



My College QuickStart™

Implementation Guide



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Introduction

Students take the PSAT/NMSQT® for many reasons: to prepare for the SAT®; to enter scholarship competitions; to get personalized feedback to help them plan for college. My College QuickStart™ is the newest and one of the most robust benefits of a student's participation in the PSAT/NMSQT. However, it only benefits those who use it. This guide provides advice on best practices that have been implemented by educators and that have succeeded in encouraging student use of My College QuickStart.

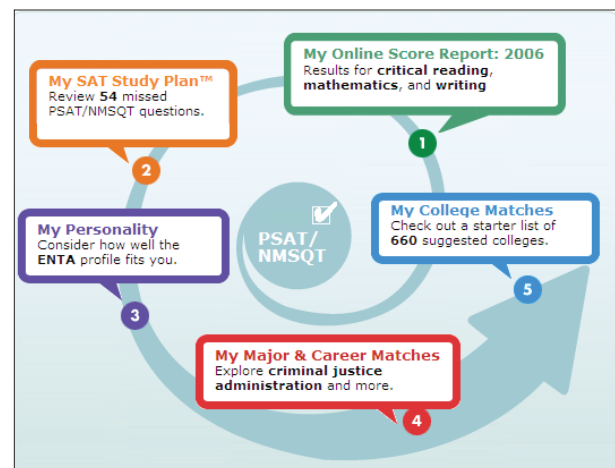
“Just yesterday, a junior taking an AP Spanish class told me that he wants to be an anthropologist and that he has read all the material on My College QuickStart. He was about the tenth person this week to talk to me about My College QuickStart. The results have been amazing in terms of students getting all the information needed for their college planning, including preparing for the SAT, registration for the SAT, and college admissions.”

—Judy Rath, Head Counselor,
Northside Health Careers High School
San Antonio, TX

What is My College QuickStart?

My College QuickStart is an online college and career planning kit available free of charge to all students who take the PSAT/NMSQT. It is powered by their responses to the test and provides personalized information that helps students take their next steps toward college:

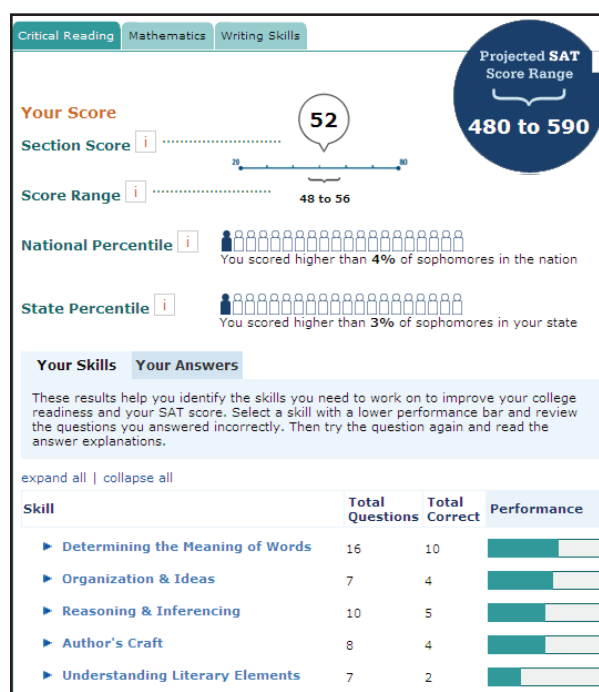
- My Online Score Report — an enhanced score report that allows students to review each test question, their answers, and the correct answers with answer explanations
- My SAT Study Plan™ — a customized SAT study plan based on students' PSAT/NMSQT test performance, highlighting skills for review and practice
- My Personality — a detailed personality test that helps students learn about themselves and discover majors and careers that fit their strengths and interests
- My Major & Career Matches — extensive information about majors and careers, including insights about what to expect and what courses to take now
- My College Matches — a starter list of colleges based on students' home state and indicated choice of major



My Online Score Report is an interactive PSAT/NMSQT Score Report that includes:

- Every test question with complete answer explanations and the ability to sort questions by difficulty level and skill.
- National and state percentiles so students can see how they performed compared to other students.
- Projected SAT score ranges for high school students so they can estimate how they might perform on the SAT based on their PSAT/NMSQT scores.
- Skills feedback that is easy to understand and actionable.

Note: Ninth-graders will receive percentile ranges. Students in schools outside the United States will see comparisons to all students outside the United States.



