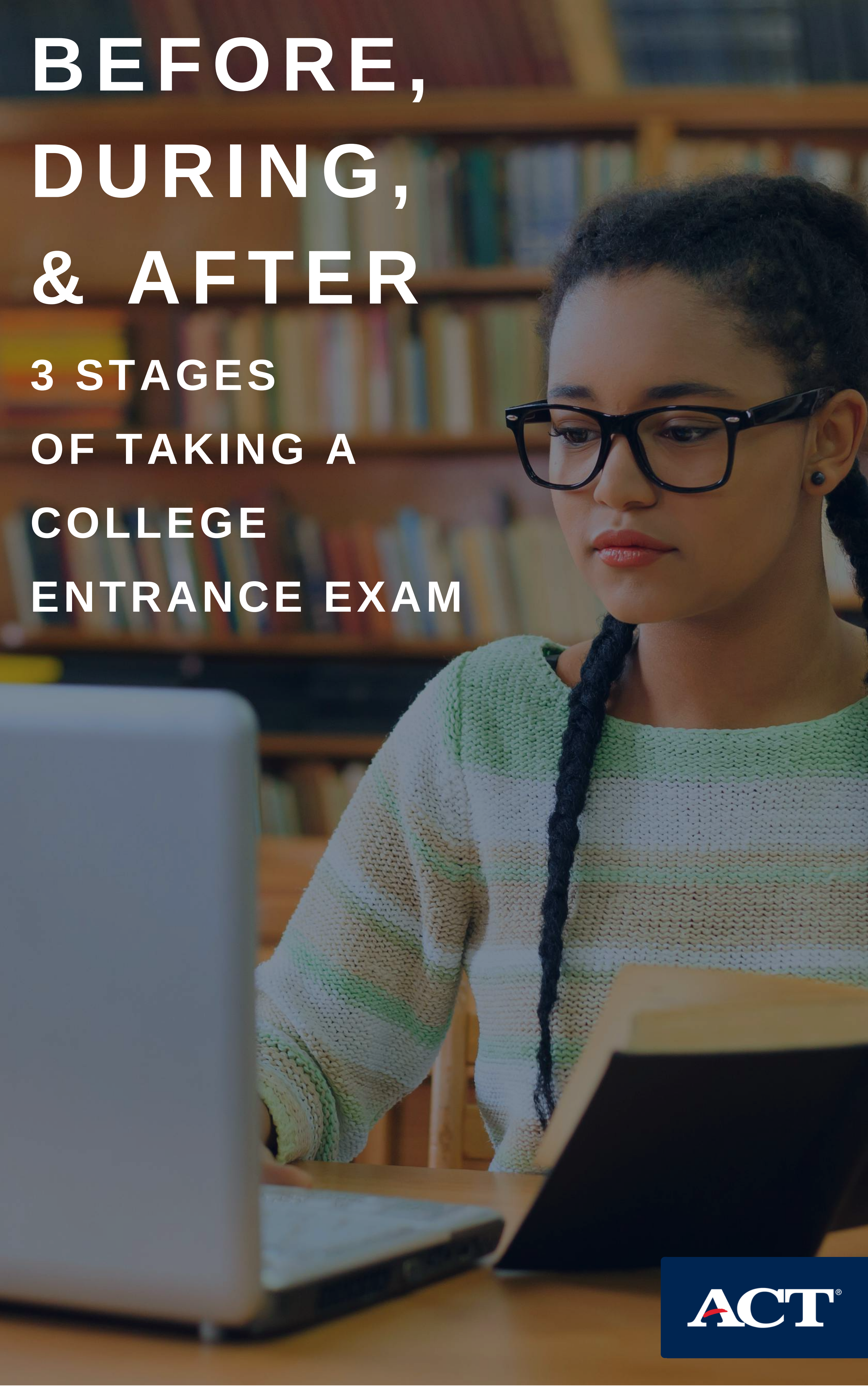


BEFORE, DURING, & AFTER

3 STAGES OF TAKING A COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAM



WHAT IS A COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAM, AND WHY TAKE ONE?

One aspect of applying for college is submitting a college entrance exam score. All U.S. four-year universities and colleges accept your exam score.

But, what does it measure? Why do colleges consider it in their admissions process?

