

Name:

Date:

Block”

“A Modest Proposal” Close Reading

Ok, let’s get into it! We are going to read the first 7 paragraphs together, then you will read the rest of the essay with a partner or two.

A. For the WHOLE DOCUMENT, be sure to annotate in the text to clarify, define, and note key points, then summarize each paragraph in the margin.

B. After you read, complete the structural analysis below. Write the relevant details from each section in the proposal:

I. Introduction (paragraphs 1-7)

II. Thesis statement (paragraphs 8-9)

III. How the plan will work (paragraphs 10-19)

IV. Advantages of the plan (paragraphs 20-28)

V. Possible objections/other solutions (paragraphs 29-30)

VI. Conclusion (paragraphs 31-33)

C. Discuss each question, finding specific evidence from the text that supports your response. Write thoughtful notes on your responses and the evidence (please cite all examples by paragraph #).

1. How does Swift portray himself throughout the essay? In what places does he reveal an egotistical persona? (tone, attitude)
2. How does Swift dehumanize the people in this essay? What is his purpose in doing so?
3. How does Swift make himself appear to be an expert?
4. Why does Swift focus on the benefits of his plan before giving us the details of it?
5. What point is Swift trying to make about landlords in paragraph 12?
6. What can you infer about the social and political conditions in Ireland from the essay?
7. How does Swift ironically criticize Catholicism in paragraph 21?
8. Paragraphs 21-28 detail the advantages of Swift's proposal. What criticisms of society are implied in these paragraphs?
9. Does Swift hold out any hope that Ireland will be able to save itself without resorting to his "modest" proposal? Hint: reread paragraphs 29-30. What does Swift really want the Irish to do?
10. Reread the final paragraph. What is ironic about Swift's comment about his own family?