

Errata & Overview for the 2023 NYC HS GUIDE and 2023 NYC SHSAT HANDBOOK v1.1 11/4/2023

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

Hi! The 2023 NYC SHSAT HANDBOOK is now available! Last year it was provided along with the NYC Public Schools Admissions Guide as two separate documents, but with lots of supplementary information on the DOE website. So far for 2023 admissions they are doing similarly. The title of this year's SHSAT document is "NYC Guide to the Specialized High Schools Admissions Test - SHSAT for 2023 Admissions."

I've provided video instructions for downloading this year's handbook (2023) on my YouTube channel. That, along with some additional complementary words about the handbook, and some of what is mentioned in this document, can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fe7rUP6ovBc>

2023 NYC HS Guide Overview Comments

As mentioned above, the independent general guide for all NYC DOE HSs is no longer being produced and has been replaced by the NYC Public Schools Admissions Guide for all grades; you'll use it along with additional information from the DOE website, and myschools.nyc.

Please review the DOE site for changes this year, and how grade groups, priorities, screened schools, essay schools, audition schools, and ed opt schools will impact 2023 NYC DOE HS admissions. In particular, note that grades will be based upon your final Grade 7 marking period, that the DOE has tightened grade bands and hence the impact of the lottery on some programs, and that no state test scores will be used this year.

2023 Registration Timeline

Note that dates are decided by the DOE and may change. See the DOE website and myschools.nyc for specific details. Some handy links for HS (and MS) admissions can be found at

<https://www.GregsTutoringNYC.com/doe-ms-hs-admissions>

You can also get some insights regarding your lottery number here

<https://www.GregsTutoringNYC.com/doe-lottery>

2023 SHSAT registration opened on Oct 6 and will close on Nov 4. SHSAT testing will occur on Nov 17, 19, 20, and Dec 11 and 17. See the DOE website and myschools.nyc for your details depending upon whether you are a DOE student, grade 9 student, etc., and how that interacts with your test date.

Other HS registration opened on Oct 12 and will close on Dec 1. The deadline for submitting additional material for auditions, essays, etc. will be Dec 9.

2023 NYC SHSAT HANDBOOK Overview Comments

In general the structure of the 2023 SHS Handbook is quite similar to recent years. Some overview comments:

- * The number of questions per main section remains 57 for Math and 57 for ELA.
- * The number of field questions in the past was 10 questions per each main section. The handbook has not discussed field questions the past two years and the DOE refuses to document it. This may indicate some change.
- * Math is still split up into 5 grid-ins and 52 multiple choice.
- * ELA is still presented split up into up to a dozen questions in Revising/Editing A and Revising/Editing B, and the remaining about 3-4 dozen questions in Reading Comprehension. However, the handbook no longer explicitly details this distribution breakdown. At one point it was said to take up to 11 questions, then it changed into up

to 19. Now it says nothing, which may indicate some change. There are always SHSAT wildcards and perhaps this is one of them.

* Multiple choice questions have 4 choices each

* Scoring will still occur as it has in the past, which is not completely known.

* There are still wild card situations (questions per section, scoring, subtopic choices, poetry, etc.).

* Questions on the SHSAT are in no particular order of complexity or topics, however this handbook seems to be keeping the questions of some similar topics together this go through. This may indicate some change.

* There is a Probability and Stats question with a "tree diagram"; a rare sighting. See Form A, question 99.

* The "constant of proportionality" appears in many examples. Here are some examples from Form B:

Page 197, Question 59

Page 211, Question 104

Page 211, Question 105

Page 212, Question 109

* Box plots/box-and-whiskers plots appear in many examples.

* Do not confuse Constant of Proportionality questions with the various questions dealing with Linear Relationships and/or the slope of a line on a coordinate grid being constant.

Note that some of the questions and passages in Form A and Form B of this handbook are literally based on previous handbooks' questions and passages verbatim. Although redundant, it's an ok mix of questions and passages.

Errors and Formatting Concerns

There are often a number of errors and formatting concerns in the handbook. This year I did not find too many. Those I found are detailed below.

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

In general, the number of formatting problems reduced to almost zero. That's always good, and that's a plus for students, and one less thing to worry about.

In my recent past few years' handbook reviews, I've felt that math questions lean towards slightly easier while ELA questions lean slightly harder. This year's handbook seems on par with those observations again. This means that handbooks have been mostly consistent recently. I do feel, even though as mentioned above that some are repeated questions from past years, that the combination isn't too bad for the ELA section and makes for a reasonable challenge.

This said, note that these are practice tests. A handbook is not a test day with all its dynamics. As well, handbooks do not necessarily reflect what will be occurring on test day exactly. Remember that questions in the handbook are only representational and are intended to give some sense of the exam, but they are not the exam. No matter if you find the handbook questions very challenging, kind of challenging, reasonable, or easy, don't be led astray. Test day is a beast for many students, and all topics need to be known sufficiently whether they appear in this handbook, or any handbook, or not. The handbook is authentic and handy, so it is the "gold standard" as it is written by the test writers, but it's not the be all and end all. For that matter, although some 3rd party material is well done and can be helpful, it is also not the exam and is also not test day.

