

# PSAT Tips

You'll be taking the PSAT next Wednesday (October 16<sup>th</sup>). Although the best preparation for the PSAT/NMSQT is long-term — **such as taking solid academic courses and reading widely** — you will perform better on the test if you know what to expect on test day.

## Short-term approaches and strategies...

- **Take the practice test** in *The Official Student Guide to the PSAT/NMSQT*.
- **Learn the directions** for each type of math and critical reading question.
- **Try sample questions** from past tests.
- **Earn as many points** as you can on easy questions.
- **Read all the answer choices** before marking your answer sheets.
- **Do your scratch-work** in the test book.
- **Skip test questions** — you don't have to answer every question to do well.
- **Work steadily** without wasting time on hard questions — you can always go back.
- **Check your answer sheets regularly** to make sure they're in the right place.
- **Write answers to grid-ins** in the boxes above the ovals.
- **Try educated guessing** when you can eliminate at least one answer to a question.
- **Bring a calculator and pencils** on test day.

## About guessing ...

Educated guessing means guessing an answer whenever one or more of the choices can be eliminated as definitely wrong. Because  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a point is deducted for a wrong answer to multiple-choice questions, random guessing is not recommended. If you really don't have any idea what to do with a particular question, leave that question blank and move on to the next one. You can earn an above-average score by getting only half the questions right and skipping the rest of the questions.

## On test day ...

You will go to your designated testing room instead of 1<sup>st</sup> period; you'll find out your testing room on Monday (October 14<sup>th</sup>). Freshmen will all be on the first floor of the main building. Testing will run from period 1 through period 4; there will be no bells, intercom, or Devil Vision until the beginning of 5<sup>th</sup> period. Once 5<sup>th</sup> period starts, all will return to normal. Don't forget to get plenty of sleep the night before, and please bring a calculator and pencils with you.