

Errata & Overview for the 2021 NYC HS GUIDE AND NYC SHSAT HANDBOOK v2.2 7/2/2020

Disclaimer: This document was produced by Greg's Tutoring NYC and is not affiliated with nor endorsed by NYCs DOE in any manner. This document is solely intended to be representative clarifications and suggested information for families and their students considering NYC HS enrollment, or taking NYCs Specialized High School Admissions Test aka SHSAT.

Hi! The 2021 NYC HS GUIDE AND SHSAT HANDBOOK is now available. This year they are provided as one combined document, in two sections. I've provided video instructions for downloading the guides, and that video can be found here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DpSte01lUAM>

Tentative 2021 NYC HS Guide Overview Comments

The most significant problem with the HS Guide is the discussion of Screened Admissions. Many Screened HSs use various metrics from 7th grade such as attendance, state test scores, and report card grades. However, because of coronavirus, some of those metrics have temporarily changed: school buildings were closed therefore attendance is being done differently, NY State has cancelled the Math and ELA State Tests, and the DOE decided to not give final marking period grades to middle school students in the same manner as they have in the past. Therefore, changes to the HS Guide must be forthcoming on this matter to provide new metrics. As of this writing, THE DOE HAS NOT MADE A PUBLIC STATEMENT ON THOSE NEW METRICS.

Note also that 2021 registration for NYC HSs is not yet open. Registration normally occurs in the fall a few weeks after school begins. Currently the registration deadline for NYC Specialized HSs is October 21, and for other HSs the deadline is Dec 4. For the specialized HSs, SHSAT testing will begin early Nov, and for LaGuardia HS, auditions will take place from the end of Oct though Dec. Refer to page 45 and onward of the HS Guide for more details. HOWEVER, GIVEN THE CURRENT DYNAMICS OF CORONAVIRUS, SCHOOL CLOSINGS, ETC. PLEASE BE AWARE OF ANY FUTURE CHANGES IN ANY OF THESE DATES.

2021 NYC SHSAT HANDBOOK Overview Comments

In general the structure of the 2021 SHS Handbook is quite similar to recent years:

- * The number of questions per main section remains 57 for Math and 57 for ELA.
- * The number of field questions remains 10 per each main section.
- * Math is still broken down into 5 grid-ins and 52 multiple choice.
- * ELA is still broken down into under a dozen questions in Revising/Editing A and Revising/Editing B, and the remaining about 3 dozen questions in Reading Comprehension.
- * Multiple choice questions have 4 choices each
- * Scoring will still occur as it has in the past, albeit in an unknown manner.
- * There are still wild card situations (questions per section, scoring, subtopics choices, poetry, etc.)

There are some errors and formatting concerns, detailed below.

I've categorized the concerns loosely, MANY ARE NOT A BIG DEAL, but some can have an impact. Either way, they provide a complete picture for you.

Of the various points made here, I'm putting emphasis on DBQs, and the few math notation observations I've made. As they have possible implications for test day, I would suggest them as possible additions to your studying focus. Speaking of which, the surprise last year was the addition of multiple poetry passages in the reading comprehension section of the actual test. Therefore this is another possible area that shouldn't be ignored.

In reviewing last year's handbook, I felt that math questions were slightly easier while ELA questions were slightly harder. This year's handbook seems on par with those observations again. This said, note that these are practice tests and they do not necessarily reflect what will be occurring on test day exactly. No matter if you find the handbook questions very challenging, challenging or reasonable, don't be led astray. Test day is a beast for many students, and all topics needs to be known sufficiently. As well, you must be able to adapt to questions asked in novel ways and you don't know exactly what

they will be until live during the test. I will restate that last year some students were given 3 or 4 poetry passages; such wildcards exist every year, and you're either prepared for them or you're not.

2021 SHSAT HANDBOOK Overview Comments -- Specifics

There is a number of issues and differences in this year's SHSAT handbook. They fall into a few categories: format, formatting, fonts, notation, sloppiness, and outright errata. In some cases issues fall into more than one category. I will discuss each in turn. In some cases I will not note every such concern occurrence, and as mentioned already some are not a big deal.

As in the past, answers provided are not intended to be all encompassing, nor vice versa, whereas other answers seem DEVOID OF INFORMATION, etc. For instance:

* Page 107, problem 23

Sloppy ELA explanations saying answers are correct "because they are" have improved over the past few years. However rationales such as the one provided here without supporting details still exist. This is only one example of this, therefore be observant as you weigh the real meanings of explanations to LEARN from.

