



Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology
Admissions Office
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Suggestions on How to Prepare On Your Own for the TJ Test

The TJ Admissions Test is a math and verbal reasoning test that measures not what a student knows but how well he/she can use knowledge gained over the previous seven years of schooling. The best preparation for the TJ Test, therefore, is to have taken challenging courses in elementary and middle school, to read a great deal, and to do math problems beyond those required in class.

Students who wish to do additional preparation for the admissions test may find the following suggestions to be helpful.

Test Preparation Handbook Available

A test preparation handbook for the TJ Admissions Test, the *Student Handbook for the Admissions Test for Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology*, is available for interested students who wish to learn more about the test. The handbook describes the test, offers test-taking strategies, and includes a complete sample test (with answer sheet). The handbook is available to download from the admissions website at www.TJAdmissions.org.

All students should read the handbook, especially the instructions for each section of the admissions test, before test day.

Additional Resources

There are several additional resources that might be helpful for students who want extra practice questions. Various commercial entities, including but not necessarily limited to Barron's and Princeton Review, have published study aids for the SSAT (the Secondary School Admissions Test, given by many private high schools) and the SSHSAT (the Specialized Science High School Admissions Test, given for the New York City science high schools), that may provide some additional practice questions. These test preparation books usually start with a title such as "How to Prepare for . . .," and are easily ordered from online booksellers, such as amazon.com. Some also may be available locally at larger booksellers, such as Barnes and Noble and Borders. Many students have found these books to be helpful and several of them have been used in test preparation courses. (NOTE: The Admissions Office does not recommend any particular commercial test preparation books or companies.)

If you use any of the commercial test preparation books, you will need to compare carefully the test items in each with the TJ *Student Handbook* because the TJ test contains test items

that the SSAT and SSHSAT do not, and vice versa. The SSHSAT, for example, contains a test item titled, "Scrambled Paragraphs." The TJ test does not contain that test item.

What Else Can You Do?

There are other steps you can take on your own to prepare for the TJ admissions test, as well, including the following:

- **Read, Read, Read:** Read for vocabulary and for comprehension. Look up unfamiliar words in the dictionary and work on building your vocabulary skills. Have your parents help with reading comprehension by reading the same newspaper or magazine articles that you read and then discussing them with you.
- **Get Extra Math Practice:** Do the extra credit problems, or the unassigned problems, for math homework. Get in the practice of working without a calculator (you cannot use one during the test).
- **Write Daily:** Work on your essay writing skills. All applicants must also write two essays on test day (additional information regarding essay questions is available on the admissions website) and so extra writing practice can be useful. Even if you only write for 5 minutes a day, a daily focus on writing will help combat "writer's block" on test day.

A good night's sleep the night before the test and a good breakfast on test day also will go a long way!!

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