

Making Everything Easier!™

Catholic High School Entrance Exams

FOR
DUMMIES®

Learn to:

- Boost your scores on the TACHS, COOP, and HSPT
- Sharpen your test-taking skills with 6 full-length exams
- Review key verbal, math, and quantitative concepts
- Get into the high school of your choice



Catholic High School Entrance Exams for Dummies®

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Scott and Lisa have coauthored numerous career training and standardized test preparation books, including *Paralegal Procedures and Practices*, 2nd Edition (Cengage/Delmar Publishing); *Paralegal Career For Dummies*; *GMAT For Dummies*, 5th Edition; *SAT II U.S. History For Dummies*; *SAT II Biology For Dummies*; and *SAT II Math For Dummies* (all from Wiley Publishing).

Dedication

We dedicate *Catholic High School Entrance Exams For Dummies* to Alison, Andrew, Zachary, Zoe, Dan, and Paige. Our family demonstrated patience, understanding, and assistance while we wrote this book, and we're very blessed to have them in our lives.

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have provided us with lots of information about what areas require the greatest amount of preparation.

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We thrive on feedback from our students and encourage our readers to provide comments and critiques at info@hatchedu.com.

Publisher's Acknowledgments

We're proud of this book; please send us your comments at <http://dummies.custhelp.com>. For other comments, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

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Introduction

If you're reading this book, you're probably planning to attend a Catholic high school. Congratulations on your dedication to an excellent education! But before you can don your uniform and complain about your class schedule, you have to take one of three possible entrance exams. The test you take — whether that's the HSPT, the TACHS, or the COOP — will tell your chosen high school a little bit about how prepared you are for the next step in your education. High school administrators evaluate your score and use it to determine what classes to put you in and even whether to give you a little scholarship money. We don't want to put undue pressure on you, but you do have to get ready for the challenge. How do you prepare for a test you've never seen? Sure, you can read through your notes from English and math classes (if only you'd taken any). Or you can watch a lot of *Jeopardy!* But we have a better way. . . .

Catholic High School Entrance Exams For Dummies puts at your fingertips everything you need to know to conquer the exam required by your future Catholic high school. We give you a complete review of the language, reading, math, quantitative relationship, and logic concepts the various entrance exams test. We also provide insight into how to avoid the pitfalls that standardized test-takers sometimes encounter.

About This Book

If you're like most 13- and 14-year-olds, studying for your Catholic high school entrance exam is the absolute last

thing you want to do. We get that. Really, we do. That's why we've filled *Catholic High School Entrance Exams For Dummies* with clearly written advice presented in an easy-to-swallow, casual tone. The other great thing about this book is that you can get in and get out to find what you need quickly. You don't have to read this book from cover to cover. If you have an extra hour before basketball practice or clarinet lessons, you can devour a chapter or even a particular section within a chapter. If you just want to brush up on your grammar skills or perfect your analogy-deciphering ability, you can gobble up the relevant chapter or section and forget about the rest. (If these eating metaphors are making you hungry, then by all means take a snack break.)

Note: Some of the sections in this book are applicable to only one or two tests. For instance, if you're taking the TACHS exam, you won't encounter any of the question types covered in the chapter on verbal reasoning. You may want to refer to the table of contents at the front of this book to see which sections apply to the particular test required by the high school you're planning to attend.

The sample questions we sprinkle throughout each chapter in Parts II and III read like the actual test questions. Because the best way to gear up for any standardized test is to practice, practice, practice on lots of test questions, we give you well over 1,000 opportunities to answer questions and get familiar with the way your exam phrases questions and presents answer choices. Then there's the pièce de résistance of the book: two full-length practice tests for each of the three Catholic high school entrance exams (complete with full-length answer chapters to explain the answers to each and every test question).

Ultimately, we want you to succeed on whichever exam you're taking, so we're dedicated to giving you time-tested techniques for improving your score. In the following pages, you discover how to quickly spot incorrect answer choices, make educated guesses based on what you know, and manage your time wisely for the best possible score. With *Catholic High School Entrance Exams For Dummies*, you have all you need to ace the HSPT, TACHS, or COOP so you can move on to more important matters — arranging to get the cute classmate sitting next to you in science class to be your lab partner without seeming too interested.

Conventions Used in This Book

To help you find your way through this book — as in all *For Dummies* books — we've used the following basic conventions:

Italics highlight new words and terms that we're defining. They also point out individual words or short phrases that we want to draw your attention to.

Boldfaced text indicates the actions in numbered steps and keywords in bulleted lists.

Monofont alerts you to the presence of a Web address.

You'll also notice that some of the chapters contain sidebars (a paragraph or two in a shaded box). Sidebars contain quirky bits of information that we think may

interest you but that aren't essential to your performance on any of the Catholic high school entrance exams. Skip over 'em if you'd prefer; you won't hurt our feelings — too much.

Finally, some words may appear in this font. These are vocabulary words we've chosen to shine a spotlight on to help you prep for your exam.

