

## **Topic: Standardized testing should be eliminated from college admissions**

### **I. Introduction**

- A. Hook: Over 1,800 colleges are now test-optional as of 2024
- B. Background: History of SAT/ACT in college admissions
- C. Thesis: Standardized testing perpetuates socioeconomic inequality and should be removed from college admissions criteria

### **II. Claim 1 — Standardized Tests Measure Wealth, Not Ability**

- A. Test prep spending correlates directly with score outcomes
- B. Evidence
  - 1. Students from households earning \$200K+ score 395 points higher on average (College Board data)
  - 2. Test prep industry revenue exceeds \$1 billion annually
- C. Tests reward access to resources, not academic potential

### **III. Claim 2 — Test-Optional Policies Have Not Reduced Academic Quality**

- A. Universities that went test-optional maintained graduation rates
- B. Evidence
  - 1. University of Chicago post-test-optional GPA data
  - 2. MIT's re-adoption of testing — and why it's the exception, not the rule
- C. Alternative criteria identify capable students equally well

### **IV. Counterargument — Tests Provide Objective, Comparable Metrics**

- A. GPA inflation makes high school grades an unreliable comparison tool
- B. Proponents argue tests level the playing field across school quality
- C. Rebuttal: GPA inflation is addressable; systemic test bias is structural and not fixable without elimination

### **V. Conclusion**

- A. Restate thesis: standardized tests entrench inequality without adding predictive value
- B. Summary of three core claims
- C. Call to action: institutions should adopt holistic review permanently