A college entrance exam, like the ACT® test, measures your achievement in core academic areas important for your college and career success.

In addition to giving you an indication of your college readiness, your ACT score can help match your interests with different majors and allow more educational and financial opportunities. That's why ACT refers to it as a college readiness assessment.

WHAT IS A COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAM, AND WHY TAKE ONE?

Colleges use a readiness assessment to gauge how well you've mastered certain subject areas during your high school career and how well you might do in those subjects during your first year of college.

These subjects include:

English

Math

Reading

Science

Writing (optional)

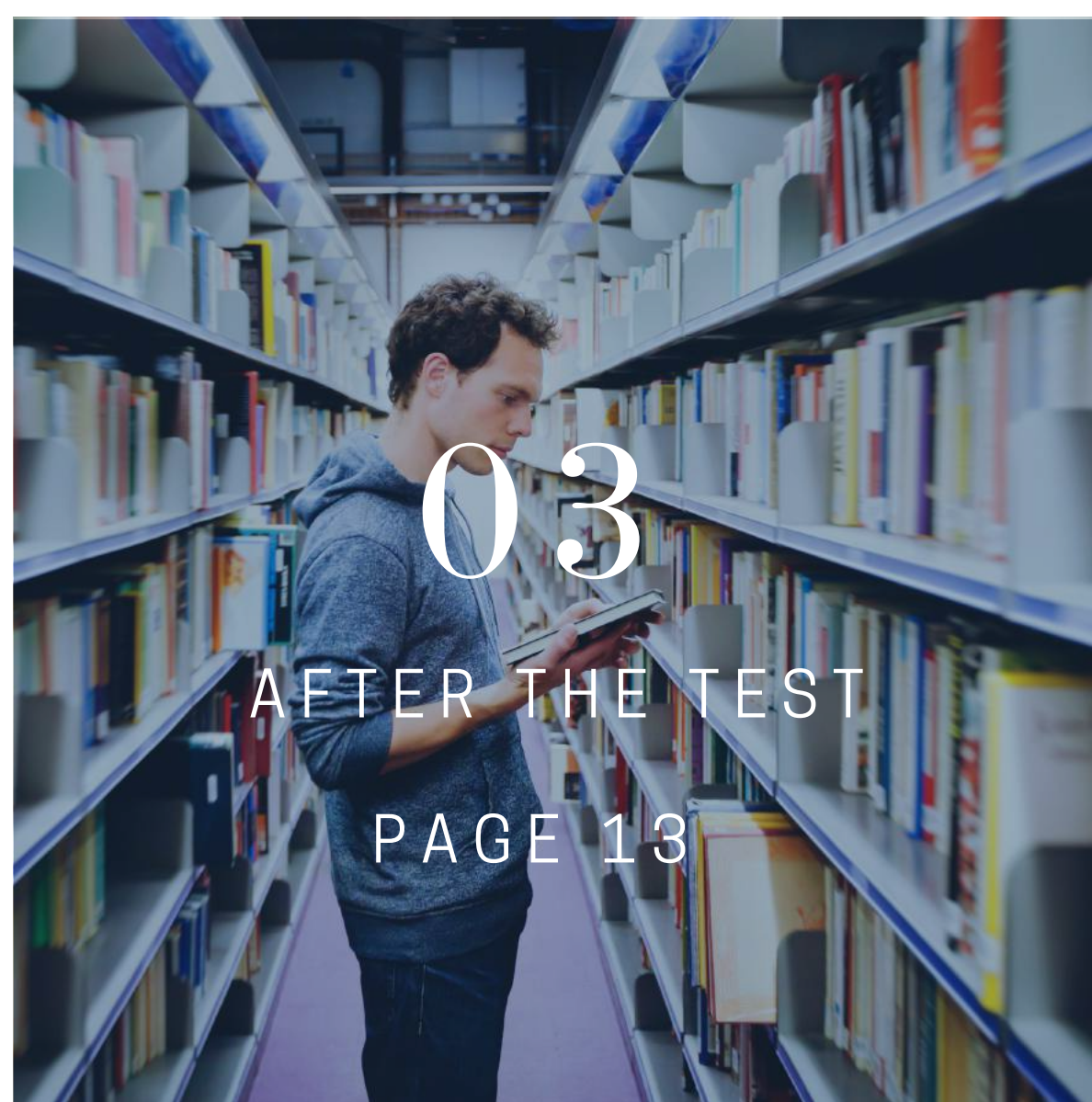
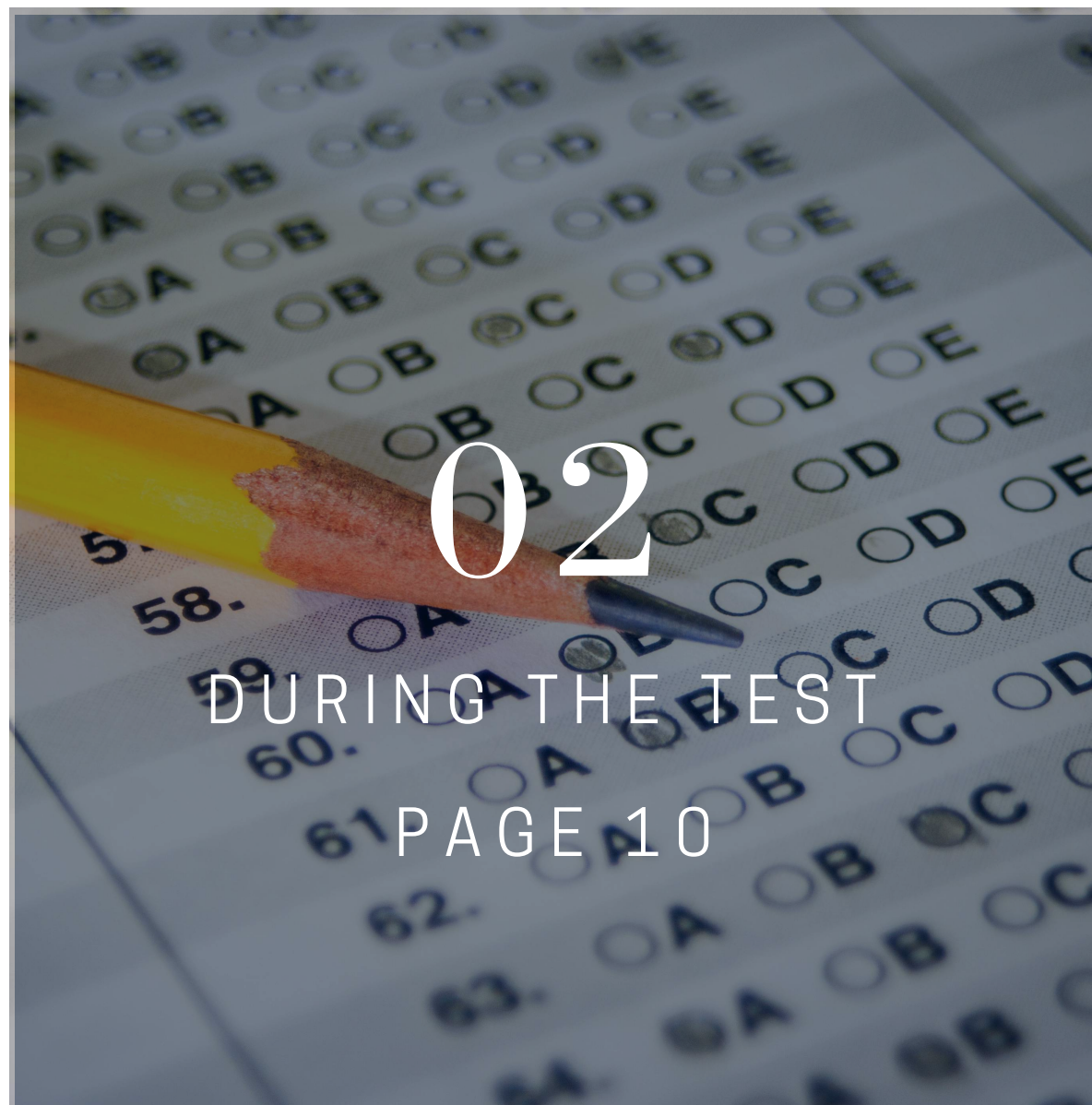
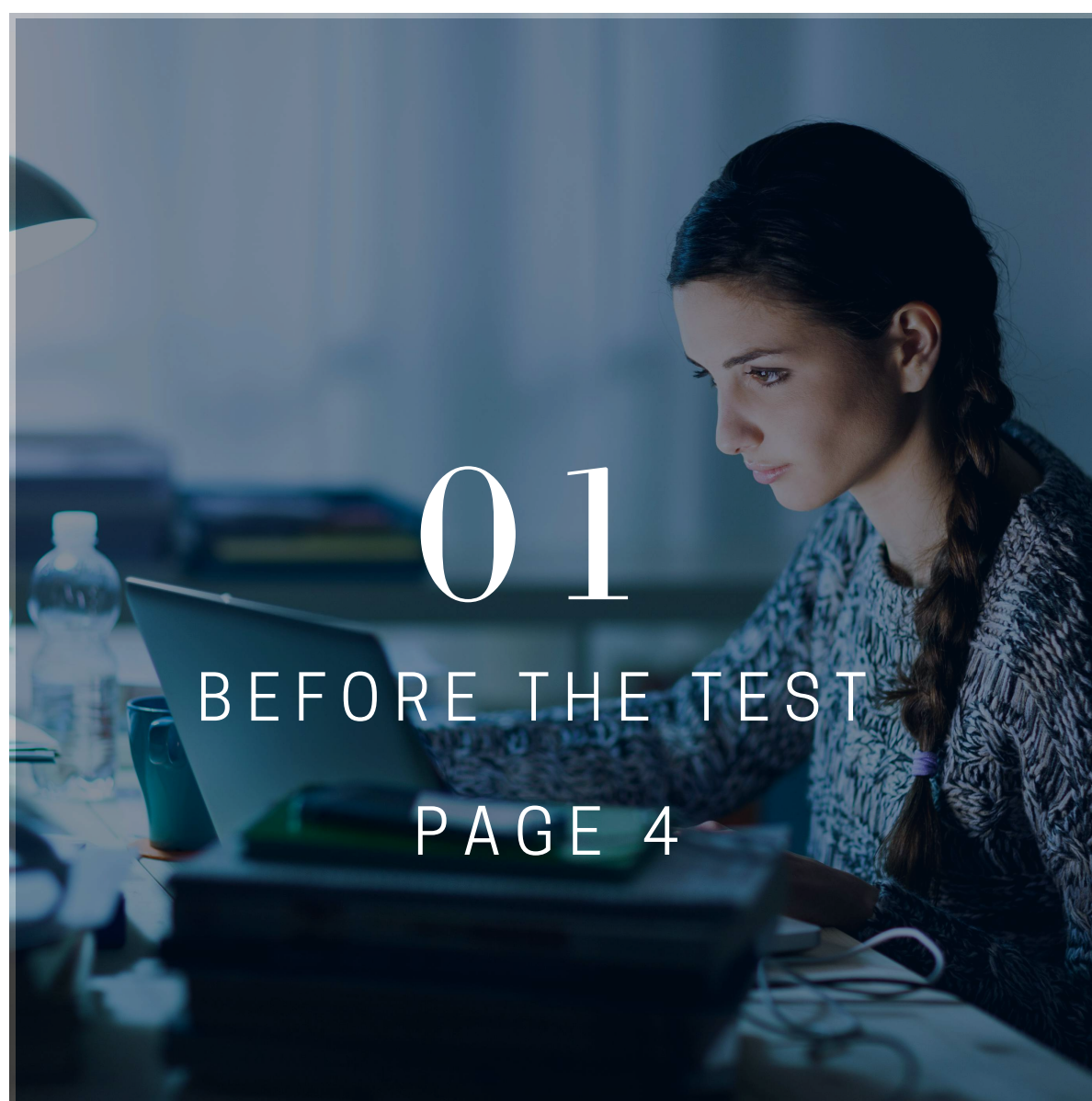
The ACT test is a very important part of the admissions process and can open to the door to more educational and financial opportunities.

