters from Birmingham Jail” by Martin Luther King, Jr.

“The Ballot or the Bullet” by Malcolm X

“Self-Reliance” by Ralph Waldo Emerson

John F. Kennedy’s Inaugural Address

Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech

“I am the First Accused” speech by Nelson Mandela

“Freedom or Death” speech by Emmeline Pankhurst

George Washington’s Farewell Address

“Ain’t I A Woman” speech by Sojourner Truth

“The Man with the Muck-Rake” speech by Theodore Roosevelt

“Quit India” speech by Mahatma Gandhi

“Duties of American Citizenship” by Theodore Roosevelt

### HAPPY READING!

Looking to start or continue your SAT journey?

Let MEK help you on your path to elite scores with our proven methods, rigorous courses, and expert guidance!

We look forward to hearing from you!

# RESOURCES FOR PARENTS & STUDENTS

## BCA EXAM PREP RECOMMENDED READING LIST

By Rachel Erwin, Director of Exam Prep English

Summer is a great time to enjoy the sun, spend some time with family, and relax a bit.

But it's also a great time to capitalize on your spare time by preparing for your high school admission goals. Read our blog to learn more about how summer courses are a game changer.

This summer and fall, many 8th graders in Bergen County will be preparing to apply to Bergen County Academies (BCA) or Bergen County Technical High School in Teterboro (BT).

Doing some extra summer reading can help students be better prepared for this application, test, and interview:

- First, you can familiarize yourself with the type of text you will encounter during the English portion of the BCA/BT admissions exam. The more exposure you have to these types of texts, the more successful you will be on the official exam in January!
- Second, you can use your summer reading list to learn more about your own interests. BCA and BT are STEM schools that ask you to apply to a specific academy or program. Your application process will be much easier if you have a genuine passion and a demonstrated interest in the academy or program you are applying to.

Below is a suggested reading list that will help you accomplish both tasks. Don't worry about reading everything, just follow your curiosity. Also, remember, you aren't just reading to read, but to comprehend! Look up any unfamiliar vocabulary and use online resources to better understand confusing aspects of the text.

### TEXTS SIMILAR TO THE ENGLISH PORTION OF THE BCA/BT EXAM

The English section of the BCA/BT admissions exam consists of a short passage, generally 1-2 pages, followed by an essay prompt that asks you to analyze the text in some way. Here are some books, short stories, essays, articles, and websites you can read this summer to become better acquainted with this style of text.

#### BOOKS & NOVELS

*Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Seasonal Eating* by Barbara Kingsolver

*A Short Guide to a Happy Life* by Anna Quindlen

*Where the Past Begins: A Writer's Memoir* by Amy Tan

*The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls

*Last Days of the Dog-Men* by Brad Watson

*Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Kimmerer

#### SHORT STORIES, ESSAYS, ARTICLES

"Wrestling with Peace" by Mary Alice Hostetter

"If You Think Racism Doesn't Exist" by Jordan Womack

"How to Tame a Wild Tongue" by Gloria Anzaldua

"Math is Personal" by Jessica Nordell

"The YouTubers are not okay" by Rebecca Jennings

"We've Got to Stop Requiring Parking Everywhere" by Farhad Manjoo

"Through the Tunnel" by Doris Lessing

"Shaving" by Leslie Norris

"The Glowing Muse" by Steve Almond

#### WEBSITES & PUBLICATIONS

*The New Yorker*

*The New York Times*

*The Atlantic*

*Orion Magazine*

### TEXTS THAT CAN HELP YOU EXPLORE YOUR INTERESTS

As you consider applying to particular programs or academies, you want to cultivate specific interests with a field of study. Below is a list of books, articles, or publications to check out. It's been divided by particular BCA academies or BT programs. But don't feel like you have to stick with one category! Use this list to explore!

#### SCIENCE, ENGINEERING, MATH

This reading material on this list is appropriate if you are considering applying for the Academy for Advancement of Science and Technology, Academy for Engineering Design Technology, Academy for Medical Science Technology, or Academy for Technology and Computer Science at BCA. It's also appropriate if you are considering applying for the Automotive Engineering and Design, Aerospace Engineering, or Computer Science programs at BT.