* Page 138, problems 95 and 97

The answers are provided as solutions to percent problems, but they are actually the same underlying technique. Please take note.

* Page 141, problems 108 and 110

While some explanations include wordy and sometimes unhelpful narrative and/or often have a lack of mathematical explanation, these have no narrative in their explanations whatsoever.

* Page 128, problem 69

Again, a super terse explanation that is not really sufficient.

SOME SLOPPY CONCERNS include

* Page 60 and page 68

Some sort of sloppy formatting or overlay problem at the bottom of the page.

This results in a half-showing duplicate page footer.

SOME FONT CONCERNS. There are various questions and solutions where choice of fonts was not the best, or is even intermixed. This could be a problem with some displays on a phone or tablet, or even if one is tired when looking at the display. OR ON TEST DAY!! For instance:

* Page 127, problem 63

In the line that reads: $550 \div 1.10 = (1.10 \div 1.10) \times$ the division sign \div can appear to be a + plus sign whereas with a different font with the dots above and below set up differently, say with \div , it wouldn't. This occurs in a few other examples both for the question and the answer. So beware.

* Page 136, problem 90

This example uses two different fonts for an equal sign. You can see this on the last two lines of the explanation. Again, on some devices the equal sign in the last example could appear to be a minus sign. Especially in an example such as this one where there are other problems that will be noted below.

SOME DIFFERENCES IN NOTATION. Some of these are significant because it indicates a change in approach and direction of the SHSAT. They include:

* Page 55 and page 74

Recent SHSAT reading comprehension has not involved Document-Based Questions (DBQs) however these ELA passages include charts and questions about them. Please take note.

* Page 79, problem 58

The - symbol is being used it two different ways. In -3.8 and -1.1 it appears raised to denote a negative number. In -(...) it appears half-way to denote subtraction. In some text and fonts it might often appear half-way but with the same intended meanings. Please take note.

* Page 81, problem 64

This problem involves "empty box" notation as well as the "not equals" sign. Recent SHSAT math has not involved that. Please take note.

* Page 82, problem 67

The problem involves expressions formatted with various levels of numerators and

denominators. Recent SHSAT math has not involved that. Please take note.

* Page 84, problem 76

This problem begins by tossing out a bunch of numbers. Most problems do not start out this way. It's not until you read the question that you see it's a list and in fact a set of numbers. Please take note.

* Page 87, problem 86

As with the discussion on problem 58 above, $-$ is being used to denote a negative number. However, instead of being slightly raised as in question 58, the sign is very raised. The intent of negativity is still the same. It's easy for this to be confusing or even to become an optical illusion; some viewers may not even see the minus sign being used. Please take note.

These final points are ERRATA TYPE CONCERNS:

* Page 92, problem 110

This is a weak point, but the questions assumes no other money is added.

* Page 125, problem 58

$-(-1)$ should be $-(-1.1)$

* Page 125, problem 59

The explanation "falls off end of page" so the answer -- 150 degrees -- doesn't quite actually appear.

* Page 126, problem 62

The explanation is not wrong, however, the second half of the description could be misleading and/or not understandable to some readers.

* Page 136, problem 90

The explanation doesn't illustrate the final simplification of $110/12$ to $55/6$ which is the answer required. Also, as noted above in the other section, it mixes fonts for equal signs which on some devices could make the incomplete answer appear to be a minus sign.

The following comments pertain to PRACTICE TEST FORM B, the extra Grade 8 Math Grid-in Questions, and the Grade 9 Math Questions.

NOTATION

* Page 163 referred to on Page 166 question 33 is another DBQ. Please take note.

* Page 173 referred to on Page 175 question 50 is another DBQ. Please take note.

FONTS

* Page 235, problem 67

The divide signs could look like plus signs

ERRATA

* Page 187, problem 71

If Martina started at 11:59pm but Karen started reading at 12:01am, that's 4 days and 2 minutes, therefore "on the same day" should perhaps be more written as "at the exact same time"

* Page 235, problem 64

The explanation says Point B is -2 , however there is no Point B; -2 is Point F

* Page 256, problem 5

It shows $-12 = 52$ is not true and therefore "there is no solution" but that is choice C, not D

It's June, please consider your HS preparations now!

40 years experience with Grade 8 and Grade 9 SHSAT!

Any questions? Don't hesitate to contact us!

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