This book will show you how to prepare for and what to do during and after the test.



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THE STAGES OF TAKING A COLLEGE
READINESS ASSESSMENT



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BEFORE THE TEST

What courses should I look for in high school?

What can I do months before the test?

What can I do the night before the test?

What can I do the morning of the test?

Courses to look for in high school

Courses you take in high school that prepare you for college should also prepare you for a college readiness assessment.

Taking the right courses and doing well in them is like studying for the test.

There are recommended combinations of courses, in each specific subject area, you should consider taking while in high school to best help you prepare for a college readiness assessment. The more challenging the class, the more prepared you'll be for the test and for college courses.

This is how the ACT has always worked. It will test you over how proficient you are in the core academic areas of English, reading, math, and science. If you reach an ACT Readiness Benchmark, then you have a high probability of getting a good grade in that corresponding college entry course.

Based on extensive research, ACT has determined that if you score at or above an **18 for English, 22 for reading, 22 for mathematics, and 23 for science**, you are ready for college.

Things to do months before the test

You might be wondering about the best way to study and when to start studying for a college readiness assessment.

There are four things you should consider doing when it comes to studying for a college readiness assessment. These practices will help you build confidence leading up to the test and prevent cramming or burnout.

Take a practice test—Taking a practice ACT test allows you to familiarize yourself with the format and types of questions asked. After you take a practice test, note your strengths but, more importantly, identify areas for improvement.

Plan your practice and study time—Set aside small amounts of time for studying over an extended period. Keep a calendar of your schedule, but make sure to keep it flexible for surprise homework assignments, extracurricular activities, and fun.

Keep a positive attitude—Practice positive thinking: imagine yourself sitting in the quiet test room, bubbling your answers on the scantron, meeting the challenge of the exam.

Take a look at ACT test prep options—They can help you become more familiar with the test format, gain confidence, and be ready on test day.

Planning the night before and morning of the test

It's the night before your test. You plan to fall asleep early and wake up refreshed and ready to go.

Then the morning comes. Your eyes open, a small flurry of nervousness in your stomach.

You get up, get dressed, and contemplate what you need to do in the next hour to help ensure success on the test.



But where do you start?

BEFORE THE TEST

Here are three things you can do to help give you that extra boost the night before and morning of the test:



Get a good night's rest.

Research shows that you can improve your score if you get between 7 and 9 hours of sleep the night before the test.



Eat a great breakfast.

And make sure that breakfast is full of brain-boosting food. Protein and fiber-rich food can help optimize your brain power.



Remain calm and confident.

Remember, you've prepared for this. Be confident in what you know.

Bring these to the test

Another good practice to do the night or morning of the test is to gather what you need to bring to the testing center.

Read and take note. You don't want to forget anything or risk not being admitted to the test.



A printed copy of your ticket.



Acceptable photo identification.



A permitted calculator.



A watch to pace yourself.



Sharpened, soft lead No. 2 pencils with good erasers.



Snacks or drinks to consume outside the test room.

More information about what to bring can be found at actstudent.org

02

DURING THE TEST

What kind of calculator can I use?

What are some tips that can help me during the test?

Types of calculators you can bring

The following types of calculators are permitted, but only after they are modified as noted:

- You can use calculators that can hold programs or documents—just remove all documents and programs that have computer algebra system functionality
- Calculators with paper tape—just remove the tape
- Calculators that make noise—just turn off the sound
- Calculators with an infrared data port—just completely cover the infrared data port
- Calculators that have power cords—just remove all power/electrical cords

Remember, for the ACT test, you are not required to use a calculator. All problems can be solved without a calculator.

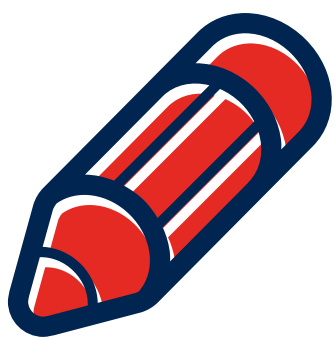
Test Taking Tips

What can be done once in the fray of shuffling paper, scratching pencils, and a ticking clock?

Here are some general test tips:



Pace yourself—don't spend too much time on a single question.



Use a sharpened No. 2 pencil with a good eraser.



Answer every question. You are not penalized for wrong answers.



Eliminate as many incorrect answers as you can, then make an educated guess.

Find more tips at actstudent.org.

