

# AP English 12: English Literature and Composition

## A Modern Proposal project

### **Task:**

Your first task is to identify a problem with modern society. Choose a serious fault (one with significant negative consequences for society) that is prevalent throughout the United States or the world; do not focus too narrowly on a problem that exists only in Conyers or the Metro-Atlanta area. Your project will include two main elements: research about your topic and a satire that inspires societal change through humorous mockery (modeled after Swift's "A Modest Proposal"). Both elements of the project must be meticulously proofread and in polished form.

### ***Research element***

- at least three articles from appropriate magazines and journals that explore different aspects of and perspectives on the problem
- 100-word summary of each article, including its thesis and perspective
- 100-word reaction to each article, expressing agreement or disagreement
- precise MLA-style citation for each article

### ***Satire element***

- 500-word essay that addresses the chosen problem in a humorous and mocking way
- detailed and clearly stated plan for correcting problem with specific strategies stated and defended
- use of a variety of rhetorical appeals, irony, hyperbole, and understatement
- a created fictional narrator who is an expert and who speaks from first-person perspective
- diction that is appropriate for the narrator and the topic
- an appropriate title and subtitle (stating the proposal's goal) modeled after Swift's title and subtitle

### **Process in creating satire:**

#### **1. Making the connection to your own life**

Think of something that annoys or angers you; it can be a serious national or social issue or a situation that you have to deal with in everyday life. Brainstorm about all of the problems caused by your issue and list them for later use. Next, come up with as many reasonable solutions to this problem as you can, listing them also for further use.

#### **2. Developing your own "proposal"**

Swift's persona proposed cannibalism because he felt that England was already "devouring" the Irish politically and economically. In a sense, physically consuming children was just a "logical" extension of what Britain had been doing to Ireland already. Like Swift, create a proposal that is completely outrageous and satirical but which also has a logical connection to the situation or issue it purports to improve.

#### **3. Writing your proposal**

Combine your ideas from 1 and 2 and write your proposal. Structure it like Swift's: describe the situation and the problems it causes; present your "modest" proposal, describing its implementation fully; list all of the benefits that would come of adopting it; finally, disprove the most serious objection to your proposal as you dismiss all rational and serious solutions.