

Introducing ...

# Borland Educational Test Strategy Workshops

Preparing Students to Excel on Today's Standardized Tests

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Dear Interested Parent, Colleague, or Student,

Thanks for your interest in the Borland Educational Test Strategy Workshops!

I'd like to take this opportunity to acquaint you with the workshops, and with some of the reasons I believe them to be among the best programs available anywhere to prepare students in junior high and high school to take standardized tests such as the SAT1, SAT2, ACT, PSAT, SSAT, and HSPT.

For today's students, standardized tests are a critically important fact of academic life. Unfortunately, many receive artificially low scores that give an unfairly negative impression of their academic abilities – not because they aren't capable students – but simply because they don't know how to correctly approach and take a standardized test! Many students, without realizing it, make simple strategic errors that can have a disastrous effect on their standardized test scores and, as a result, on the educational opportunities made available to them.

Fortunately, it is possible, in a short period of time, to “learn the ropes” of standardized test taking, for students to adopt basic, powerfully effective test taking strategies and learn simple skills that allow them to maximize their performance on standardized tests. This “strategic approach” enables students to make the most of the knowledge they already have – and can mean the difference between disappointing scores and real success.

Borland Educational Test Strategy Workshops are complete courses, packed with dynamite test taking info, materials, strategies, exercises, and homework designed to help students BLAST through test taking barriers and achieve outstanding scores!

**For example, did you know that ...**

- there's a simple way to make each section of a standardized test shorter, easier, less dangerous, less stressful, and much more productive for nearly every student?
- guessing is nearly always a good idea – but should be done in a completely different way on math questions than on verbal questions?
- the most difficult math questions can be among the easiest to guess correctly on?
- one can earn points on analogy and synonym questions without knowing what the given words mean, and on reading questions without “reading” the passage?
- learning to fill in bubbles “the smart way” can significantly improve one's score?

It's true! These are just a few of the many amazing “tricks of the trade” that students discover and learn how to apply in the Borland Educational Test Strategy Workshops.

## Other highlights include ...

- how and why standardized tests like the SAT1, SAT2, ACT, PSAT, SSAT, and HSPT differ radically from other tests, and therefore demand a radically different test taking approach and focus in short-term preparation;
- key general test taking tips and strategies, including: the importance of “Choosing Your Battles,” using the “Two Pass Approach,” the “Marking System,” and the “Process of Elimination,” and understanding how standardized tests are scored (and why this usually makes guessing a very good idea);
- when and how to guess: the role of intuition; using a “guessing machine”; knowing when *not* to guess; etc.;
- specific strategies for handling typical standardized test math questions;
- “math that matters” – easy to learn “speed math” techniques for estimation, percents, fast fractions, mental calculation, etc.;
- particular strategies for attacking sentence completion, reading, writing, synonym, and analogy questions;
- a simple exercise that can improve reading comprehension scores in less than 10 minutes a day, and special, helpful tips for slower readers;
- the many benefits of long-term preparation for standardized tests, and how to best profit from one’s extra investment of time and energy;

... and much more!

These examples give an idea of the awesome test taking advantage students can gain by enrolling and participating in a Borland Educational Test Strategy Workshop. But what else distinguishes these workshops? With so many other test taking programs, private teachers, and test prep books competing for your business, why should you go with Chris Borland and Borland Educational?

Here’s why:

### **Powerful, Effective Approach!**

Success on “provide the answer” tests, the kind students take routinely in school, depends roughly 90% upon subject knowledge and only 10% upon test taking strategy. However, high scores on “pick the answer” tests (like the SAT1, SAT2, ACT, PSAT, SSAT, and HSPT) depend in roughly equal amounts on subject knowledge and test taking savvy. While little or nothing can realistically be done to actually improve one’s command of mathematics or the English language in just a few hours, a LOT can be done in the same short time to master powerful test taking techniques, tips, and strategies – and thereby dramatically raise standardized test scores!

