PSAT/NMSQT
List of Academic Skills

Critical Reading Skills

Determining the Meaning of Words

Use vocabulary skills, context, roots, prefixes and suffixes to determine the meaning of words.

Author's Craft

Understand how the author uses tone, style, organization and literacy devices such as metaphors or symbolism.

Reasoning and Inference

Determine the implied meaning of a reading passage and draw informed conclusions.

Organization and Ideas

Understand the organization of a reading passage, and identify the main and supporting ideas.

Understanding Literary Elements

Determine meaning using literary elements such as plot, setting, dialogue and characterization.

Mathematics

Number and Operations

Understand types of numbers (integers, fractions, decimals), their properties and the correct order of operations (addition, multiplication, division). Perform computations correctly.

Algebra and Functions

Solve problems using algebraic expressions and symbols to represent relationships, patterns and functions of different types.

Geometry and Measurement

Solve problems based on understanding the properties of shapes, such as triangles and circles, and the spatial relationships between angles and lines.

Data, Statistics and Probability

Analyze data, apply statistical methods, make inferences and determine the likelihood that certain events will occur.

Problem Solving

Solve abstract and practical problems by applying and adapting a variety of strategies. Monitor progress and evaluate answers in terms of questions asked.

Representation

Use and translate among representations including verbal, numerical, symbolic and graphical to communicate mathematical ideas and solve problems.

Reasoning

Develop and use mathematical arguments and proofs to explore the truth of conjectures and justify conclusions.

Connections

Connect ideas from different areas of mathematics (particularly geometry and algebra) to state or solve abstract or applied problems.

Communication

Express mathematical ideas precisely and communicate them coherently and clearly in the language and notation of mathematics.

Writing Skills

Manage Word Choice and Grammatical Relationships Between Words

Use grammatical structures correctly, including subjects and verbs, nouns and pronouns, and the correct verb tense.

Manage Grammatical Structures Used to Modify or Compare

Understand correct use of adjectives or adverbs, comparative structures (such as neither and nor), and phrases used to modify or compare.

Manage Phrases and Clauses in a Sentence

Use parallel structure, connectives (such as that or which) and relative clauses (such as who or what) properly in a sentence.

Recognize Correctly Formed Sentences

Recognize correct sentence structure.

Manage Order and Relationships of Sentences and Paragraphs

Identify how to order the elements of a sentence or paragraph to improve clarity, meaning and the progression of ideas.