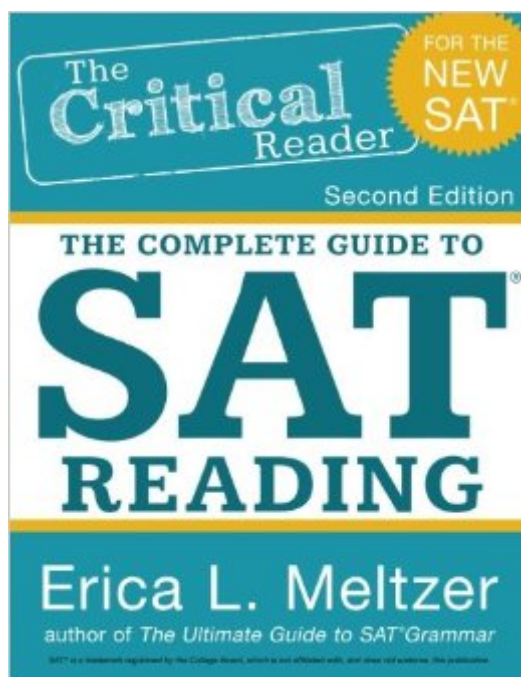


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# The Critical Reader, 2nd Edition





## Synopsis

The Critical Reader, 2nd Edition has been updated to reflect the content of the redesigned PSAT (2015 and later) and SAT (March 2016 and later). Intended to clearly and systematically demystify what is often considered the most challenging section of the exam, this book provides a comprehensive review of the skills tested on SAT Reading for students who are serious about raising their scores. Includes: -A chapter-by-chapter breakdown of question types, with in-depth explanations and numerous examples demonstrating how to work through each type. -Techniques for comprehending complex passages and identifying key information quickly and efficiently. -Extensive strategies for simplifying and answering paired supporting evidence questions as well as informational graphic questions. -A list of alternate definitions of common words, plus strategies for using context clues to decipher the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary. To allow students to apply the strategies outlined in this book to College Board material while focusing on the specific areas in which they are seeking to improve, this book also includes a list of all the Reading questions from the Khan Academy exams/College Board Official Guide, 3rd Edition (2015), arranged both by category and by test. Note: for additional reviews, see <http://www..com/gp/product/1479224715>

## Book Information

Paperback: 354 pages

Publisher: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform; 2 edition (July 28, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1515182061

ISBN-13: 978-1515182061

Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 0.8 x 11 inches

Shipping Weight: 2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (17 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #4,165 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #15 inÂ Books > Education & Teaching > Higher & Continuing Education > Test Preparation > SAT #71 inÂ Books > Education & Teaching > Test Preparation > College & High School #90 inÂ Books > Textbooks > Test Prep & Study Guides

## Customer Reviews

This book is the most helpful one among all the study guide I have purchased. The author analyzes every type of question that might appear in the test, along with how students often respond to it and how they SHOULD respond to it by using certain techniques. I think it is the best part about this



book because the author knows how they would solve the problem in inefficient way when encountering certain question, so she can offer a better method to save time. She also points out a lot of concept that I didn't pay much attention before, which is the key to get the answer. There are detailed and clear step-by-step guide to approach the question and analyze each answer choices, why it should be picked and why it shouldn't. Each topic are followed by short practices in the end, which is very convenient. I believe that understanding all the strategies in the book and applying them on the test will be extremely helpful and prevent students from panicking.

I'm an SAT tutor, and since the SAT will adopt a new format beginning in March of 2016, I read this book with interest. Overall, The Critical Reader is a thorough guide to the Reading section of the new test and is written with great care and insight. Most SAT books' coverage of the Reading section suffers from a major flaw: these books usually treat the section as an easily solvable puzzle: just apply this step-by-step technique, and voila - you'll get the right answer. I know from experience that for most students, learning how to do well on the Reading section requires more trial and error, more thinking, and more rigor, and is often best conveyed through conversation. The Critical Reader provides just that. It cannot, of course, talk back to the student, but the detail of its explanations and depth of its analysis are the next best thing. The breadth of The Critical Reader's coverage of the new Reading section is outstanding as well. Rather than lump certain kinds of questions together, the book painstakingly discusses every possible question type, so that students can more easily understand the different kinds of thinking they'll have to do. Practice question realism in the book is similarly outstanding; most companies don't do a very good job of capturing the nuance and complexity of authentic SAT questions, but those in this book are virtually indistinguishable from the real ones. This matters, since students need to get as used to real questions and the rules they play by as possible. The book's interior design and layout is fairly dry, and could be more engaging. This, combined with the book's rigor, makes me generally only recommend it for students who are self-motivated (or who can be motivated). But for those willing to work through it, it's the best guide I've yet seen for improving Reading scores.

Having used the previous edition of The Critical Reader to help both of my daughters to achieve high scores on the previous SAT, I was excited to begin working with this revised edition in tutoring others. It did not disappoint-- The Critical Reader remains my go-to resource for SAT prep. The book guides the student in not only understanding the strategies specific to this test, but also how to thoroughly analyze each question type. Plenty of practice is provided, and the questions closely



mimic those on the actual exam. With the production of the new 2016 SAT, there aren't a lot of previous College Board tests to draw on, and this fills that need perfectly. I would recommend The Critical Reader for above-average to high scoring students. It's not a "quick fix" for a student who needs to cram. For those willing to invest the time, I know of no better way to achieve those top scores.

I read all the posted reviews with great interest. The vast majority are written by tutors. Very few if any are by students. Are these reviews to be trusted? I have seen many of the same tutors write favorable reviews for books authored by other tutors. Appears an incestuous circle of tutors selling each other's services and books

So the new SAT has just begun to be a factor for our students. We have been using Erica Meltzer's other books with our students for over three years, and we have LOVED their practical and thoughtful approach. My tutoring center serves students at all points of their academic lives, and many of our materials are self-developed, or drawn from the Precision Teaching community. However when it comes to helping students achieve excellence in these high stakes college entry exams, NOTHING beats Erica's series of books. We have used Erica's materials previously, but now, especially with the "new" SAT, they are essential. Without her work on the New SAT the test would be almost impossible to decode--now we have a fabulous tool that can help our students succeed. We now rely on her new "Complete Guide" for most of our work for this test. I want to also mention that her website, [...], provides a wealth of information and perspective on the entire process of test preparation. We urge our students (and their parents) to become familiar with her work there as well.

This guide to SAT reading has exactly what I want as a test prep tutor: strategies geared towards the questions, categorized by question type and lots of exercises. I appreciate that Meltzer's examples and exercises are very similar to what we see on the real test. And she has so many exercises that I usually ask my students to read her lesson and just do five exercises; if they have trouble, we would have many more left over to do together. My only critique is that the repetitive formatting style gives such a sense of austerity; sometimes a student feels overwhelmed just perusing the pages. But after learning a ton of info from a HW assignment or two, he/she is sold.

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