My SAT Study Plan provides students with an orientation to the SAT and personalized skills feedback based on their PSAT/NMSQT results. It includes:

- Personalized skills feedback and access to hundreds of practice questions.
- Examples of SAT essays written by real SAT takers (see essays that received a score of 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1).
- An official SAT practice test, complete with score report
- SAT test-taking advice
- Express SAT registration

Note: Middle school students do not receive a personalized SAT study plan. Instead, they will be encouraged to sign up for The Official SAT Question of the Day™.

My SAT Study Plan™

Ima, welcome to your personalized SAT® study plan! Congratulations on taking the PSAT/NMSQT—this is a huge step in preparing for the SAT. After all, PSAT in PSAT/NMSQT stands for "Preliminary SAT." That's why we've based your study plan on your PSAT/NMSQT results. Keep in mind that to do your best, you should also take challenging courses, read extensively, and write often.

Meet the SAT

- Question types
- Time allotted

Prepare for Critical Reading
2010 PSAT/NMSQT Score: 49

Prepare for Mathematics
2010 PSAT/NMSQT Score: 49

Prepare for Writing
2010 PSAT/NMSQT Score: 45

Take an Official SAT Practice Test

- Personalized, detailed score report
- Answer explanations

My Personality contains a detailed personality test that helps students learn about themselves and discover majors and careers that fit their strengths and interests. The ORA Personality Profiler has three parts with a total of 125 questions and usually takes 30 minutes or less to complete. Students will be able to identify:

- Their strengths
- The ways they learn best
- The ways they interact socially
- What motivates them
- Tips for being their best
- Careers and majors to explore

My Personality

Your answers to the ORA Personality Profiler® indicate that your type is:

ENTA: The Improviser

Sound Like You?

- Are you forceful, direct, driven, and adventurous?
- Do you learn best when dealing with new and challenging topics?
- Do you speak with passion?
- Are you motivated by change?

ENTA stands for:

- Extraverting
- Intuiting
- Thinking
- Adapting

No test can tell you who you are, but reflecting on your results can help you know yourself better. Decide for yourself how well the ENTA profile fits you. For feedback that's more personalized—and to get additional information on what each letter in your type means—view your [detailed results](#).

Personality Checklist: Your progress so far

My Major & Career Matches contains a personalized list of majors and associated careers based on the chosen major of interest indicated on the PSAT/NMSQT paper score report. It connects students to profiles of:

- Their chosen major
- Related majors
- Related careers

The screenshot shows the 'My Major & Career Matches' page. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'FOR STUDENTS | FOR PARENTS | FOR PROFESSIONALS' and a search bar. Below the navigation bar is the CollegeBoard logo and 'inspiring minds'. The main heading is 'My College QuickStart™'. Below this, there's a breadcrumb trail: 'Home > My Organizer > My College QuickStart > My Major & Career Matches'. The page title is 'My Major & Career Matches'. A paragraph explains that the user showed an interest in secondary education and teaching when they took the PSAT/NMSQT in 2010, and now they have a perfect place to explore that interest. Below this, there's a section titled 'Education' with two columns: 'Related Majors' and 'Related Careers'. The 'Related Majors' column lists: Agricultural Studies, Exercise Science, Health & Medicine, Library Science, Music, and Psychology. The 'Related Careers' column lists: Adult Education, Higher Education, Human Resources, K-12 Education, Sports and Fitness, and Visual Arts. On the right side, there's a sidebar with a user profile for 'Ima Student' (ima@collegeboard.com) and a link to 'Update My Info | Sign Out'. Below the profile, there's a section for 'Express SAT® Sign-Up' and a 'MyRoad™' section with a link to 'Learn more about MyRoad, your interactive planning tool, featuring: A personality test, Majors & careers'.

My College Matches is a starter list of colleges in each student's home state that offer the chosen major indicated on the PSAT/NMSQT paper score report. There is a detailed profile for each college that includes specific information on:

- Majors offered
- Admissions (for high school students)
- Tuition costs and financial aid
- Sports, housing, and more

Students can use the College MatchMaker feature to edit their personalized college list by adding and deleting search criteria like distance from home, school size, and extracurricular activities.

Note: Students outside the United States will receive a list of all U.S. colleges that offer the chosen major.