Furthermore, handbook or no handbook, the SHSAT is about concepts, topics, and creative, critical thinking. As such, 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 actual test. No ands, ifs, or buts about it here.

There will also be wildcards. For instance, two years ago it seems students were given less geometry. Three years ago, students were given 3 and in some cases 4 poetry passages. Last year, more constant of proportionality and box plot questions appeared. Such wildcards exist every year, and you're either prepared for them or you're not. See my note earlier regarding potentials for this year.

Please make note of the following: The exam is on at least everything you've learned up until this point, and for that reason everything is game.

2023 SHSAT HANDBOOK Overview Comments -- Specifics

There are always a number of issues and differences in many years' SHSAT handbooks. 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 or occurrence, and as mentioned already some are not a big deal.

As in the past, answer explanations provided are not all encompassing, often DEVOID OF INFORMATION, etc. Sloppy ELA explanations saying answers are correct "because they are" have improved over the past few years. However rationales without strong supporting details still exist. This applies to math explanations too, as often they are just plopped on the page and a student who does not know how to solve the problem still will not be able to solve the question even after viewing the explanation in the handbook, as often the handbook just does not discuss concepts, combinations of steps, or how it may only be showing a simplification of the solution. In short, many have a lack of mathematical explanation, with no narrative in their explanations whatsoever. Therefore be observant as you weigh the real meanings of explanations to LEARN from. For many such examples, you will need external help to make sense of, understand, and get a context for what is provided.

SOME HEADS UP/BE ALERT questions include:

Form A, Page 80, Question 61

This question can be considered being computationally intensive since some solutions could end up involving more decimal digits than one is used to dealing with. Also, rounding does not come into play until the end of the question.

Form A, Page 80, Question 62

This question leans toward inexact measurements. In particular, that the min is 39 and Q3 is 78. Note that this question also deals with a box plot/"box and whiskers" so make sure you're up on how they're set up and their meaning.

Form A, Page 81, Questions 63

Note that things such as prime factorization can be tested directly or indirectly. Be ready for ALL TOPICS!

Form A, Page 89, Question 93

This is a different type of question. Even when unfamiliar, this is just a heads up to keep thinking "concepts" and when necessary to think outside of the box!

Form A, Page 91, question 99

This question makes use of a "tree diagram" and hence is a different type of question. Just a heads up to keep thinking "concepts" and when necessary to think outside of the box!

Form B, Page 198, Question 61

This is a different type of percent question. Just a heads up to keep thinking "concepts" and when necessary to think outside of the box! (This is also a possible Constant of Proportionality question.)

Form B, Page 208 Question 98

This is a different type of probability and statistics question. Just a heads up to keep thinking "concepts" and when necessary to think outside of the box! Furthermore, the description on Page 264 only shows the example in a more brute force way. More mathematically consider that as there are three spots for each group arranged as follows: spot 1 has 2 male choices; spot 2 is for one of the remaining 4 candidates, and spot 3 is for one of the remaining 3 candidates. However, as the spot 2 candidate is already accommodated by a possible spot 3 candidate, and vice versa, they will be duplicates, hence we get $4 \times 3 = 12$ possible spot 2/3 combo's and then $12 / 2 = 6$ to remove duplicates and then to consider with the number of males in the mix $6 \times 2 = 12$.

Form B, Page 209, Question 101

This question refers to "sample space." Remember you must be up on all terminology!

SOME SLOPPY CONCERNS questions include:

** Form A, Page 141, Description of Question 83

The description is sloppy referring to t as -t. While it's understandable what they were trying to do with the explanation using t, -t and - -t, t is not interchangeable with -t, and therefore, that can make things confusing.

x* Form B Page 223, Question 17

This explanation does not amply discuss why choice D is not the answer. In particular it mentions that "the diagram makes no mention of e-waste in particular" which is not quite so. Furthermore, the explanation they give for B, which I agree is the right answer, says the question specifically mentions "toxic chemicals in e-waste" so there is a definite disconnect here. The problem with D is that while the diagram does illustrate an impact on water sources it also refers to soil, air sources, plants, and animals. Instead B deals with toxicity in (unlined) landfills from e-waste as a whole, which is more in sync with Paragraph 4. General thought: be thorough going through explanations.

** Form B, Page 212, Question 110

The concern here is that testers are told "Diagrams other than graphs are not necessarily drawn to scale. Do not assume any relationship in a diagram unless it is specifically stated or can be determined from the information given." However, the answer on page 268 informs the test taker that "the figure shown is a right rectangular prism with a square base" but that is not fully known from the problem, especially in light of the concern. The question should be revealing more about the shape either in words or symbolic additions to the illustration, such as additional right angle designators. This clashes as the question mentions "will result" and we have to infer the shape being a square, and luckily it's really the only obvious shape choice since it's not drawn as say a triangle.

These final points are ERRATA TYPE CONCERNS:

** Form A answers, Page 128, Question 58

The explanation concludes in calculating 1.175 but that should be 1.1775

It's October, please consider all your HS preparations now!

40+ years experience with the Grade 8 SHSAT and Grade 9 SHSAT!

Any questions? Don't hesitate to contact us!

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