The Official Guide to the Elementary Level SSAT for Students in Grades 3 – 4
Table of Contents
A Brief History of SSATB ................................................................. 4
SSAT Testing Levels ........................................................................ 4
Admission Testing ........................................................................ 4
What to Expect on Test Day .......................................................... 4
Overview of the Elementary Level SSAT ....................................... 5
  Quantitative (Math) Section ....................................................... 5
  Verbal Section .......................................................................... 6
  Reading Section ........................................................................ 6
  Writing Sample ........................................................................ 6
Registration & Fee ......................................................................... 7
Elementary Scoring ....................................................................... 7
Reporting Services ........................................................................ 7
Frequently Asked Questions ........................................................ 8
Helpful Tips .................................................................................. 9
Contact SSAT .............................................................................. 9
Practice Elementary SSAT ............................................................ 11-19
Welcome!

If you are in the process of having your child apply to one or more of the independent schools around the world that rely on the Secondary School Admission Test (SSAT) as an admission assessment tool, this guide is for you.

This is an exciting time in your child’s academic life, and we have designed this guide to help demystify the testing process. As you read through this document, you’ll find an overview of the individual test sections, sample problems, and answers to frequently asked questions.

Please contact us if you have questions or concerns—like you, we want your child to feel confident and well-prepared.

Sincerely,

Heather Hoerle
Executive Director, SSATB
A BRIEF HISTORY OF SSATB

In the 1950s, ten independent school admission officers addressed the need for a common admission test. Because academic programs differed among schools, it was difficult to compare the academic ability of applicants based on grades and other school-specific performance measures. To solve this problem, the Secondary School Admission Test Board (SSATB) was formed. SSATB is a non-profit educational organization whose mission is to advance and add value to the private school admission process for schools, students, and families. Over 900 private and independent schools in the United States, Canada, and worldwide rely on SSATB for the delivery of high-quality admission and assessment services.

SSAT TESTING LEVELS

There are currently three testing levels of the SSAT. The Upper Level is for students in grades 8-11. The Middle Level is for students in grades 5-7. The Elementary Level is for students in grades 3-4. (2012-13 is the Elementary SSAT’s introductory year.)

ADMISSION TESTING

The SSAT is an admission test and is designed to assess, for example, how well a student can process verbal and quantitative information and solve problems. Admission tests are predictive of academic performance, compare a child’s performance with that of other children in a standard setting, provide a profile of academic strengths and weaknesses, and assess differences among individuals. Admission tests are not achievement tests, which are designed to measure how much a student has learned in school or his/her knowledge about a specific curriculum. When used for admission by private and independent schools, the test is only one piece of information about the applicant that is considered.

WHAT TO EXPECT ON TEST DAY

When arriving at the test site, be sure to have your child’s SSAT Admission Ticket, which you received after registering him/her for the test. Your child will be checked into the test site by the administrator and will take a seat in the testing room. Parents are not allowed in the testing room. Once all students are seated, the proctor will begin. The proctor will read a series of instructions to ensure that students have the correct test booklet and that they understand how to mark their answers in the test booklet. Testers will mark their answers directly in the test booklets by coloring in the circle next to their answer choice.
OVERVIEW OF THE ELEMENTARY LEVEL SSAT

The Elementary Level SSAT is a multiple-choice admission test that consists of four sections, given in this order:

- Quantitative (math) – 30 questions, 30 minutes
- Verbal – 30 questions, 20 minutes

  Break – 15 minutes (snacks and beverages are allowed during break)

- Reading – 28 questions (seven short passages, each with four questions), 30 minutes
- Writing Sample – 1 prompt, 15 minutes

  Total Testing Time: 110 minutes

QUANTITATIVE SECTION

The Quantitative (math) section assesses a student’s ability to solve mathematical problems involving:

Number Concepts and Operations
- Addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of whole numbers, fractions, and decimals
- Rounding, place value, estimation, and properties
- Odd, even, positive, negative, and prime numbers
- Ratios and proportions

