**Evidence-Based Selected Response Questions**

A Modest Proposal

1a. Which is the best term to describe Swift’s **tone** in “A Modest Proposal”?

1. Ironic
2. Critical
3. Serious
4. Satirical

1b. Choose 2 examples from the text to support your answer:

1. “But my intention is very far from being confined provide only for the children of professed beggars;” (16-17)
2. “whoever could find out a fair, cheap, and easy method…would deserve so well of the public as to have his statue set up for a preserver of the nation.” (12-14)
3. “I am assured by our merchants that a boy or girl before twelve years old is no salable commodity;” (54-55)
4. “whereof only one fourth part to be males, which is more than we allow to sheep, black cattle, or swine;” (67-68)
5. “I have reckoned upon a medium that a child just born will weigh twelve pounds, and in a solar year if tolerably nursed increaseth to twenty-eight pounds.” (77-78)
6. “…that a young healthy child well nursed is at a year old a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled;” (62-63)

2a.What is Swift’s main **purpose** in “A Modest Proposal”?

1. To find a serious solution to Irish poverty.
2. To criticize English treatment of the Irish.
3. To raise awareness about Irish poverty.
4. To propose cannibalism as an option.

2b. Choose 2 examples to support your answer:

1. “Infant’s flesh will be in season throughout the year, but more plentiful in March, and a little before and after.” (82-83)
2. “…some scrupulous people might be apt to censure such a practice…as a little bordering upon cruelty…” (120-121)
3. “I have already computed the charge of nursing a beggar’s child, to be about two shillings per annum, rags included;” (90-92)
4. “he confessed that this expedient was put into his head by the famous Psalmanazar, a native of the island of Formosa,” (123-124)
5. “and therefore it will have one other collateral advantage, by lessening the number of Papists[[1]](#footnote-1) among us.” (88-89)
6. “the executioner sold the carcass to persons of quality as a prime dainty; and that is his time the body of a plump girl of fifteen…was sold to his Imperial Majesty…” (128-129)

**Answer Key**

1a- D

1b- B, F

2a- B

2b- B, E

1. A derogatory term for Roman Catholics, which many Irish were at the time. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)