

A modest proposal is  
a satirical story



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

A Modest Proposal is a satirical story that exemplifies the attitude between the rich and the poor in the same society. Jonathan Swift uses a great amount of rhetorical devices that effectively highlight the proposal. He uses repetition, metaphors, irony, false belief, and also includes sarcasm, satire and humor to make the negative tone stand out.

Swift uses one of his ways to achieve his purpose by blaming and mocking the mothers by telling them that they should go out and work instead of being lazy and begging on the streets. He also explains that the children will grow up having a tough future, having to become thieves. Swift uses false belief to make the purpose of this story get across.

The way he executes this purpose is not ethical or moral whatsoever. Swift declares that a ... a young healthy child well nursed is at a year old a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked or boiled; and I make no doubt that it will equally serve in a fricassee or a ragout. (62-64). He has claimed that around twenty thousand children were to be reserved for breeding, showing that humans are treated like livestock.

Also adding, that women were called breeders. This will inform the audience of the extreme living conditions the people in the Irish community suffer with, and that help is needed. Swift also incorporates emotional appeal in his argument by proposing slaughter houses in suitable places and hiring butchers who will do the job of slaughtering children. He then overemphasizes that children will be roasted like pigs. Another rhetorical device that catches the reader is the emotional appeal towards abortion. Swift claims There is likewise another great advantage in my scheme, that

will prevent those voluntary abortions sacrificing the poor innocent babes, I doubt, more to avoid the expense than the shame (30-33) This is horrifying to not only the children who are being involved but to the whole audience.

Another one of his ways that he supports his argument using rhetorical devices is by sarcasm, and a lot of it. It is undeniably frightening what Swift introduces about how children are in higher demand when the meat is better. He explains that I believe no gentleman would repine to give ten shillings for the carcass of a good fat child, which, I have said will make four dishes of excellent nutritive meat (92-94). He includes humor saying that mothers will only make a little bit of profit enough to keep them stable until the mother can have another child. Swift proposes that if children will not be able to be food, this will create good revenue to the whole country of Ireland.

Swift also includes irony talking about how people do not want to be affiliated with animals but then he calls the women breeders. Swift shows I calculate there may be about two hundred thousand couple whose wives are breeders (36). This shows that the poor are treated like livestock and the irony helps reverse the psychology that Swift is trying to do on purpose to inform the readers of the major problem.

Overall, Swift changes from sympathetic to sarcastic to humorous to being so horrifying that the reader might want to stop reading. The main reason he wrote this was to inform readers of the poverty in Ireland and the suffering many were put through. The purpose was that he used reverse psychology to make the audience understand the pain and difficulties of living in Ireland in the 1700s.