Algebra, Geometry, and Other Math
- Describe and extend patterns
- Equalities/inequalities
- Shapes, line segments, and angles
- Linear measure, area, and perimeter
- Read and interpret graphs/tables
- Weight, capacity, time, temperature, and money
- Logic, data analysis, and probability
VERBAL SECTION
The Verbal section assesses a student’s vocabulary, verbal reasoning, and ability to relate ideas logically. This section consists of two different types of questions: synonyms and analogies. Synonyms assess a student’s ability to select the one word or phrase that is closest in meaning to the word given in capital letters. Analogies assess a student’s ability to find relationships between words.

To complete the section, students use their knowledge of:
- word origins
- synonyms
- antonyms
- homonyms
- root words
- prefixes
- suffixes
- multiple meanings of words

READING SECTION
The Reading section assesses a student’s ability to comprehend what is read. Students are asked to read through a short passage and then answer a set of four questions about that passage. Depending on the passage, students may be asked any of the following types of questions:

- **Content**
  Using specific details that are stated in the passage, the student may be asked to identify main ideas and/or provide answers to questions relating to “who,” “what,” “where,” “when,” “why,” and “how.”

- **Context**
  Using context clues, the student may be asked to determine the meaning of a specific word or phrase and choose the correct definition or synonym.

- **Inference**
  Using implicit information from the passage, the student may be asked to make inferences about the behaviors and motives of the author and of the characters depicted in the passage.

- **Analysis**
  Drawing on the information contained in the passage, the student may be asked to make inferences, predictions, and conclusions.

WRITING SAMPLE
The Writing Sample gives the student an opportunity for self-expression through written response to a picture prompt. The student is asked to look at the picture and tell a story about what happened and to be sure the story includes a beginning, a middle, and an end. This writing sample is not graded but a copy is provided to the school. The family does not receive a copy of the Elementary writing sample, nor is the writing sample available for purchase by families in the 2012-13 testing year.
REGISTRATION & FEE
When a school requests that your child take the Elementary Level SSAT, you can access the test registration form by following these steps.

1. Go to www.ssat.org and create an account. This account is for a single child only. Record your Web Login ID, which you will need to retrieve your child’s scores after the scoring process is complete.

2. When registering, you will be asked to indicate your child’s grade level. When you select grade 3 or 4, you will access the appropriate test site search and select the location where you wish your child to test.

3. If the school to which your child is applying has given you an access code to use to register for the test, you will enter it in the space provided.

4. When you register, you may designate school score recipients—free of charge. You may also wait to receive your child’s scores before adding score recipients through your child’s account page.

5. The Elementary SSAT fee is $80 and is payable by credit card.

6. If you are unable to pay the test fee due to economic hardship, you may request a Fee Waiver from the school to which you are applying—prior to registering for the test.

ELEMENTARY SCORING
Your child’s Elementary SSAT score report will contain the following information:

- **Number of Items**: The number of items in the content sections and subsections.
- **Number Correct**: The number of correct answers for the content sections and subsections.
- **Percent Correct**: The percentage of correct answers for the content sections and subsections.
- **Scale Score**: A score which has a range of values from 300 to 600.
- **Scale Score Percentile Rank**: The scale score percentile rank is a score which has values from 1 to 99. It compares performance to other students taking the same examination.
- **Total Scale Score**: The total scale score is the sum of the scale scores for the Quantitative, Verbal, and Reading Sections. It has a low value of 900 and a high value of 1800.

REPORTING SERVICES
A free copy of your child’s score report will be available online via your SSAT account. For an additional fee, SSAT will report scores by mail ($20) or FedEx ($35). Scores are generally available within three business days of receipt of the testing materials at the SSAT offices.
**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**How do schools use my child’s scores?**
Schools use your child’s scores in different ways—to estimate your child’s ability to do work in a private school, to compare your child’s performance with other applicants for admission, and/or to compare the test score with your child’s present academic record. Each school evaluates a child’s scores according to its own standards and requirements. Specific questions about how test scores are used in the admission process should be directed to the school’s admission officer.

