

SSAT/ISEE PREPARATION

Inspirica

Over 25 Years of One-on-One
Tutoring and Test Preparation





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Inspirica

Our Founder



Dear Parent,

When I first started tutoring students for the SSAT and ISEE, I was 24 years old and almost no one in the US was doing this sort of work. At that time it wasn't too difficult to be admitted to the nation's independent and boarding schools, so students didn't feel a great deal of stress, parents didn't have to be too involved, and most everybody ended up happy.

Over the past 26 years, I've seen how the admissions field has changed, and as the parent of 6th and 9th grade children, I also have a personal understanding of this process. Although some children go through the high school admissions process unconcerned, many students unwittingly get the message that this process is "high stakes" and that they need to perform. They come to us with all sorts of worries: they might disappoint, they might not be smart enough, they don't want to switch schools, they might never be as successful as their parents. We all know they are at a tough age, but who needs this amount of pressure?

If your family works with Inspirica we will turn down the volume immediately. Your child might actually tell you that tutoring is fun and ask you if the tutor is available for adoption (we hear both of these comments all the time)! For students who are stressed, we refocus them; for those who are not worried, we make sure they stay that way. All the while, they learn and meet their goals. Meanwhile, we want you as a parent to feel just as confident, so we assign you your own educational consultant, your "tutor" to guide you through the testing that surrounds the high school entrance process, whose sole job it is to answer all of your questions whenever you have them and update you on your child's progress along the way.

I've devoted my life to helping parents make wise educational choices for their children with minimal worry. At Inspirica, we truly care about both you and your child and will offer you all the guidance and support possible. To that end, I've put together this brochure for you. After you've read it please give us a call. We would be happy to discuss how we can help you "breathe easy" throughout this exciting time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Jacobson'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Lisa Jacobson
Founder and CEO
Inspirica

Inspirica

Over 25 Years of One-on-One
Tutoring and Test Preparation

“I will certainly recommend Inspirica to anyone who is searching for a great tutoring and test prep service. I was quite impressed with your knowledge and willingness to try to help us in any way you could.”

—*satisfied parent*

The Inspirica Difference

Since 1983, Inspirica has been exceptionally successful in preparing students for standardized tests and academic work. We customize our programs to suit each student’s specific needs and goals. With warmth and expertise, an Inspirica tutor works one-on-one with each student on content and strategies, and an educational consultant works with you on everything else. Our unique, collaborative approach means that all members of our team—from our superb tutors to our caring and knowledgeable office staff—make sure that your child receives the best possible care to achieve great results with minimal stress.

EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANTS

The first time you contact Inspirica you will speak with an educational consultant who will be your personal guide to the entire high school admissions test preparation process. Your educational consultant will get to know you and your child, make a personalized program recommendation, and answer any questions you may have over the course of your child’s program. If you are unsure of which exam is needed for admissions or when to schedule the exam, your educational consultant would be happy to advise you. Your educational consultant will oversee your child’s program from beginning to end, making sure that the right tutor is matched, checking in with you periodically to provide feedback, and recommending adjustments if needed.

TUTORS

Our tutors are, in a word, inspirational. They are highly educated and bright, with a wide range of academic and professional expertise, and they score exceptionally high on standardized tests. For us, this is just the beginning. To qualify as Inspirica tutors, they must also be personable, skilled motivators who communicate easily with young students. Our tutors complete an extensive training program on various approaches of teaching strategies and content. Throughout their Inspirica careers, our tutors also participate in ongoing professional development workshops to continue to hone their teaching skills. Working one-on-one with their students, our tutors are enthusiastic, patient, and eager to invest in your child as an individual. They are true professionals who take deep pride in their work.

CURRICULUM

Our curriculum is unsurpassed, constantly evolving and growing in response to new research and changing standards and needs. Inspirica devotes a group of staff members to the regular study and analysis of the SSAT and ISEE exams. As part of our constant monitoring of the tutoring process, our staff upgrades and improves curriculum materials on a regular basis.

Our tutors understand that one size does not fit all and that every program will unfold in a unique way.

PROGRAMS

Our programs are customized to your child based on an initial assessment and the profile you provide. Your educational consultant will analyze the results of this diagnostic and recommend an individualized tutoring program. The program will include an introduction to the exam, content review, and test-taking strategies and techniques specific to your child's strengths and score goals. Our tutors customize their approach and the content that they cover in session according to each student's needs and progress—they understand that one size does not fit all and that every program will unfold in a unique way. We offer a complimentary “mock” exam to our students so that in addition to their in-session work with tutors, they have the opportunity to practice under test conditions. A mock exam also provides a check point of progress mid-program. Our tutors and educational consultants work together to ensure that the program progresses smoothly so that your child feels confident.