#### BOOKS

*The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* written by Rebecca Skloot

*When Breath Becomes Air* by Paul Kalanithi

*Unnatural Causes* by Dr. Richard Shepherd

*Stiff: The Curious Life of Human Cadavers* by Mary Roach

## BCA EXAM PREP RECOMMENDED READING LIST

*Stuff Matters: Exploring the Marvelous Materials That Shape Our Man-Made World* written by Mark Miodownik

*Engineer to Win* by Caroll Smith

*Set Phasers on Stun* by S.M. Casey

*Algorithms to Live By: The Computer Science of Human Decisions* by Brian Christian and Tom Griffiths

### WEBSITES & PUBLICATIONS

*Scientific American*

*Science News*

*National Geographic*

*BBC – Science*

*Ars Technica*

*Atlas Obscura*

*Smithsonian*

### BUSINESS

This reading material on this list is appropriate if you are considering applying for the Academy for Business and Finance at BCA or the Strategic Asset Management program at BT.

### BOOKS

*Zero to One* by Peter Thiel

*Freakonomics* by Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner

*Naked Economics: Undressing the Dismal Science* by Charles Wheelan

*Notes to a Young Entrepreneur* by Gary Nealon

### WEBSITES & PUBLICATIONS

*The New York Times – Business Section*

*Forbes*

*Bloomberg*

*CNBC*

*MarketWatch*

*Wall Street Journal – Business Section*

### HUMANITIES, COOKING, THE ARTS

This reading material on this list is appropriate if you are considering applying for the Academy for Culinary Arts and Hospitality Administration or the Academy for Visual and Performing Arts at BCA. It's similarly appropriate if you are considering applying for the Fashion Design, Culinology, Digital Media Arts, or Commercial Art and Graphic Design program at BT.

### BOOKS

*The Omnivore's Dilemma: The Secrets Behind What You Eat* by Michael Pollan

*Without Reservations: How a Family Root Beer Stand Grew into a Global Hotel Company* by Bill Marriott and Kathi Ann Brown

*Fashion Design Essentials: 100 Principles of Fashion Design* by Jay Calderin

*The Elements of Graphic Design* by Alex W. White

*Type: A Visual History of Typefaces and Graphic Styles* by Jan Tholenaar

*An Actor Prepares* by Constantin Stanislavski

*An Illustrated History of Filmmaking* by Adam Allsuch Boardman

*On Writing* by Stephen King

### HAPPY READING!

Looking to start or continue your BCA journey?

Let MEK help you on your path to elite scores with our proven methods, rigorous courses, and expert guidance!

We look forward to hearing from you!

# WHAT'S NEXT

## FALL 2022 REGISTRATION

Register for Fall 2022 courses by August 26th to receive up to 20% off your tuition.



SCAN OR CLICK TO DOWNLOAD  
FALL 2022 COURSE CATALOG

### ACT BOOT CAMP | AUGUST 30<sup>TH</sup> TO SEPTEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup>

**TUITION: \$893** for 8-day boot camp

Finish off your test prep journey strong with **an intensive virtual 8-day boot camp**, comprised of lectures and exams! Join our ACT teaching team and other rigorous students to reach your goal score and unlock your potential on the September ACT exam!

TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>AUG. 30</b> 5:00 PM to 8:30 PM Simulation Test	<b>AUG. 31</b> 5:00 PM to 8:30 PM Lecture	<b>SEPT. 1</b> 5:00 PM to 8:30 PM Simulation Test	<b>SEPT. 2</b> 5:00 PM to 8:30 PM Lecture	<b>SEPT. 3</b> 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM Simulation Test
<b>SEPT. 6</b> 5:00 PM to 8:30 PM Lecture	<b>SEPT. 7</b> 5:00 PM to 8:30 PM Simulation Test	<b>SEPT. 8</b> 5:00 PM to 8:30 PM Lecture	<i>SEPT. 9</i>	<b>SEPT. 10</b> <b>OFFICIAL ACT EXAM</b>

### RECEIVE \$50 MEK CREDIT!

We want to hear all about your time as part of the MEK family!

Leave us a review on Google and talk about your experience with us, from the courses you loved to the service you received. Then, email [mek@mekreview.com](mailto:mek@mekreview.com) with a screenshot of your posted review or, if you're on campus, show us your review in person to redeem a \$50 credit toward MEK courses!

