

Modest Proposal – AP Questions

1. The author's style is characterized by his
 - I. technical diction
 - II. ironic tone
 - III. elaborate syntax
 - a. I only
 - b. II only
 - c. I and II only
 - d. II and III only
 - e. I, II, and III

2. In paragraph 6, with the phrase “except where they are of towardly parts,” the speaker
 - I. refutes a contrasting argument in order to strengthen his position
 - II. qualifies a previous generalization about the Irish children
 - III. offers an exception to the terms of the proposal
 - a. I only
 - b. II only
 - c. I and II only
 - d. II and III only
 - e. I, II, and III

3. In paragraph 6, the speaker makes which of the following appeals?
 - I. substantive
 - II. authoritative
 - III. motivational
 - a. I only
 - b. II only
 - c. I and II only
 - d. II and III only
 - e. I, II, and III

4. The speaker appeals to each of the following EXCEPT
 - a. pity
 - b. reason
 - c. economy
 - d. avarice
 - e. pragmatism

5. Paragraph 15 presents appeals to each of the following EXCEPT
 - a. gentility
 - b. patriotism
 - c. economy

- d. utility
 - e. indulgence
6. In paragraph 17, the speaker offers as a “refinement” of his proposal each of the following EXCEPT
- a. the meat would be too tough to enjoy
 - b. there would result a loss of able-bodied workers
 - c. the cost of fattening teenagers would be prohibitive
 - d. the practice would bring charges of cruelty
 - e. there would result a loss of breeders
7. In the fourth sentence of paragraph 17 (“Then as to the females, it would...”), “it” refers to
- a. “flesh...generally tough and lean, like that of our schoolboys by continual exercise”
 - b. “these to be disposed of...otherwise by their nearest relations”
 - c. “cruelty...the strongest objection against any project”
 - d. “both sexes...being now ready to starve for want of work and service”
 - e. “the want of venison...supplied by the bodies of young lads and maidens”
8. The speaker admits which of the following as the strongest objection to any proposal?
- a. that it would be regarded as cruel
 - b. that it would promote avarice
 - c. that it would reduce population
 - d. that it would violate the law
 - e. that it would encourage exploitation
9. Which of the following describes the rhetorical progression of paragraph 17?
- a. general statements followed by specific examples
 - b. attitude of acceptance leading to persuasive reasoning
 - c. statements of flattery moving to gentle criticism
 - d. presentation of qualified argument followed by refutation
 - e. specific information leading to general thesis
10. In paragraph 17, each of the following serves as antecedent to the same pronoun EXCEPT
- a. friend
 - b. lover
 - c. patriot
 - d. acquaintance
 - e. person
11. With the phrase “persons of quality,” in paragraph 18, the speaker appeals to
- a. economy
 - b. philanthropy
 - c. pity

- d. gentility
- e. misogyny

12. The speaker uses each of the following arguments in support of his proposal EXCEPT

- a. it would prevent voluntary abortions
- b. it would ease the burden of parents too poor to feed their children
- c. it would decrease the incidence of domestic violence
- d. it would stimulate Ireland's economy with a new and profitable export
- e. it would provide greater culinary variety for the genteel

13. Which of the following are offered as advantages of the proposal?

- I. It would lessen the number of Papists
- II. It would increase the number of marriages
- III. It would decrease the number of suicides

- a. I only
- b. II only
- c. I and II only
- d. I and III only
- e. II and III only

14. The tone of Swift's speaker might best be described as

- a. reasoned and confident
- b. ironic and absurd
- c. condescending and indifferent
- d. arrogant and illogical
- e. diffident and objective

15. Which of the following is most effective in assuaging possible feelings of disgust in the reader?

- a. the technical aspect of the facts and figures
- b. the speaker's avoidance of the grotesque
- c. the blunt candor of the proposal
- d. the ironic nature of the proposal
- e. the rational analysis supporting the proposal

16. Swift evidently wishes to have effected which of the following among members of his contemporary audience?

- a. They will be convinced of the soundness of the proposal
- b. They will be willing to absolve the speaker of selfish motives
- c. They will be willing to adopt a modified version of his proposal
- d. They will feel that some of their own selfish motives are exposed
- e. They will view the proposal as an opportunity for further personal gain

Short Answer questions:

1. For each of the classic appeals (ethos, pathos, logos), indicate one example from the first 8 paragraphs. Which one is the speaker's primary appeal?
2. Indicate Swift's motivational appeals, specifically those to thrift, economy, and patriotism.
3. Identify the counterargument that the speaker anticipates in paragraph 19.
4. Explain what Swift suggests as "expedients" in paragraphs 29-31. What do these "expedients" infer?

Answer Key

1. e
2. c
3. e
4. d
5. b
6. b
7. e
8. a
9. d
- 10.d
- 11.d
- 12.d
- 13.c
- 14.a
- 15.d
- 16.d