The screenshot shows the 'My College Matches' page. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'FOR STUDENTS | FOR PARENTS | FOR PROFESSIONALS' and a search bar. Below the navigation bar is the CollegeBoard logo and 'inspiring minds'. The main heading is 'My College QuickStart™'. Below this, there's a breadcrumb trail: 'Home > My Organizer > My College QuickStart > My College Matches'. The page title is 'My College Matches'. A paragraph explains that this is a starter list of colleges that are near the user and offer the major they selected when they took the PSAT/NMSQT. To update their matches, they should check or uncheck the choices in the 'Search Criteria' box. On the left side, there's a 'Search Criteria' section with three categories: 'Location' (New York, Mid-Atlantic, Entire U.S.), 'College Major' (Major: Secondary Education and Teaching), and 'Admission' (Projected SAT scores: SAT Critical Reading midrange: 460-560, SAT Math midrange: 460-560, Include colleges that don't report scores). Below these, there's a 'Size' section with three options: Small (fewer than 2,000 students), Medium (2,000-15,000 students), and Large (more than 15,000 students). On the right side, there's a 'My College Match Results' section with a 'Save Search' button and a 'My Saved Searches' button. Below this, it says '39 Matches Found' and 'Print Results'. A yellow box contains the text: 'This is a starter list. Customize your results using the search criteria on the left. Click "Save Search" when you're finished.' Below the yellow box, there's a list of colleges: Adelphi University (Garden City, NY), Canisius College (Buffalo, NY), City University of New York: City College (New York, NY), City University of New York: Hunter College (New York, NY), College of Saint Rose (Albany, NY), Columbia University: School of General Studies (New York, NY), Dominican College of Blauvelt (Orangeburg, NY), Dutchess Community College (Poughkeepsie, NY), Elmira College (Elmira, NY), Hofstra University (Hempstead, NY), and Houghton College (Houghton, NY).

Who Can Use My College QuickStart?

My College QuickStart is available to all students who take the PSAT/NMSQT. Students will have access to My College QuickStart until they graduate high school.

Access My College QuickStart

Students sign in at www.collegeboard.com/quickstart. Students will need:

- a) Their unique access code, found on the official paper PSAT/NMSQT Score Report. Student access codes are also listed on the *Roster of Student Scores and Plans* sent to each PSAT/NMSQT Coordinator with the individual score reports.
- b) A collegeboard.com student account. Students are guided to create a collegeboard.com account if they do not already have one. Note: Students will need a valid e-mail address in order to create a collegeboard.com account.

Best Practices

The following pages describe best practices for educators to successfully implement My College QuickStart in schools.

- 1) Familiarize yourself with My College QuickStart.
- 2) Customize your approach to utilize My College QuickStart to meet your individual school's needs.
- 3) Work closely with teachers to promote the tool.
- 4) Demonstrate My College QuickStart in a classroom or advisory setting.
- 5) Demonstrate My College QuickStart in a schoolwide assembly.
- 6) Assign My College QuickStart as homework.
- 7) Involve parents in promoting My College QuickStart.
- 8) Generate excitement about the tool.

Familiarize Yourself with My College QuickStart

Many educators find it best to try out Web-based tools before recommending them to their students. Try a demo of My College QuickStart to see what your students can do.

Go to www.collegeboard.com/resources and click the link for the demo.

Customize Your Approach to Meet Your School's Needs

It goes without saying that effective use of My College QuickStart requires access to a computer. It's also clear that schools and communities vary widely when it comes to the number of computers available for student use, either in school, at home, or in the community.

In considering the best approach for your school, poll your colleagues and students to answer the following questions:

School:

- 1) Does your school have a computer lab that can accommodate a group of students working with My College QuickStart simultaneously? What is the schedule of availability of that lab, and how far in advance does it need to be reserved? Will there be staff on hand to help with technical issues that may arise?
- 2) If there is not a computer lab that will accommodate a group experience of My College QuickStart, what other computers exist in the building? Are there computers in classrooms, libraries, or resource centers that students could use, on their own or with an educator, during advisory periods, study hall, or other free periods?
- 3) Does your school restrict the Web sites that may be accessed, and is www.collegeboard.com on the list of accessible sites?
- 4) What other activities, lessons, or assignments that incorporate the use of the Internet are being employed at your school? Are there opportunities to piggyback My College QuickStart exploration onto those activities?
- 5) Are there classes or instructional units offered at your school that focus on preparing for admissions tests like the SAT or career exploration and selection? Would these classes benefit from the inclusion of a My College QuickStart unit?
- 6) Who are the "Internet experts" on staff who find ways to incorporate it into their lessons and could be good sources of advice?