**Are special testing accommodations available for the Elementary SSAT?**
Yes, families who can provide school documentation verifying that their child routinely receives special accommodations in his/her current academic setting may apply for special accommodations. More information, along with the required forms, can be found at www.ssat.org. If you intend to apply for special accommodations, be sure that the test site you choose has special accommodations seating capacity.

**How many times can my child take the Elementary SSAT?**
Your child may take the Elementary SSAT twice during the testing year (August 1- July 31).

**Are snacks or drinks allowed on the day of the test?**
Yes, your child may bring snacks and beverages for consumption during the break. Snacks and beverages may not be consumed during testing.

**Can my child use the restroom during the test?**
A 15-minute break is provided during the test for trips to restroom. A child may raise his/her hand to use the restroom at any time during the test, but the child may not make up the missed testing time.

**Should my child guess if he/she doesn’t know the answer?**
Encourage your child to try to answer every question, making his/her best guesses about the questions of which he/she is unsure. There are no penalties for wrong answers.

**How do I report my child’s scores to schools?**
You may indicate the school’s 4-digit SSAT code at the time of test registration, or you may wait to receive your child’s scores before designating score recipients through your child’s online SSAT account.

**Are fee waivers available for the Elementary SSAT?**
Yes, you may request a fee waiver from the school to which you are applying, if you are unable to pay the test fee due to economic hardship. A fee waiver covers the cost of the test only ($80) and can be used in lieu of a credit card during test registration.
HELPFUL TIPS
The best way to help your child prepare for the Elementary Level SSAT is to review the test format beforehand, including layout, structure, instructions, and time allotment. Looking at practice questions together is an excellent way to demystify the process.

In the days leading up to the test, be sure that your child gets adequate rest. Provide a healthy breakfast on the test day and encourage your child to bring a break-time snack and drink.

Be careful not to add unnecessary stress. While it’s always important to encourage your child to do his/her best work, don’t overemphasize the importance of the test.

Be sure to remind your child to listen carefully to the test administrator, who will provide all the instructions he/she needs to take the test successfully.

If your child is sick on testing day, you have up to one week after the scheduled test date to book a seat for another test date (if available). A change fee applies.

CONTACT SSAT
If you need assistance or have additional questions, please call us Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Eastern time) at 609-683-4440, email us at info@ssat.org, or “chat” with us via www.ssat.org.
PRACTICE TEST

This practice test is provided to give you and your child a specific look at the types of questions that will appear on the test. It is also formatted exactly as the real test book will appear to your child on test day. Note that your child will mark answers directly in the test book by filling in the circle next to his/her answer choice. Please note, this is not a full-length practice test.
SECTION 1
10 Questions

Following each problem in this section, there are five suggested answers. Select the best answer from the five choices. You may use the blank space provided to solve the problem.

Sample Question:

34 -13 =

- 19
- 21
- 37
- 42
- 47

1. Lily wants to buy a notebook that costs $3.50. She only has $2.45. Which coins could you give Lily so that she would have exactly $3.50?

- A 1 nickel
- B 2 quarters and 1 nickel
- C 3 quarters and 2 dimes
- D 4 quarters and 1 nickel
- E 4 quarters, 1 dime, and 1 nickel

2. 17 + 6 =

- A 20
- B 22
- C 23
- D 24
- E 26

3. According to the graph below, what is the total number of cupcakes sold on Monday and Wednesday?

- A 25
- B 35
- C 55
- D 60
- E 75

![Cupcakes Sold Graph]

Number of cupcakes

Monday Tuesday Wednesday
4. Omar and Zahir have 427 paperclips in their collection. They traded 259 of their paperclips to their sister for 27 pencils. How many paperclips do the boys have now?