03

AFTER THE TEST

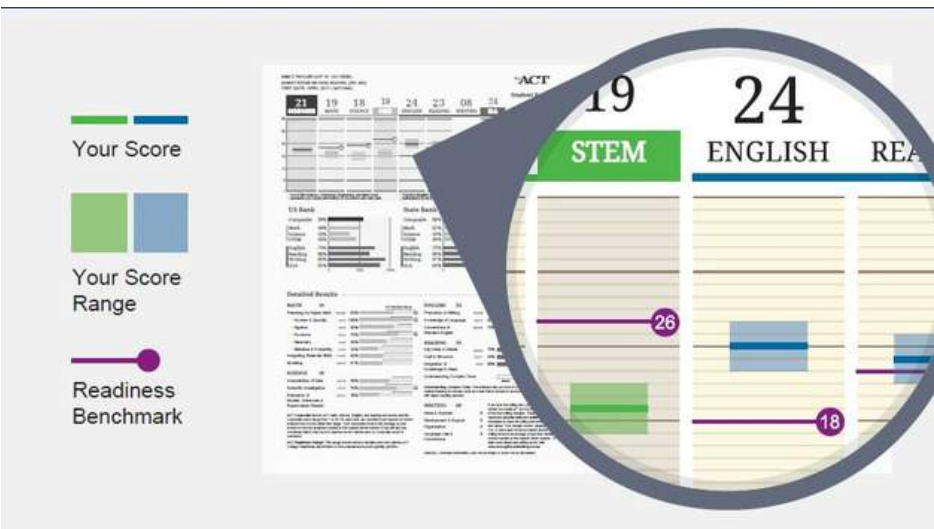
What can I learn from my score report?

Should I retest and how much should I study for the retest?

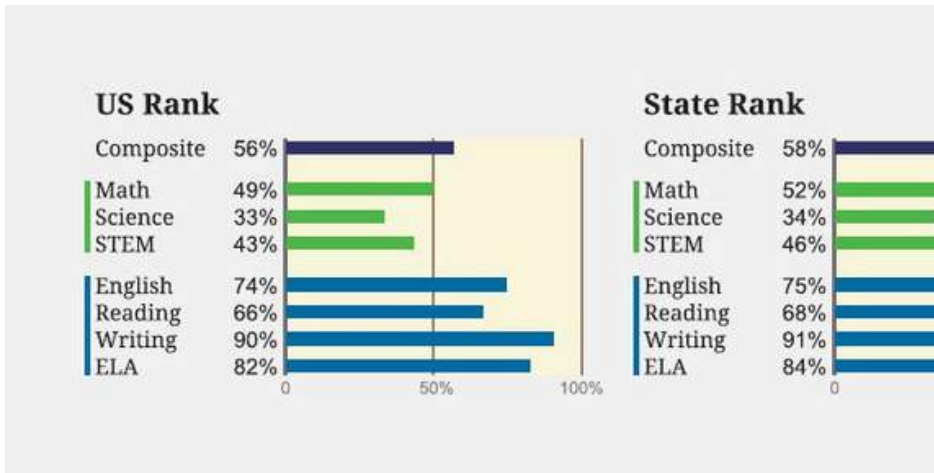
What can I learn from my score report?

You've taken the test and received your scores.

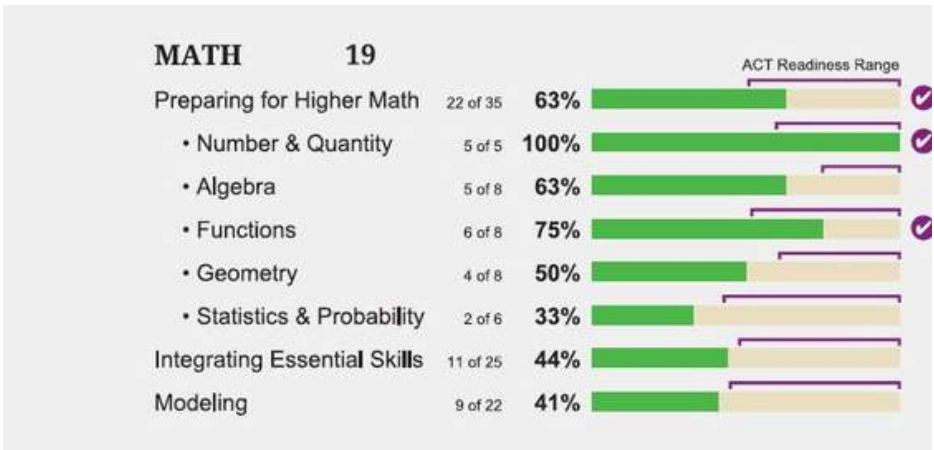
With the ACT, there are four aspects you should check out on the new, enhanced score report.