Students:

- 1) How many students have a computer with Internet access at home, and are allowed to use it?
- 2) How many students have access to computers at other locations in the community, such as libraries or community centers?
- 3) What Web sites do your students use in their free time when they are preparing for college admissions tests or have questions about college and career planning? Could they supplement or replace fee-based independent test prep or college guidance with My College QuickStart, which is free of charge?

- 4) What Web sites do your students visit for fun? How is My College QuickStart like those sites?

All of this information can help you determine the best approach for encouraging your students to get the most value out of My College QuickStart.

Work Closely with Teachers to Promote Use

The important work of encouraging successful college planning often falls to counselors, but teachers can also play an important role and may be helpful in engaging students in My College QuickStart.

Some steps to engage teachers:

- Incorporate information about My College QuickStart, including a link to the Guided Tour online, in newsletters that are distributed to staff.
- Inform the English and math departments about the wealth of feedback that My College QuickStart provides, which can be used for practice and discussion in the classroom.
- Share PSAT/NMSQT reports, such as the Summary of Answers and Skills reports, with English and math teachers to help guide classroom instruction.
- Identify teachers who use the Internet in their curriculum, and reach out to them for advice or brainstorming on encouraging the use of My College QuickStart.
- Identify the teachers responsible for college and career coaching and make sure they know about My College QuickStart.

Demonstrate My College QuickStart in a Classroom or Advisory Setting

Lesson plans can be implemented in a variety of ways, including in a classroom or computer lab. Lesson plans and other resources for educators are available at www.collegeboard.com/resources.

It should be no surprise that schools with the highest participation in My College QuickStart demonstrated the tool in a computer lab, with students accessing their own accounts on individual computers.

Educators from those schools found it useful to do the following:

- **Reserve the computer lab** ahead of time, and make sure that any available staff are on hand to assist with technical problems that may arise.

- Allow **plenty of time for logging in** and getting started. Students new to www.collegeboard.com will need to spend some time setting up their accounts. Logging-in time might vary for different students. Occasionally, students will incorrectly enter identifying information on the PSAT/NMSQT answer sheet, or during the log-in process, which can cause delays in connecting to their online information. Usually, these delays can be resolved by contacting the College Board, but they may not be resolved immediately. If students are logging in as a group, additional time to identify these situations should be added. Be prepared with supplemental activities for the students in these rare situations—an example may be to have them search for colleges or sample SAT questions on www.collegeboard.com. Remember that students need an e-mail address to access My College QuickStart.

- Use the **color-coded** design of My College QuickStart to keep an eye on your students' progress. The swirl icon on the top left of the screen, as well as key elements on the pages, are colored accordingly:

- My Online Score Report = Green
- My SAT Study Plan = Orange
- My Personality = Purple
- My Major & Career Matches = Red
- My College Matches = Blue

- Identify **new concepts and vocabulary** that emerge in My College QuickStart and make sure they are explored during, or prior to, the class. Do students understand what “percentile” means and what it tells them about their performance on the PSAT/NMSQT? Do they realize that the college list they first see only reflects their home state and chosen major, and is not related to their scores? Do they understand how their major in college can help shape their career choices?

- **Encourage deeper exploration and discussion** of the concepts and information that My College QuickStart introduces. What supplemental activities can students do, on their own or in a follow-up class, that take the information from My College QuickStart and lend it to a plan of action related to college preparation? What can students do to work on the identified “Skills to Improve”? See www.collegeboard.com/psatdownloads for section-specific lesson plans that include suggestions for follow-up activities.

- **Be mindful of the sensitive and confidential nature** of test scores, and discourage the sharing of score information among students.

- Download and print the “**Get Connected**” reference sheet at www.collegeboard.com/psatdownloads.

Demonstrate My College QuickStart in a Schoolwide Assembly

The classic schoolwide assembly is sometimes the best option for introducing students to My College QuickStart or to supplement and reinforce prior introductions. Small schools, schools lacking technical or financial resources, and schools lacking space are all examples of schools that may find success with this approach.

