

FULL-LENGTH SAT-TYPE ESSAY PRACTICE TESTS

Model Exam 1

Directions: Now that you have completed the lessons and other practice material in the Essay Section of this book, you are ready to try the full-length SAT Essay Model Exams. These three SAT Essay Model Exams match the format of the SAT, including complexity of passages, essay prompts, and timing. Take these tests under conditions as similar as possible to the actual test conditions:

- Read the passage and write an essay in response to the prompt in one sitting.
- Adhere to the 50-minute time frame to keep the testing conditions as realistic as possible.

After you complete each Model SAT Essay Exam,

- Use the SAT Essay Rubric provided in the corresponding Answer Sheet to evaluate your essay.
- Read and analyze the Sample Essays. Compare your essay to these samples in order to learn from their strengths.

This is a great opportunity to see what you know well and what you still need to practice before you write the real SAT essay. Good luck!

As you read the passage below, consider how Elie Wiesel uses

- evidence, such as facts or examples, to support claims.
- reasoning to develop ideas and to connect claims and evidence.
- stylistic or persuasive elements, such as word choice or appeals to emotion, to add power to the ideas expressed.

Adapted from Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel’s speech, “The Perils of Indifference,” delivered at the White House in Washington, D.C. on April 12, 1999.

1 We are on the threshold of a new century, a new millennium. What will the legacy of this vanishing century be? How will it be remembered in the new millennium? Surely it will be judged, and judged severely, in both moral and metaphysical terms. These failures have cast a dark shadow over humanity: two world wars, countless civil wars, the senseless chain of assassination—Gandhi, the Kennedys, Martin Luther King, Sadat, Rabin—bloodbaths in Cambodia and Nigeria, India and Pakistan, Ireland and Rwanda, Eritrea and Ethiopia, Sarajevo and Kosovo; the inhumanity in the gulag and the tragedy of Hiroshima. And, on a different level, of course, Auschwitz and Treblinka. So much violence, so much indifference.

2 What is indifference? Etymologically, the word means “no difference.” A strange and unnatural state in which the lines blur between light and darkness, dusk and dawn, crime and punishment, cruelty and compassion, good and evil.

- 3 What are its courses and inescapable consequences? Is it a philosophy? Is there a philosophy of indifference conceivable? Can one possibly view indifference as a virtue? Is it necessary at times to practice it simply to keep one's sanity, live normally, enjoy a fine meal and a glass of wine, as the world around us experiences harrowing upheavals?
- 4 Of course, indifference can be tempting—more than that, seductive. It is so much easier to look away from victims. It is so much easier to avoid such rude interruptions to our work, our dreams, our hopes. It is, after all, awkward, troublesome, to be involved in another person's pain and despair. Yet, for the person who is indifferent, his or her neighbors are of no consequence. And, therefore, their lives are meaningless. Their hidden or even visible anguish is of no interest. Indifference reduces the other to an abstraction.
- 5 In a way, to be indifferent to that suffering is what makes the human being inhuman. Indifference, after all, is more dangerous than anger and hatred. Anger can at times be creative. One writes a great poem, a great symphony, one does something special for the sake of humanity because one is angry at the injustice that one witnesses. But indifference is never creative. Even hatred at times may elicit a response. You fight it. You denounce it. You disarm it. Indifference elicits no response. Indifference is not a response.
- 6 Indifference is not a beginning, it is an end. And, therefore, indifference is always the friend of the enemy, for it benefits the aggressor – never his victim, whose pain is magnified when he or she feels forgotten. The political prisoner in his cell, the hungry children, the homeless refugees – not to respond to their plight, not to relieve their solitude by offering them a spark of hope is to exile them from human memory. And in denying their humanity we betray our own.
- 7 Indifference, then, is not only a sin, it is a punishment. And this is one of the most important lessons of this outgoing century's wide-ranging experiments in good and evil.
- 8 In the place that I come from, society was composed of three simple categories: the killers, the victims, and the bystanders. During the darkest of times, inside the ghettos and death we felt abandoned, forgotten. All of us did.
- 9 And yet, my friends, good things have also happened in this traumatic century: the defeat of Nazism, the collapse of communism, the rebirth of Israel on its

ancestral soil, the demise of apartheid, Israel's peace treaty with Egypt, the peace accord in Ireland. And let us remember the meeting, filled with drama and emotion, between Rabin and Arafat that you, Mr. President, convened in this very place. I was here and I will never forget it.

