MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY

UNIVERSITY OF TUNIS

ECOLE NORMALE SUPERIEURE ENTRY EXAM

LITTERATURE

Session: July 2010.....**Department:** English

Duration: 4 hours **Coefficient:** 03

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1. "Poetry is form. Content is a secondary aspect." Comment and discuss.

2. "All the great institutions of the Classical Age used literature to expose the evil in society and in human nature." Comment and discuss.

3. "The novel has always been associated with a reflection of society and a reflection upon it. Using a novel you read, develop this statement.

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LANGUAGE

Session: July 2018 ..... **Department:** English

Duration: 3 hours **Coefficient:** 02

PART 1: READING COMPREHENSION (20 points)

Read the text below and then answer the questions.

On Dumpster Diving

by Lars Eighner

I began Dumpster diving about a year before I became homeless. 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, using the word "foraging," but I prefer to reserve the 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 like the athletic ability to lower myself into the Dumpster as the true divers do, much to their increased profit.

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 wasteful consumer owing to what I learnt as a scavenger.

While my dog Lizabeth and I were still living on the house on avenue B in Austin, as my savings ran out, I put almost all the 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,...and change sometimes amounting to many dollars. I acquired many things from the Dumpsters.

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

What is safe to eat?

Eating safely from the Dumpster involves three principles: using the senses and common sense to evaluate the condition of the found materials, knowing the Dumpsters of the given area and checking them regularly, and seeking always to answer the question "why was this discarded?"

Canned goods, for example, turn up fairly often in the Dumpsters I frequent. All except the most phobic people would be willing to eat from a can even if it came from Dumpster. Canned goods are among the safest of foods to be found in Dumpsters, but are not utterly foolproof.

Raw fruits and vegetables with intact skins seem perfectly safe to me, excluding of course the obviously rotten. Many are discarded for minor imperfections which can be pared away. Leafy vegetables, grapes, cauliflower, broccoli and similar things may be contaminated by liquids and may be impractical to wash.

Candy, especially hard candy, is usually safe if it has not drawn ants. Chocolate is often discarded only because it has become discoloured as the cocoa butter de-emulsified. Candying after all is one method of food preservation because pathogens do not like very sugary substance.

The area I frequent is inhabited by many affluent college students. I am not here by chance; the Dumpsters in this area are very rich. Students throw out many good things, including food. In particular they tend to throw everything out when they move at the end of a semester, before and after breaks, and around midterm when many of them despair of college. So I find it advantageous to keep an eye on the academic calendar.

The students throw food away around the breaks because they do not know whether it has spoiled or will spoil before they return. A typical discard is a half jar of peanut butter. In fact nonorganic peanut butter does not require refrigeration and is unlikely to spoil in any reasonable time. The student does not know that, and since it is Daddy's money, the student decides not to take a chance.

I learnt to scavenge gradually on my own. Since then I have initiated several companions into the trade. I have learned that there is a predictable series of stages a person goes through in learning to scavenge.

At first the new scavenger is filled with disgust and self-loathing. He is ashamed of being seen and may lurk around, trying to duck behind things or he may try to dive at night.

In fact most people instinctively look away from a scavenger. By skulking around, the novice calls attention to himself and arouses suspicion. Diving at night is ineffective and needlessly messy. Every grain of rice seems to be a maggot. Everything seems to sink. He can wipe the egg yolk off the found can but cannot erase the stigma of eating garbage out of his mind.

That stage passes with experience. The scavenger finds a pair of running shoes that fit and look and smell brand new. He finds a pocket calculator in perfect working order. He finds pristine ice cream, still frozen, more than he can eat or keep. He begins to understand: People do throw away perfectly good stuff, a lot of perfectly good stuff.

At this stage, Dumpster shyness begins to dissipate. The diver, after all, has the last laugh. He is finding all manner of good things which are his for the taking. Those who disparage his profession are the fools, not he.

