In-class Essay 5

Below you will find questions drawn from the CBEST, MSAT, CSET, and general GRE. Answer one. You will have 45 minutes to complete your essay.

Discuss how well reasoned you find any one of the following arguments in an essay of 400-500 words.

The following appeared in a letter to the editor of the Antelope Valley Press:

"Both the villages of Palmdale and Lancaster have experienced sharp declines in the numbers of residents who pay property taxes. To save money and improve service, the two cities recently merged their once separate garbage collection departments into a single department located in Palmdale and the new department has reported few complaints about its service. Last year the library in Lancaster had 20 percent fewer users than during the previous year. It follows that we should now further economize and improve service, as we did with garbage collection, by closing the library in Lancaster and using the library in Palmdale to serve both villages."

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Yellow-legged frogs were once common in high-altitude lakes in the Sierra Nevada mountains, but they have become increasingly rare. Trout feed on tadpoles and young frogs. Few lakes in the Sierra Nevada had any trout in them until a hundred years ago. At that time, many lakes were stocked with trout for recreational fishing, and now trout are common in virtually all bodies of water in the Sierra Nevada. Researchers removed the trout from one lake, and the frog population soon quadrupled. Since frogs are capable of moving several miles over land, removing trout from just a few lakes is clearly the way to restore the frog population to its former levels.

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Studies show that in 70 percent of traffic accidents, at least one driver involved is less than 10 miles from home when the accident occurs. This statistic indicates that drivers have a tendency to drive incautiously when they are close to home, probably because familiar surroundings give them a false sense of security. Thus, the places where people feel safest are the places where they are in fact at greatest risk of serious injury.

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In measuring electrical activity in different parts of the brain, researchers found that people who describe themselves as generally happy have more activity in the left prefrontal lobe of their brains than do other people. Therefore, a medication for stimulating the left prefrontal lobe of the brain would be an effective treatment for clinical depression.