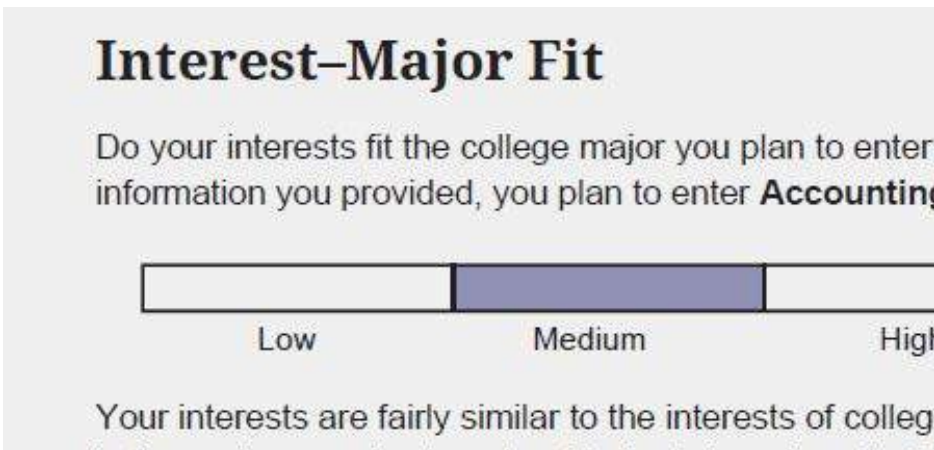
1 Know if you're college ready
Scoring at or above the College Readiness Benchmark means you have a good chance of getting a B or C in a first-year college class.



2 Compare yourself
Ranking shows the percentage of recent grads who took the ACT and received scores that are the same or lower than yours.



3 Find areas to improve
The ACT Readiness Range visualizes areas where you excel and helps you find opportunities for improvement.



4 Compare interests to majors
Learn if your interests are similar to those of students who actually chose the major you're considering.

For more information about your ACT score report, go to actstudent.org.

Should I retest?

Maybe this is the last question on your mind, but many students retest after getting their first score reports.

In fact...

57% 

...of the students who took the ACT in 2015 increased their score when they retested.

The lower your initial ACT Composite score, the more likely your second score will be higher than the first score.

The higher your initial ACT Composite score, the more likely your second score will be the same as or lower than the first score.

Every point matters. If you increase your score by one point, it may allow you more scholarship and educational opportunities.

Should I retest?

So how do you know if retesting is right for you?

Here are some things to consider:

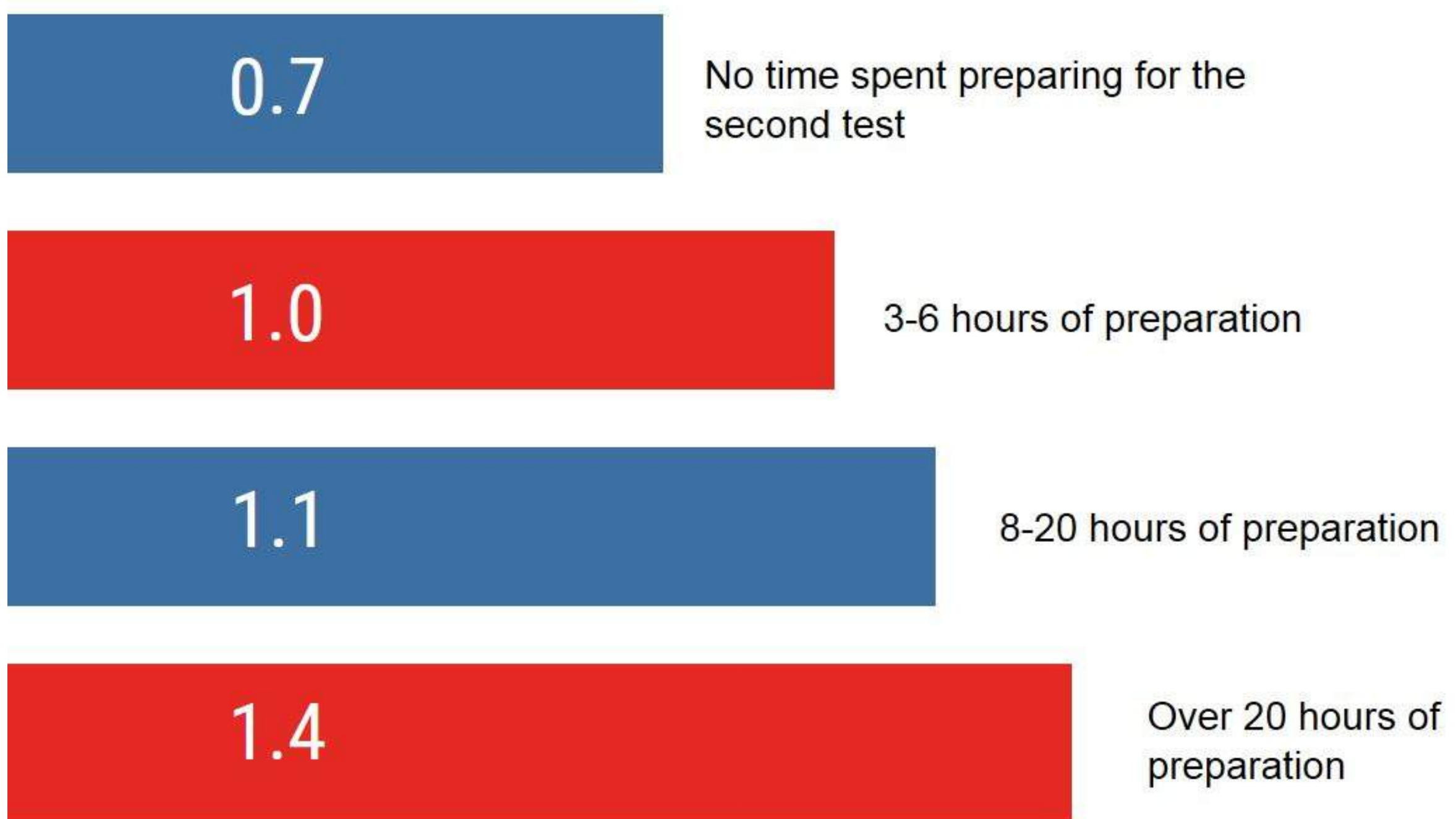
- *Do your scores meet your goals?*
- *Do your scores match the range of scores of the college you want to attend?*
- *Do you qualify for some scholarship opportunities with your current scores? (Maybe that scholarship opportunity is within your grasp.)*
- *Do you think your scores do not accurately represent your abilities?*
- *Are your scores not what you expected, based on your high school grades?*
- *Have you taken more coursework or an intensive review in the areas covered?*
- *Do you want to apply to a college that requires or recommends the writing test?*

How you answer these questions will determine whether or not you should consider retesting.

How much should I study for the retest?

A lot of factors determine whether or not your score will increase, but the average increase in score is typically based on how much time is spent preparing for a second test:

Average ACT Composite Score Increase Changes from First to Second Test Based on Amount of Preparation



Will increasing your score, even by a point, have an impact? Certainly! It could increase your financial opportunities, admission possibilities, and scholarship chances.

RESOURCES

Helpful resources to help you
prepare

RESOURCES

Ultimately, the most important aspect of preparing for a college readiness assessment is mindset.

Remember to believe in yourself. Remain calm and confident. Your attitude could play a major role in how you score on a college readiness assessment.

Build your confidence before the test and become college ready by clicking on and checking out these helpful resources:

Free Resources



Preparing for the ACT Test



ACT Question of the Day



Sample Test Questions

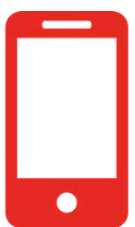


Test Tips

Affordable Resources



ACT® Kaplan Online Prep Live



ACT Online Prep™



The Official ACT® Prep Guide

Taking the ACT test doesn't have to be stressful if you prepare and know what to expect. Remember: you can do it!