

## ACTIVITIES: A Modest Proposal

1. Find examples of each of the elements of form of the classical proposal:
  - a) A clearly-defined problem
  - b) A proposed solution
  - c) A convincing argument supported by facts, examples, and opinions of recognized authorities
  - d) Recognition of opposing viewpoints - anticipating objections and allaying fears of the opposition
  - e) Comparison of proposed solution to alternatives
  - f) A self-controlled tone - rational, specific, avoiding exaggerations, never quarrelsome

4. Swift uses a technique called "diminution." This is the use of words or phrases that are less shocking than the real ones. One example from today's political talk is the use of "collateral damage" for human casualties in war.

In A Modest Proposal "beggars" and then "breeders" are used instead of **parents**. Find the different words and phrases Swift uses for **children**.

5. A similar device is the use of statistics in the essay. They are often used in today's editorials and essays. Their use can overwhelm the reader and cause the reader to feel detached from the problem.

Find examples of statistics in A Modest Proposal and discuss their effect

6. Where does Swift's "own" voice come through most clearly? Give two examples.

7. What topics can you think of for some modern "modest" proposals? Write some on the blackboard.