Unfortunately, other standardized test courses, private teachers, and workbooks often take the content-based “drill and kill” approach to short-term test preparation, attempting to increase students’ test scores by improving their math and verbal skills. Typically, students are given long, unrelated lists of vocabulary words to memorize, practice with question types which rarely if ever appear on the test itself (antonyms,

simple percentages, etc.), and repetitive and tedious calculation drills. Last-minute cramming like this may make students *feel* better prepared for the test, but it simply cannot and does not take the place of slow, disciplined preparation year after year in school. Instead of actually being better prepared to score well on the test, students merely develop false confidence and are often sadly disappointed with the results they achieve.

By contrast, the “strategic approach” to standardized test taking is designed to enable students to make the utmost of the math, verbal, and writing skills they’ve already acquired and offers a far better chance to optimize actual performance on the test. I believe that teaching students to adopt the “strategic approach” is by far the best way to quickly and dramatically increase standardized test scores – and this is the entire purpose of the Borland Educational Test Strategy Workshops!

### **Unique, Specialized Materials**

Students who enroll in Borland Educational Test Strategy Workshops receive a course folder replete with copyrighted tips and strategy notes, practice exercises and worksheets, lists and appendices – materials created especially for these courses and available nowhere else – together with a leading commercially published test preparation workbook.

### **Individualized Programs**

Each student is different, with his or her own test taking strengths and weaknesses, and each Borland Educational Test Strategy Workshop is customized to help meet the particular needs of the individual students enrolled in it.

### **LOTS of Test Taking Practice, Practice, Practice!**

Realistic test taking practice is a key feature of the Borland Educational Test Strategy Workshops. Each student takes full-length practice tests, and numerous “mini tests.” Students are taught to record and interpret their practice test results, critique each performance, and keep a “reminders list” of important things they can do to improve their score, to review before each new attempt.

### **Experienced, Professional Instructor**

Chris Borland is a well-known and respected professional academic coach and test prep specialist, in private practice since 1978. As a career private educator for nearly 30 years, Chris has conducted more than 20,000 instructional sessions for more than 1,000 clients, and has taught hundreds of courses in standardized test preparation for schools, student groups, and individuals in the San Francisco Bay Area and elsewhere (references available upon request).

### **Flexible, Customized Scheduling**

Borland Educational Test Strategy Workshops typically comprise six to twelve hours of instruction divided into several two to three hour segments, and are offered to individuals as well as to groups ranging in size from two to twenty-five or more students. Specific days and hours can be flexibly arranged around school and family schedules, vacations, etc. Sessions are held at schools, in students’ homes, at Borland Educational offices in Sausalito and Santa Rosa, California, or at other local facilities.

## Results!

Comments like these have come from parents and students about the benefits they've received from participating in Borland Educational Test Strategy Workshops:

"... Chris Borland guided my daughter toward a new confidence about her capacity to achieve ... realized in her SAT scores which jumped hundreds of points ..."

"Our son's SSAT score increased from the 19th to the 69th percentile."

"... I really liked the strategies and all the practice tests we took ... They helped me a lot ..."

"My son received a score of 19 the first time he took the ACT ... had three one hour sessions with Chris ... retook the ACT ... and received a score of 24 ... !"

"[In just a few hours with Mr. Borland] our daughter's SAT math score went up 90 points to 650, and her verbal went up 50 to 780!"

## Better Value

Although other similar workshops often provide much less, they can cost much more. Borland Educational Test Strategy Workshops offer schools, groups, and families an excellent value.

## And ... IT'S FUN!

We all learn best when we're having fun! Courses are conducted in a light and entertaining way, and the enjoyment of all involved is a top priority. It's exciting for students to discover that they can do so much to raise their test scores, and my goal is to make the courses fun and interesting, as well as informative and transformative, for each one.

It's been a pleasure to introduce you to Borland Educational Test Strategy Workshops!

If you would like to arrange for an STS Workshop for your school, student group, or individual student, or if you have any questions or would like further information, please contact me, Chris Borland, at 415-332-4564.

I look forward to hearing from you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Borland". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Chris" written in a large, sweeping loop.

Chris Borland