10 Does it mean that we have learned from the past? Does it mean that society has changed? Has the human being become less indifferent and more human? Have we really learned from our experiences? Are we less insensitive to the plight of victims of ethnic cleansing and other forms of injustices in places near and far? Is today's justified intervention in Kosovo, led by you, Mr. President, a lasting warning that never again will the deportation, the terrorization of children and their parents be allowed anywhere in the world? Will it discourage other dictators in other lands to do the same?

11 Together we walk towards the new millennium, carried by profound fear and extraordinary hope.

Write an essay in which you explain how Elie Wiesel builds an argument to persuade his audience that indifference has serious consequences. In your essay, analyze how Wiesel uses one or more of the features listed on page 520 (or features of your own choice) to strengthen the logic and persuasiveness of his argument. Be sure that your analysis focuses on the most relevant features of the passage.

Your essay should not explain whether you agree with Wiesel's claims, but rather explain how Wiesel builds an argument to persuade his audience.

Compare Your Essay

After you write your own essay, read the sample student essays below and mark their strengths and weaknesses. Then look at the explanations that follow to see how an essay reader may score the writing. Compare your writing with the sample essays so that you can learn from their strengths.

Prompt #1 Sample Essay Score: Advanced—3 and 4s

On April 12, 1999, Elie Wiesel convinced his audience at the White House that indifference poses great dangers to the world. Wiesel juxtaposes stark opposites and uses dramatic language to draw a strong emotional response from his listeners and readers; he continues to appeal to his audience's emotions through varying sentence structures and first person point of view, and the latter creates a universal condition for all people. Through these strategies, Wiesel effectively warns readers and listeners that indifference can lead to severe consequences for humanity.

In the beginning of Elie Wiesel's speech, he starts off with dramatic diction with phrases like "vanishing century," "judged severely," "cast a dark shadow over humanity," and "bloodbaths." These word choices help to hook the audience right away by appealing to the pathos of his listeners and readers. In the following paragraph, Wiesel illustrates the dangers of indifference by juxtaposing starkly contrasting concepts like "light and darkness ... dusk and dawn ... good and evil." These differing ideas highlight the strange nature of "no difference." After establishing this, he places the idea of indifference in humanity using emotional language like "seductive," "pain and despair," and "anguish." These intense words help to convey Wiesel's sense of exigency regarding the threat of indifference.

The emotional appeal continues through Wiesel's repetitive, whittling-down of sentence length within paragraphs. In the first, fourth, fifth, and eighth paragraphs of his speech, he follows relatively the same format of syntactical structure: he begins with longer sentences and they grow shorter as he reaches the end of the paragraph, and finally he ends with a short sentence that contrasts with the lengthier sentences at the beginning. By explaining his ideas in the earlier part of the paragraphs through longer, sometimes

run-on sentences, but then ending each paragraph abruptly, he draws attention to the content of each sentence. For example, in the first paragraph, Wiesel provides several historical cases to support his claim that the past century has consisted of several failures. After these longer sentences in which he lists events like “two world wars, . . . the senseless chain of assassinations” and more, he ends the paragraph with “So much violence, so much indifference.” The last sentence serves as a punch line that delivers the main point of the previous paragraph with few words. By repeating this structure throughout his speech, he explains in detail his point and summarizes the paragraph in a short, poignant sentence. These terse, powerful phrases at the ends of his paragraphs help Wiesel effectively establish his ideas.