Local Tutoring

Our tutors will meet with your child at a time and place that is convenient for you. They are based in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia and commute to surrounding areas. Many of our families prefer in-home tutoring, but other arrangements are also possible, such as meeting at a local library or in one of our offices.

Custom Trips

Inspirica's tutors are renowned for traveling year-round to help students whose families request them locally, nationally, and internationally. Our tutors have traveled to thirty-eight states and to four continents to work one-on-one with students.

“Inspirica Anywhere”

In order to support our students wherever they may be, Inspirica offers one-on-one tutoring via the computer called “Inspirica Anywhere.” The technology is simple. With the basics of a computer, webcam, and Internet connection, your child can meet with his or her tutor no matter the circumstances.

In-person tutoring is a wonderful way for students and tutors to work together, but it is not always possible. Student travel or weather-related emergencies can interfere with a regular tutoring schedule. Many Inspirica students also live across the United States and internationally.

Through video conferencing and a shared work environment, students can meet with their Inspirica tutors anytime, anyplace. For more information about “Inspirica Anywhere,” call and speak with one of our educational consultants.

“Inspirica Anywhere” programs are available for students 13 years and older.



Tests

“It is a nice chemistry with portions of laughter mixed with long roads of understanding and comprehension.”
—*satisfied parent*

SSAT

Most young students have little experience with this type of standardized test, and we have found that familiarizing them with the format can ease their way. The confidence your student will gain through this experience will very likely carry over to future standardized tests.

The SSAT is given at two levels: Lower and Upper. The Lower Level SSAT is administered to students entering 6th–8th grade; the Upper Level exam is for students entering 9th–12th grade. Both levels of the SSAT have four multiple-choice sections. Two of these sections are in Math. The Verbal section tests vocabulary through a combination of synonym and analogy questions. Finally, there is a Reading section that contains short passages and accompanying sets of comprehension questions. The SSAT begins with a short essay that students write in response to a prompt.

The multiple choice sections are scored by taking the number of correct answers and subtracting a quarter of a point for every incorrect answer, which means there is a penalty for guessing. The resulting “raw” score is converted into a scaled score. These scores are then compared by grade level and gender, and students are given percentile rankings. Two percentiles are provided: SSAT and national. The SSAT percentile only includes students applying to independent schools, which is a small, competitive subset of all students at the same grade level, so the SSAT percentile is used for admission purposes. The essay does not receive a score but is forwarded to schools as a writing sample.

The SSAT may be taken privately or in a small group on a date that's different from those offered nationally. This type of administration is called a “Flex Test,” and students may only take one per year. Our New York and Philadelphia offices are SSAT test sites. Please call if you would like to schedule an official exam.

Please see our website for more information: www.inspirica.com

The confidence your student will gain through this experience will very likely carry over to future standardized tests, like the SAT.

ISEE

Most young students have little experience with this type of standardized test, and we have found that familiarizing them with the format can help ease their way. The confidence your student will gain through this experience will very likely carry over to future standardized tests.

The ISEE is given at three levels: Lower, Middle, and Upper. The Lower Level ISEE is administered to students entering 5th & 6th grade, the Middle Level to students entering 7th & 8th grade, and the Upper Level to students entering 9th–12th grade. Every level of the ISEE has four multiple-choice sections. Two of these sections are in Math. The Verbal section tests vocabulary through a combination of synonym and fill-in-the-blank questions. Finally, there is a Reading section that contains short passages and accompanying sets of comprehension questions. At the end of the exam, students write a short essay based on a given prompt.

The exam is scored by taking the number of correct answers out of the total number of questions. There is no penalty for answering a question incorrectly. This “raw” score is converted into a scaled score, which is placed on a bell curve to compare students of the same gender and grade level. The bell curve is divided into nine segments, called stanines, numbered 1 to 9. Stanines are not divided equally: a 5 (the high part of the bell curve) represents approximately 20% of test-takers, whereas only 4% receive a 1 or a 9 (the extremes of the curve). Schools use stanines for admissions. The essay does not receive a score but is forwarded to schools as a writing sample.

The ISEE test is given by appointment arranged through the ERB (Educational Records Bureau) office. It is also given at least once at the school to which the student is applying. The ISEE can be taken only once every six months. Students may take the test in large group, small group, or individual settings. Please visit the ISEE website for registration information.

Please see our website for more information: www.inspirica.com

Inspirica In The News

“There’s nothing like that feeling of watching the students get into the school they’d been aiming for. I know I’ve made a mark on their lives, and they sure have on mine.”

—*Inspirica tutor*

Inspirica has appeared in numerous major news and media outlets, including the following:



THE WALL STREET JOURNAL



BusinessWeek

The New York Times



Newsweek

Town&Country



seventeen



The Washington Post

Money

YAHOO!

Bloomberg



The Philadelphia Inquirer



Forbes

Woman's Day

FT



CRAIN'S

NEW YORK

FINANCIAL TIMES

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