

SATIRE PROJECT – A Modest Proposal (individual project)

Think wicked thoughts to make a ‘modest’ proposal to fix a vice in our society, much like Jonathan Swift did in his ‘proposal.’ In a narration, you will give voice to a problem in the United States. While your problem should be a serious issue, your solution, obviously, should be satirical. Your objective is to draw attention to an important social issue while proposing a ludicrous solution. The contrast of the problem and solution should make the need for reform evident.

Step 1: Brainstorm and Research

Brainstorm a social issue which piques your interest. Make sure the topic is important enough that you can gather published information on it. Some general guidelines:

- Try to think of something that poses a genuine problem, even if it seems more specific to certain groups.
- Avoid typical “teen” issues and look at the larger scope of society.
- Propose a “modest” solution that is satirical in nature.
- Think of how Swift pointed out flaws in society (ignorance of human rights, vanity of aristocracy, etc) and contrasted those problems with extreme situations.
- Highlight the pertinent information in your research (quotations, statistics, people or places, other data, etc) and attach these sources to your finished satire.

Step 2: Organize and Write

Once you have all the ‘hard facts’ that you need, you can begin writing your ‘proposal.’

- Write this as a narration (see Swift’s “Modest Proposal”); it’s okay to use “I” and to examine the issue in a story-like manner. Be sure to have a recognizable persona / clear voice.
- Make sure to use proper rhetoric and logic in developing your arguments.
- Include enough factual information to warrant true reader concern over the issue you are presenting. Your ‘proposal’ will build on this information to make your solution seem that much more necessary.
- Minimum 1 ½ double-spaced pages, including classroom formatting.
- Include a title for your piece – this should incorporate the satire into the title (perhaps through irony)

Warning: Have common sense

- While this project is meant to be humorous and mocking in bringing about satirical reform, please be sensitive in how you approach your topics.
- Limit your use of invectives or harsh reductions. Remember, the point of satire is not to offend but to bring about awareness of the social issue. If you offend your audience, they may never learn the lesson or change their behavior.

Assessment

- You will be assessed on your ability to effectively satirize your chosen issue while maintaining a serious persona to create humor. See project rubric for more detail.