Wiesel demands the attention of his listeners throughout his piece. By using rhetorical questions throughout the speech, Wiesel’s audience takes an active role in it. He directly addresses readers and listeners with the use of phrases like “my friends.” In the ninth paragraph he speaks right to the president. He truly persuades his audience using the first person point-of-view. The first sentence of Wiesel’s speech begins with “we” and he creates a connection with those listening and reading. He continues the use of first person while discussing the tendency of all people to participate in indifference, and he adopts the word “human” several times. By discussing the similarities of all people in phrases like “our work, our dreams, our hopes” and “have we really learned from our experiences,” and emphasizing the shared qualities of humans, Wiesel creates universality among all people. He uses this universality to show that all people have an obligation and responsibility to avoid passivity and, of course, indifference.

Elie Wiesel’s speech successfully establishes his point regarding the risks of remaining indifferent to crimes against humanity through intense diction, fluctuating syntactical structure and the quality of universality with first person point-of-view. The audience experiences his strong emotional appeal and takes an active role in reading or listening to the speech, which helps to persuade them of his ideas.

Explanation of Score

Reading Score: 4 Advanced	
Comprehension	The writer clearly understood the article and the author's arguments. See introduction: clear claim and outline of author's persuasive techniques.
Accuracy	The writer accurately presented facts from the article. All references to information in the article are correct.
Evidence	The writer effectively used evidence, quotations, and paraphrasing to demonstrate an understanding of the article. See effective use of quotations and paraphrasing in each body paragraph.

Analysis Score: 3 Proficient	
Evaluation of evidence	The writer effectively evaluated the author's use of evidence, reasoning, stylistic and persuasive elements. The writer documents the use of juxtaposition, sentence structure, word choice, and first person point of view.
Support	The writer supported most claims with evidence from the text and explanations of the significance of that evidence. See use of quotations and paraphrasing from the article in each body paragraph. However, the fourth paragraph lacks examples of rhetorical questions.
Focus	The writer stayed focused on the most relevant features of the article in order to address the task of evaluating the author's effectiveness. The writer focused on author's ability to elicit emotional response in his reader and keep the attention of his audience. Although the author may use other techniques, the writer has focused on two or three of the most significant.

Writing Score: 4 Advanced	
Strong central claim	The writer clearly presented a central claim: <i>Wiesel juxtaposes stark opposites and uses dramatic language to draw a strong emotional response from his listeners and readers; he continues to appeal to his audience's emotions through varying sentence structures and first person point of view, and the latter creates a universal condition for all people.</i>
Organization and progression of ideas	The writer has a clearly organized essay. <i>Essay starts with an introduction that contains the central claim. It continues with body paragraphs, each beginning with a clear topic sentence, each maintaining focus on its subtopic, and each ending with a strong closing sentence. The body paragraphs transition smoothly from one another. The essay ends with a concise conclusion that restates the central claim and most relevant supporting subtopics.</i>
Sentence structure	The writer employed simple, complex, and compound sentences. The writer varied sentence length and style.
Word choice	The writer used synonyms for repeated words, appropriately leveled vocabulary, and accurate terms. <i>"juxtaposes stark opposites," "severe consequences for humanity," "whittling-down of sentence length."</i>
Style and tone	The writer used a formal essay tone appropriate for the task.
Standard written English	The writer followed conventions such as proper use of punctuation, correctly formed sentences (no run-ons or fragments), and correct grammar and spelling.

Prompt #1 Sample Essay Score: Proficient/Partial—3s and a 2

"The Perils of Indifference" is a speech that Elie Wiesel, a holocaust survivor, gave at the White House in 1999. In this powerful speech, Wiesel effectively uses many techniques to convince his audience of the urgency of his topic. He shows his listeners that this is a really important issue. He uses rhetorical questions, some short sentences, and opposites to prove his point.

Wiesel starts with an optimistic statement: "We are on the threshold of a new century, a new millennium." Here he peaks the reader's interest. He follows with a rhetorical question, which is a technique he uses repeatedly throughout the speech.