Every word helps us create the best possible learning experience for your child. Let us know how we're doing!

### SUMMER NEWSLETTERS

Throughout the Summer, MEK celebrates the achievements and milestones of our students in our bi-weekly newsletter. Our students have been making great strides toward reaching their goals. Check out our newsletters to see their progress, access educational resources, and learn what MEK has in store for Fall 2022!

[CLICK HERE FOR NEWSLETTER #1](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR NEWSLETTER #2](#)



## FALL 2022 BCA/BT PREP PROGRAM

Students currently enrolled in Exam Prep 8 took their BCA/BT Prep Placement Exams in class on August 12th. Following the exam, students will receive their initial class placement, which will dictate their specific schedules for the Fall. This year's BCA/BT Prep Program will be 100% in-person, hosted at both our Palisades Park and Closter campuses, and thus, we have limited space available for students to join the program.

While our Early Bird Registration ends on August 26th, we recommend that all students with the intention of enrolling in the Fall BCA/BT Prep Program register in advance to save their spot in the program, regardless of class placement.

NOW UNTIL **AUGUST 26<sup>TH</sup>**

**CCSS STUDENT EVALUATION (IF NOT TAKEN EARLIER)**  
**BCA/BT SIMULATION TEST | OFFICIAL PLACEMENT**

Students will take their BCA Simulation Test for official placement into the program. The placement that students receive during this time will be the official first placement into the BCA/BT Prep program. Students may be placed in different levels for English and Math.

Students enrolling in the BCA/BT Prep Program during this time will be enrolling in BOTH the program AND the course level that they qualify for.

However, students who are currently enrolled at MEK and have not received their placement may register for the program to ensure a spot in the program before placement. **This way, these students can secure their preferred schedule and campus.**

FALL 2022 SCHEDULE  
**PHASE 1: SEPTEMBER 9<sup>TH</sup> TO NOVEMBER 12<sup>TH</sup>**  
**PHASE 2: NOVEMBER 12<sup>TH</sup> TO JANUARY 7<sup>TH</sup>**

	PALISADES PARK CAMPUS		CLOSTER CAMPUS	
	ENGLISH	MATH	ENGLISH	MATH
HIGH HONORS	<b>Thursday</b> 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM	<b>Saturday</b> 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM	N/A	N/A
LEVEL A & B	<b>Wednesday</b> 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM STARTING NOV. 12TH, 6:10 PM to 8:30 PM <b>Saturday</b> 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM STARTING NOV. 12TH, 9:10 AM to 11:30 AM	<b>Tuesday</b> 5:30 PM to 8:30 PM <b>Friday</b> 5:30 PM to 8:30 PM	<b>Tuesday</b> 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM STARTING NOV. 12TH, 6:10 PM to 8:30 PM	<b>Wednesday</b> 5:30 PM to 8:30 PM
LEVEL C	<b>Wednesday</b> 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM STARTING NOV. 12TH, 6:10 PM to 8:30 PM <b>Saturday</b> 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM STARTING NOV. 12TH, 9:10 AM to 11:30 AM	<b>Tuesday</b> 5:30 PM to 8:30 PM <b>Friday</b> 5:30 PM to 8:30 PM	N/A	N/A
CLINIC	<b>Thursday</b> 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM	<b>Tuesday &amp; Friday</b> 5:00 PM to 6:30 PM	N/A	N/A

REGISTER BY AUGUST 26<sup>TH</sup> FOR **UP TO 20% OFF** ~~\$7,254~~ **\$5,857**

AUG  
26

**AUGUST 26<sup>TH</sup>**

**NO BCA/BT SIMULATION TESTS GIVEN AFTER AUGUST 26<sup>TH</sup>**

SEPT  
09

**SEPTEMBER 9<sup>TH</sup>**

**START OF BCA/BT PREP PROGRAM**



**MEK REVIEW<sup>®</sup>**

(855) 346-1410  
[www.mekreview.com](http://www.mekreview.com)

**PALISADES PARK CAMPUS**

261 1st Street  
Palisades Park, NJ 07650

**CLOSTER CAMPUS**

40 Homans Ave.  
Closter, NJ 07624