A 168  
B 172  
C 232  
D 238  
E 286

5. 4 is to 16 as 5 is to ____

A 15  
B 16  
C 18  
D 25  
E 26

6. If \(24 \div m = 6\), then \(5 \times m = ?\)

A 4  
B 6  
C 9  
D 20  
E 30

7. The table below shows the temperature in \(^\circ\)F for five cities on November 1. What was the average temperature?

A 45°  
B 65°  
C 67°  
D 69°  
E 86°

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temperature on November 1</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miami</td>
<td>90°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlanta</td>
<td>82°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle</td>
<td>65°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland</td>
<td>63°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>45°</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. 1.7 m = _______ cm?
   A) 0.17
   B) 1.7
   C) 17
   D) 170
   E) 1,700

9. Which fractions below are ordered from the smallest to largest?
   A) $\frac{2}{6}$, $\frac{2}{8}$, $\frac{2}{10}$, $\frac{2}{12}$
   B) $\frac{2}{6}$, $\frac{2}{10}$, $\frac{2}{8}$, $\frac{2}{12}$
   C) $\frac{2}{8}$, $\frac{2}{6}$, $\frac{2}{12}$, $\frac{2}{10}$
   D) $\frac{2}{12}$, $\frac{2}{10}$, $\frac{2}{6}$, $\frac{2}{8}$
   E) $\frac{2}{12}$, $\frac{2}{10}$, $\frac{2}{8}$, $\frac{2}{6}$

10. If area = $\frac{1}{2} \times \text{base} \times \text{vertical height}$, what is the area of $\Delta ABC$?
    A) 9 square units
    B) 10 square units
    C) 18 square units
    D) 20 square units
    E) 40 square units
SECTION 2
14 Questions

This section consists of two different types of questions: synonyms and analogies. There are directions and a sample question for each type.

Synonyms
Each of the following questions consists of one word followed by five words or phrases. You are to select the one word or phrase whose meaning is closest to the word in capital letters.

Sample Question:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SLEEPY:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. perky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. fast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>●. tired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. sad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. hungry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. IGNORANT:
   A. serious  
   B. creative  
   C. forgetful  
   D. uneducated  
   E. knowledgeable

2. DIFFICULT:
   A. soft  
   B. hard  
   C. light  
   D. gentle  
   E. simple

3. ADEQUATE:
   A. ideal  
   B. perfect  
   C. acceptable  
   D. mild  
   E. optimal

4. FRIGHTFUL:
   A. spiteful  
   B. horrible  
   C. deceitful  
   D. vengeful  
   E. shameful

5. OBJECTIVE:
   A. end  
   B. line  
   C. part  
   D. begin  
   E. purpose

6. ADMIRE:
   A. desire  
   B. pretty  
   C. appreciate  
   D. crave  
   E. delight
Analogies
The following questions ask you to find relationships between words. For each question, select the answer choice that best completes the meaning of the sentence.

Sample Question:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kitten is to cat as</th>
<th>A fawn is to colt</th>
<th>B puppy is to dog</th>
<th>C cow is to bull</th>
<th>D wolf is to bear</th>
<th>E hen is to rooster</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Choice B is the best answer because a kitten is a young cat just as a puppy is a young dog.
Of all the answer choices, B states a relationship that is most like the relationship between kitten and cat.

7. Blue is to color as
   - A human is to hair
   - B pillow is to sleep
   - C flower is to grass
   - D paper is to pencil
   - E rabbit is to animal

11. Wheat is to bread as milk is to
   - A cow
   - B goat
   - C drink
   - D white
   - E cheese

8. Simple is to complex as
   - A muddy is to dirt
   - B sore is to painful
   - C beautiful is to gorgeous
   - D miniature is to massive
   - E hilarious is to funny

12. Water is to liquid as
   - A ice is to solid
   - B snow is to flakes
   - C freezing is to cold
   - D slippery is to steps
   - E milk is to yogurt