Foolish Assumptions

Here's the most important assumption we're making about you: You're most likely an eighth-grader planning on attending a Catholic high school, and you've been told you must take an entrance exam. (Yes indeed — we've been praised for our startling ability to recognize the obvious!) Generally, students who attend parochial schools make learning a top priority, so we're also thinking that you're a pretty motivated student. And it's likely that your grade and middle school years have been spent in a parochial environment too, which means you've had an awesome education already. Good for you!

Most of the concepts you'll encounter on the Catholic high school entrance exam you're facing aren't new to you, but the way they're presented can be downright weird for some question types. So, even if you're a math whiz with a college-level vocabulary, you should expose yourself to the question types ahead of time just so you know what to expect. What if you're at the other end of the spectrum and are wishing you paid a little more attention in Miss O'Brien's algebra class? No worries; we're ready for you, too. Inside these pages are thorough

math and English reviews just in case you've been napping in class.

How This Book Is Organized

Catholic High School Entrance Exams For Dummies is divided into five parts that are packed with important information to get you ready for exam day. We organized these parts so you can easily navigate through the book to find whatever topic you're looking for. Following is a quick look at what each part covers.

Part I: Providing Perspective on Catholic High School Entrance Exams

This part tells you how to figure out which exam you're supposed to take, how Catholic high schools use each of the exams, and what each exam looks like. It also helps you get super-organized for your test-taking adventure. It features information on registering for your exam, assembling everything you need to take with you to the testing site, and developing a tried-and-true strategy for moving successfully and efficiently through the test questions.

Part II: Vanquishing the Verbal Questions

Here's where you discover what kinds of language and reading questions appear on the entrance exams. Get ready to encounter all sorts of ways to play with vocabulary words, find out how to approach analogies in words and pictures, train your brain to think logically, and create a plan for working through reading comprehension passages and their questions. This part also includes pithy reviews of proper grammar, usage, punctuation, spelling, and sentence construction.

Part III: Mastering Math and Conquering Quantitative Questions

The third part of the book is more than just an exciting overview of every math class you've had since kindergarten. In addition to reviews of the traditional math concepts of arithmetic, geometry, algebra, and word problems, you discover how to tackle other inventive quantitative question types. The Catholic high school entrance exams present you with creative questions that ask you to complete number and picture sequences, evaluate shapes and figures, balance squares and triangles on scales, and figure out strange-seeming hole-punch problems.

Part IV: Practice Makes Perfect

As promised, after you feel comfortable with your increased vocabulary, memorized math formulas, and that hole-punch question type, you can put your skills to the test tackling the full-length exams contained in this part. For your testing enjoyment, we include two HSPTs, two TACHSs, and two COOPs. Each exam comes complete with a sample bubble answer sheet so you can practice filling in circles, as well as thorough explanations of all the answers.

Part V: The Part of Tens

No *For Dummies* book is complete without The Part of Tens, and this book is no different. Here, we include ten important test-taking strategies you should apply to master the exam you're facing. We also include a chapter for you to share with your parents so they know their role in helping you do your best. (They didn't think they could just buy you this book and ditch you, did they?)

Icons Used in This Book

One exciting feature of *Catholic High School Entrance Exams For Dummies* is the icons that highlight especially significant portions of the text. These little pictures in the margins alert you to areas where you should pay particularly close attention.



This icon is pretty self-explanatory. When you see it, you know you're going to get to practice the particular area of instruction covered in that section with a question like one you may see on the test. Our

examples include detailed explanations of how to most efficiently answer exam questions and avoid common pitfalls.



Information tagged with this icon relates specifically to one (or all) of the entrance exams. It highlights facts you should know about each exam that'll help you perform your best.



This icon points out those general concepts, such as math formulas and grammar rules, that you should keep in mind as you tackle the test questions.



Throughout the book, we give you insights into how you can enhance your performance on the entrance exam you're facing. Text featuring the Tip icon presents you with juicy test-taking timesavers.

Where to Go from Here

Wondering where to get started? Well, if you're a test-taking whiz or straight-A student who only needs to brush up on a few areas, you can go right to the chapters and sections that cover those areas. (Use the table of contents and index as your guides.) Then again, if you really want to ace the HSPT, TACHS, or COOP, we suggest you take a more thorough approach to preparing. Familiarize yourself with the general test-taking process in Chapter 2 and then work through the complete verbal and math reviews. You can skim through sections that

you know a lot about by just reading the Tip, Remember, and Heads Up paragraphs and working through the Example questions.

If nothing else (and after you've done some preparatory work), we encourage you to take at least one of the practice exams in Part IV. Taking a practice test shows you which questions you seem to cruise through and which ones you need more work on. One way to use the practice tests is to take the first practice test for your exam and calculate your score. Then read through the verbal and math reviews in Parts II and III. After that, take the second practice test and compare your new score to the one you got on the first test so you can see just how much you improved with a little practice.

Wherever you begin, be confident that you're making a giant contribution to bettering your future by working through this book. Now, get ready to pass that Catholic high school entrance exam with flying colors!

Part I

Providing Perspective on Catholic High School Entrance Exams



In this part . . .

Here's where you really get to know your Catholic high school entrance exams. First, you discover just what your school of choice might do with your scores. Then you spend time becoming familiar with the formats of the HSPT, TACHS, and COOP, as well as