**11AP**

**Rhetorical Analysis Essay**

*AP Language & Composition Exam: Question 2 (Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts for one-third of the total essay section score.)*

Directions: Paragraphs 1 through 7 serve as an introduction to Lars Eighner’s essay “Dumpster Diving.” Read the passage carefully and write an essay explaining how Eighner uses rhetorical strategies to introduce his subject to his reader.

*Lars Eighner was born in Corpus Christi, Texas, in 1948 and grew up primarily in Houston. He became homeless in 1988 after leaving a job he had held for ten years as an attendant at a state hospital in Austin, Texas. He lives in a small apartment in Austin and continues to scavenge. This article was originally published in the Fall 1990 issue of The Threepenny Review.*

(1) Long before I began Dumpster diving I was impressed with Dumpsters, enough so that I wrote the Merriam-Webster research service to discover what I could about the word "Dumpster." I learned from them that "Dumpster" is a proprietary word belonging to the Dempsey Dumpster company.

(2)Since then I have dutifully capitalized the word although it was lowercased in almost all of the citations Merriam-Webster photocopied for me. Dempsey's word is too apt. I have never heard these things called anything but Dumpsters. I do not know anyone who knows the generic name for these objects. From time to time, however, I hear a wino or hobo give some corrupted credit to the original and call them Dipsy Dumpsters.

(3) I began Dumpster diving about a year before I became homeless.

(4) I prefer the term "scavenging" and use the word "scrounging" when I mean to be obscure. I have heard people, evidently meaning to be polite, use the word "foraging," but I prefer to reserve that word for gathering nuts and berries and such which I do also according to the season and the opportunity. "Dumpster diving" seems to me to be a little too cute and, in my case, inaccurate because I lack the athletic ability to lower myself into the Dumpsters as the true divers do, much to their increased profit.

(5) I like the frankness of the word "scavenging," which I can hardly think of without picturing a big black snail on an aquarium wall. I live from the refuse of others. I am a scavenger. I think it a sound and honorable niche, although if I could I would naturally prefer to live the comfortable consumer life, perhaps — and only perhaps — as a slightly less wasteful consumer owing to what I have learned as a scavenger.

(6) While my dog Lizbeth and I were still living in the house on Avenue B in Austin, as my savings ran out, I put almost all my sporadic income into rent. The necessities of daily life I began to extract from Dumpsters. Yes, we ate from Dumpsters. Except for jeans, all my clothes came from Dumpsters. Boom boxes, candles, bedding, toilet paper, medicine, books, a typewriter, a virgin male love doll, change sometimes amounting to many dollars: I acquired many things from the Dumpsters.

(7) I have learned much as a scavenger. I mean to put some of what I have learned down here, beginning with the practical art of Dumpster diving and proceeding to the abstract.