He asks: “What will the legacy of this vanishing century be?” His listeners are perhaps ready for a hopeful answer to that question. Wiesel then grabs their attention with a contrast: “Surely it will be judged, and judged severely.” Now his listeners know that the message of the speech may be more serious. He reinforces this seriousness with a long list of violent events.

Wiesel continues with rhetorical questions, opening the next two paragraphs with questions such as “What is indifference?” and “What are its courses and inescapable consequences?” He is engaging his audience in hopes of making them really think about these issues. He also asks complicated questions such as “Can one possibly view indifference as a virtue?” He is strengthening his argument by acknowledging different perspectives to every issue.

Wiesel also uses some very short, powerful sentences to emphasize his points. He writes about hatred, “You fight it. You denounce it. You disarm it.” Here Wiesel uses repetition also. This further supports his point. The other way he does this is by showing his audience lots of opposites. He says, “Indifference is not a beginning, it’s an end.” He also says, “. . . carried by profound fear and extraordinary hope.” Wiesel uses these pairs of opposites similarly to how he uses rhetorical questions. He is forcing the listener to grapple with conflict.

Elie Wiesel successfully argues about the dangers of indifference for our society. By the end of his speech, his listeners can’t deny this problem, because of how Wiesel constructed his speech. He bombarded his audience with questions and contrasts, and he showed them the consequences of ignoring the issue.

Explanation of Score

Reading Score: 3 Proficient	
Comprehension	The writer mostly understood the article and the author’s arguments. Writer should have clearly stated author’s claim in introduction.
Accuracy	The writer presented accurate facts from the article. All references to information in the article are correct.
Evidence	The writer used evidence and quotations to demonstrate an understanding of the article. Writer could have used some paraphrasing of author’s points, rather than relying only on quotations.

Analysis Score: 2 Partial	
Evaluation of evidence	The writer evaluated the author's use of evidence, reasoning, stylistic and persuasive elements. The writer presents "rhetorical questions," "short sentences" and "opposites" for the analysis of the author's persuasive techniques. Some of these terms could be more accurate (e.g. syntax, juxtaposition).
Support	The writer supported each claim with evidence from the text but at times did not offer complete explanations of the significance of that evidence. The second and third paragraphs need more explanation of significance. The fourth paragraph is more effective.
Focus	The writer stayed focused on some of the most relevant features of the article in order to address the task of evaluating the author's effectiveness.

Writing Score: 3 Proficient	
Strong central claim	The writer presented this in the introduction, but could have written a stronger sentence: "He uses rhetorical questions, some short sentences, and opposites to prove his point."
Organization and progression of ideas	The writer had a clearly organized essay. It starts with an introduction that contains the central claim. It continues with body paragraphs, each beginning with a clear topic sentence, each maintaining focus on its subtopic, and each ending with a strong closing sentence. The body paragraphs transition smoothly from one another. The essay ends with a concise conclusion that restates the central claim and most relevant supporting subtopics.
Sentence structure	The writer employed simple, complex, and compound sentences. The writer mostly varied sentence length and style. Writer could have used fewer short, simple sentences in places where related ideas could have been combined. At times the writing is redundant.
Word choice	The writer did not use synonyms for repeated words often enough. The writer did use some appropriately leveled vocabulary and some accurate terms. In some cases, more advanced vocabulary could have been used. Examples of problems with word choice: Writer repeats author's name frequently, opening most paragraphs with it. Writer repeats the word "he" again and again when referring to the author, opening sentences with the word repeatedly.
Style and tone	The writer used a formal essay appropriate for this task. In some cases, the writer's style and voice could have been more mature/advanced. Examples of ineffective style or tone from essay: "really important issue," "lots of opposites."
Standard written English	The writer mostly followed conventions such as proper use of punctuation, correctly formed sentences (no run-ons or fragments), and correct grammar and spelling.

If your essay did not score a 3 or 4 in all categories, rewrite it. Use comments from your teacher, parents, and friends to improve your writing.