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PART II: READING COMPREHENSION. Write your answers on this sheet. (20 points)

A/ Select the statement which best summarizes the general idea in the text? Fill the circle. (1 point)

- o Dumpster diving as a phenomenon in urban societies and how it relates to other similar terms in the English language.
- o How a homeless person and his dog Lizabeth managed to build a niche in a dumpster.
- o How a Dumpster diver acquired experience and knowledge in extracting what he needed from a dumpster while keeping safe and healthy

B/ Check whether the statements are true or false. Provide a justification as applicable. (5 points)

Statements	True	False	Justification
1. "Dumpster diving" is a polite way of talking about "scrounging"			
2. A "scavenger" is as wasteful as any other consumer.			
3. A diver can, in the process of searching, run into cash.			
4. The scavenger fed himself but not his dog from the Dumpster.			
5. Jeans and medicine were the only two items the dumpster diver could not find.			

C/ Complete the sentences by referring to details in the text. (3 points)

1. Raw fruits and vegetables are safe on condition .....
   .....
2. Candy is safe if .....
3. Chocolate in safe even though .....

D/ Why does the Dumpster diver find it useful to "keep an eye on the academic calendar?" (1 point)

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E/ Guess the meaning of the underlined words or expressions found in the text. (4 points)

1. "I like the athletic ability to lower myself into the Dumpster as the true divers do, much to their increased profit."

   a) to bend down
   b) to skip into
   c) to reach out

2. "...as my savings ran out, I put almost all the sporadic income into rent."

   a) accurate
   b) occasional
   c) consistent

3. "In fact most people instinctively look away from a scavenger."

   a) see a scavenger from a distance
   b) look at the scavenger right in the eye
   c) Avoid looking at a scavenger

4. Those who disparage his profession are the fools, not he."

   a) disgust
   b) belittle
   c) disgrace

F/ Answer the two open questions in your own words (6 points)

1. Summarise the predictions the author makes about the typical reaction(s) of novice dumpster divers?

2. To what extent do you find the author's explanations of the behavior of affluent students fair? Explain.

PART III: WRITE AN ESSAY ABOUT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING TOPICS. (20 points)

Topic 1: The influence that advertising has had on your life.

Topic 2: The chief reasons for students' academic failure.

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TRANSLATION (Eng/Ar-Ar/Eng)

Session: July 2010..... **Department:** English

Duration: 3 hours **Coefficient:** 02

فتحت الأم الباب ودفعت بأولادها أمامها وتبعهم الأب وساروا بالشارع تعصف بهم الريح ويبللهم المطر.

وما ان ساروا بعض خطوات حتى اضطربت الأرض تحت أقدامهم اضطرابا شديدا فسقطوا جميعا على الأرض وقد تجمّد فيهم كل إحساس

وتجاوب في الفضاء صوت انهيارات عنيفة وساد ظلام كثيف الا ما كان يلمع في الفضاء من حين لآخر من ضوء البرق . وتردّدت في فضاء المدينة أصوات استغاثة وصراخ .

وبعد برهة تطلّع الأب الى ما حوله فرأى ويا هول ما رأى .. لقد تحوّل منزل الأسرة والمنازل المجاورة الى أكوام من الحجارة والركام وغمغمت أم فريد وهي تضمّ أولادها الى صدرها وتتفقدهم واحدا واحدا : « انه الزلزال ... اللهم لطفك ورحمتك » .

وأضاف الأب : « لولا عنبر الوفيّ لهلكنا جميعا ولكنا الآن تحت الأنقاض » .

محمد الخمرسي الحناشي

(عن قصة عنبـــر)

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The Appointment in Samarra

Death speaks: There was a merchant in Bagdad who sent his servant to market to buy provisions and in a little while the servant came back, white and trembling, and said, Master, just now when I was in the market place I was jostled at by a woman in the crowd and when I turned I saw it was Death that jostled me. She looked at me and made a threatening gesture; now, lend me your horse, and I will ride away from this city and avoid my fate. I will go to Samarra and there Death will not find me. The merchant lent him his horse, and the servant mounted it, and he dug his spurs in its flanks and as fast as the horse could gallop he went. Then the merchant went down to the marketplace and he saw me standing in the crowd and he came to me and said. Why did you make a threatening gesture to my servant when you saw him this morning? That was not a threatening gesture, I said, it was only a start of surprise. I was astonished to see him in Baghdad, for I had an appointment with him tonight in Samarra.

W. Somerset Maugham.

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