Here are some suggestions for activities the assembly speaker can do in conjunction with a My College QuickStart demonstration:

- Explain the format and content of the official PSAT/NMSQT Score Report *Plus*. Begin or conclude the assembly by handing out the score reports. Remember to tell students not to focus on their scores. Their results will likely improve the harder they work and the longer they are in school.
- Show the student demonstration video available at www.collegeboard.com/resources.
- Show the “Understanding Results from the PSAT/NMSQT” presentation, available in Microsoft PowerPoint and PDF formats at www.collegeboard.com/psatdownloads.
- Hold a practice SAT essay-writing session using *ScoreWrite™: A Guide to Preparing for the SAT Essay*, sent to all schools in the fall.
- Discuss SAT preparation methods and ways in which My College QuickStart can supplement or replace existing strategies.
- Present practice SAT or PSAT/NMSQT questions.
- Invite speakers or panelists to talk about colleges, majors, and/or careers.

Assign My College QuickStart As Homework

Schools that are unable to use in-school computers for My College QuickStart but have a high number of students with access to computers at home or in their community may want to assign My College QuickStart exploration as homework.

Some points to consider:

- Students will need their **paper score report**, so distribute score reports prior to assigning My College QuickStart activities.

- Guide students to the **resources** that can help them, like their PSAT/NMSQT test book and the student demonstration video at www.collegeboard.com/quickstart.
- Ask for **evidence of completion**. Every page of My College QuickStart includes a printer-friendly version. Ask your students to print out key pages to bring to school and use in further discussion.
- Identify **new concepts and vocabulary** that emerge in My College QuickStart, and make sure they are explored prior to assigning any homework. Do students understand what “percentile” means and what it tells them about their performance on the PSAT/NMSQT? Do they realize that the college list they first see only reflects their home state and chosen major and is not related to their scores? Do they understand how their major in college can shape their career choices?
- **Encourage deeper exploration and discussion** of the concepts and information that My College QuickStart introduces. What supplemental activities can students do, on their own or in a follow-up class, that take the information from My College QuickStart and lend it to a plan of action related to college preparation? What can students do to work on the identified “Skills to Improve?” See www.collegeboard.com/psatdownloads for section-specific lesson plans that include suggestions for follow-up activities.
- **Involve parents** so that they can encourage use of My College QuickStart outside of school.

Involve Parents in the Use of My College QuickStart

My College QuickStart introduces several topics that can and should inspire discussions at home: course decisions, academic expectations, and college selection are just a few. If your school can reach out to your parent community and make them aware of My College QuickStart, your students will see the value in this personalized tool.

Tips for involving parents include:

- **Provide parents with valuable resources** for helping their children prepare for college. Calendars and lists of select Web sites are useful for everyone—include links to My College QuickStart and the Guided Tour in these resources.
- Send a **letter to the parents** of all PSAT/NMSQT takers explaining the benefits of the test, what the scores mean, and the information available on My College QuickStart. Sample letters and handouts can be found at www.collegeboard.com/resources.

- Include information about My College QuickStart in **regular parent newsletters**. Sample text for messages to parents can be found at www.collegeboard.com/resources.
- Incorporate My College QuickStart information into **events and face-to-face communications** with parents. Talk up the site with parents, especially in one-on-one conferences or at parent night events. Ask whether they know if their child has visited the site.

Generate Excitement About My College QuickStart

Experienced practitioners advise showing your enthusiasm for college planning and talking it up at every opportunity. For PSAT/NMSQT takers, My College QuickStart should be a common part of that excitement and discussion.

Include your community as you widen your circle of involvement. Inform community centers of your efforts to encourage a college-going culture and My College QuickStart's role in these efforts. When sharing PSAT/NMSQT participation information with local newsgroups, point out the availability of My College QuickStart.

Move Ahead

With the advice in this guide, you can now move forward with encouraging your students to take full advantage of the personalized, in-depth feedback My College QuickStart has to offer.

What best practices of your own would you like to share with other educators? Share your school's approaches to using My College QuickStart by e-mailing your ideas to psat@collegeboard.org.

About the College Board

The College Board is a mission-driven not-for-profit organization that connects students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the College Board was created to expand access to higher education. Today, the membership association is made up of more than 5,900 of the nation's leading educational institutions and is dedicated to promoting excellence and equity in education. Each year, the College Board helps more than seven million students prepare for a successful transition to college through programs and services in college readiness and college success — including the SAT® and the Advanced Placement Program®. The organization also serves the education community through research and advocacy on behalf of students, educators and schools.

For further information, visit www.collegeboard.com.

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