

GENERAL INFORMATION

Mercer Education's *ACT/COLLEGE PREP CAMP* for students entering grades 9-12 meets for five hours per day, Monday through Friday for a total of 100 hours** of intensive instruction and exercises. There are two one-month sessions, and students may attend one of the sessions or both sessions. If spaces are available, students may attend just the ACT Verbal (Reading, English, and Writing) section or just the ACT Math & Science section (either 9:30am-noon or 12:30-3pm). Small classes not exceeding eight students allow teachers to attend more fully to each student's needs. Students are scheduled in groups of approximately the same age and of similar proficiency. Over the course of four weeks, in addition to taking a complete (approximately 4-hour) assessment test, students complete multiple (4-6) ACT tests under test-like conditions and additional exercises outside of class, after which they review, analyze, and discuss their errors and weaknesses with their instructors.

While extensive in its scope and goals, the course is paced in such a way that assignments never seem intimidating or overly time-consuming. Our instructors are experienced professionals who bring the standardized test material to life with interesting supplementary materials and proven teaching techniques that lead to quality results. The instruction focuses on developing academic skills (reading, writing, vocabulary, grammar, critical thinking, word problems, algebra I & II, geometry, trigonometry, scientific method, understanding data representation, and some pre-calculus), preparing students not only for several standardized tests but also for the kinds of work they will be doing in school.

In addition to developing test-taking and academic skills, students have a structured opportunity to prepare for the college application process. Working alone and in groups, students learn about higher education options and important considerations to keep in mind. They will read sample application essays and write personal statements of their own, for which teachers will provide substantial critical feedback. With the guidance of their instructors, students will also learn how to write effective academic resumes. At the end of each session, parents receive a progress report and assessment as well as suggestions for additional work to prepare for the ACT.

READING AND TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES (approximately 1 hour per day; total 20 hours)

Every student receives focused instruction in the Reading portion of the ACT, which includes strategies for deriving stated and implicit meaning from a variety of texts and methodical analysis of each student's work on four to six ACT tests. Instructional materials include established texts that clearly present techniques proven to raise scores and provide the foundation for honing reading and analytic skills and for learning advanced vocabulary (approximately 75-100 words per week).

ENGLISH, WRITING, AND COLLEGE PREPARATION (approximately 1.5 hour per day; total 30 hours)

The ACT includes a 45-minute English (grammar) section (75-multiple choice questions) and a 40-minute Writing section. During this one and a half hours of the camp, students receive focused instruction in the English and Writing sections of the ACT which includes regular in-class timed practice together with follow-up critiques, a thorough review of grammar and usage, and substantial homework exercises to reinforce concepts and practice techniques learned in class. In addition, students do research and preparation for the college application process by completing step-by-step assignments.

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** The camp usually meets for 95 hours in ME's first session because of the school closing for Independence Day (7/4), but the course content and tuition rates are the same.

MATH & SCIENCE SECTION (2.5 hours per day; total 50 hours)

Mercer Education's rigorous program thoroughly prepares students for the ACT. This includes problem solving techniques typical of the ACT and similar standardized tests. We teach common strategies and tools such as distinguishing between combinations and permutations to count possible outcomes, finding ways to organize information presented in a word problem, analyzing representation of scientific data, and methodical utilization of the scientific method. Course work draws on sample ACT problems and a variety of engaging supplementary materials designed to provide practice with all the commonly encountered questions. In addition, students complete a comprehensive review of essential skills, ranging from the use of graphing calculators to a review of methods of algebra I & II, geometry, trigonometry, probability and statistics, some pre-calculus, roles of hypotheses, data collection, and scientific inference, and all students receive methodical analysis of their work on five to seven ACT tests. *We recommend that students have completed at least half a year of Algebra II prior to enrollment.*

A Student's Typical Day (total 5 hours instruction per day; ½ hour lunch break)

On average, students will devote 1 hour per day to reading and test-taking strategies, 1.5 hours per day to writing, grammar and college preparation, and 2.5 hours per day to ACT math and science. Preparing for the verbal portion of standardized tests involves the integration of multiple language learning areas including reading, writing, vocabulary development, and grammar. Likewise, both the math and science portions of the ACT touch upon multiple skills and problem types to which each group of students brings different strengths and weaknesses. Because of the overlap of skills and student diversity, the information presented above estimates the time reserved for direct instruction in the four main subject areas of the ACT. Times devoted to various verbal components of the program may vary depending on the needs of the class.

CAMP HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ For students entering grades 9-12
- ▶ 100 hours of focused instruction
- ▶ Two 4-week sessions available
- ▶ Small classes not exceeding 8 students
- ▶ Highly experienced instructors
- ▶ Assessment and multiple (5-7) ACT tests
- ▶ Mock ACT administered under test-like conditions in the final week
- ▶ Additional exercises outside of class
- ▶ Academic & time management skills
- ▶ Critical reading strategies
- ▶ Thorough review of grammar and usage
- ▶ Increased vocabulary (75-100 words/week)
- ▶ In-class timed writing practice
- ▶ Introduction to the college application process
- ▶ Introduction to application essays
- ▶ Essential math skills & problem-solving techniques
- ▶ (Half a year or more of Algebra II prior to camp recommended)
- ▶ Science reading strategies
- ▶ Challenging supplementary materials
- ▶ Progress report & with recommendations