9. Pane is to pain as weigh is to
   - A ton
   - B way
   - C scale
   - D weight
   - E pounds

13. Audio is to hearing as video is to
   - A television
   - B camera
   - C tape
   - D vision
   - E movie

10. Find is to lose as construct is to
    - A wood
    - B build
    - C demolish
    - D misplace
    - E materials

14. Ship is to captain as
    - A airplane is to pilot
    - B boat is to water
    - C bird is to fly
    - D car is to road
    - E skateboard is to park
When the girl was brought to the king, he led her into a room that was entirely filled with straw. Giving her a spinning wheel, he said, “Get to work now. If by morning you have not spun this straw into gold, then you will have to go and live in the tower.” Then he locked the room, and she was there all alone.

The poor miller’s daughter sat there. She had no idea how to spin straw into gold. She began to cry.

Then suddenly the door opened. A little man stepped inside and said, “Good evening, why are you crying so?”

“Oh,” answered the girl, “I am supposed to spin straw into gold, and I do not know how to do it.”

The little man said, “What will you give me if I spin it for you?”

“My necklace,” said the girl.

The little man took the necklace, sat down before the spinning wheel, and whir, whir, whir, three times pulled, and the spool was full. So it went until morning, and then all the straw was spun, and all the spools were filled with gold, and the little man had vanished.

1. What did the king want the miller’s daughter to do?
   A hand over the necklace
   B spin the straw into gold
   C fill the room with straw
   D make the little man vanish
   E stop the little man from crying

2. The word that best describes the king is
   A tricky
   B boring
   C mean
   D severe
   E sneaky

3. The girl was crying because she
   A was alone in the room
   B could not unlock the door
   C could not turn straw into gold
   D wanted to keep her necklace
   E could not see the little man

4. What does the word “vanished” (line 17) mean?
   A called
   B finished
   C helped
   D disappeared
   E cried
Five cents doesn’t buy you much these days, but the 1913 Liberty Head nickel is worth a fortune. Just ask the family of George Walton.

A month after Paul Montgomery, a coin collector in New Hampshire, offered a $1 million reward for the 1913 Liberty Head nickel—one of the rarest American coins—the Walton family came forward and said that they thought they owned one.

The family had put the coin away after Walton’s death in 1962, believing the nickel was worthless. But after learning of the offer, the family decided to see if their nickel was genuine. Experts determined it was.

The story of the Liberty Head nickel began in 1883. That’s when the U.S. Mint began producing the coins. In 1912, the mint replaced the Liberty Head nickel with the Indian Head, or Buffalo, nickel. But in 1913, someone—probably an employee of the U.S. Mint—illegally minted five additional Liberty Head coins.

Two of the rare 1913 nickels are now owned by coin collectors and two others are in a museum. What happened to the fifth one remained a mystery until now.

“It’s been missing for so long,” said coin dealer John Dannreuther. “People would say there are only four, but we knew there were five. And there it is!”

5. The main idea of this passage is
   A people like to collect coins
   B the U.S. Mint makes coins with pictures
   C five extra 1913 Liberty Head nickels were made
   D the fifth 1913 Liberty Head nickel is found
   E coin collectors offer a lot of money for rare coins

6. If someone illegally made five 1913 Liberty Head nickels, they made them
   A for government officials
   B as examples for museums
   C without permission of the law
   D to sell only to coin collectors
   E at the request of the U.S. Mint

7. According to the passage, another name for the Indian Head nickel is the
   A 1913 nickel
   B Walton nickel
   C Buffalo nickel
   D Liberty Head nickel
   E Dannreuther nickel

8. In the last paragraph of the passage, we can infer that John Dannreuther feels
   A tired
   B pleased
   C hopeful
   D uncertain
   E disappointed
Look at the picture and tell a story about what happened. Make sure your story includes a beginning, a middle, and an end.

_________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________

SECTION 4
1 Question
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantitative</th>
<th>Verbal</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. D</td>
<td>1. D</td>
<td>1. B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. D</td>
<td>5. E</td>
<td>5. D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. E</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13. D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14. A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>