

INSTRUCTIONS: EXAMINE THE POLITICAL CARTOON BELOW THAT DEPICTS PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA AND SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN CAMPAIGNING IN THE 2008 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. WHAT IS THE POINT OR FUNCTION OF THIS POLITICAL CARTOON? YOUR RESPONSE SHOULD BE IN PARAGRAPH FORM.



# SATIRE

Jonathan  
Swift's "A  
Modest  
Proposal"

# SATIRE: A DEFINITION

- A satire is a work of literature which exposes and criticizes human vices and follies through exaggeration, irony, and sarcasm.
  - Exaggeration: overstatement, hyperbole
  - Irony: the use of words to convey a meaning that is opposite of the literal meaning, or the outcome is contrary to what was expected
  - Sarcasm: verbal irony; typically a sharp, harsh, or bitter remark
- The purpose of a satire is to hold a mirror up to society and inspire a change.

# SATIRE'S PLACE IN HISTORY AND LITERATURE

- Satire was popularized by writers Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift during the Restoration and Enlightenment period (1660-1800).
- This time period is known for its emphasis on logic and reason, the start of industrialization, and the excesses of the rich.
- Pope used satire to attack the immorality and bad taste of the educated and wealthy classes.

# JONATHAN SWIFT

- Swift was born in Dublin, Ireland to English parents.
- He became a clergyman and published many satires in his lifetime, such as *Gulliver's Travels* and "A Modest Proposal."
- Swift used satire to attack greed and pride, as well as political and religious corruption.
- He was very critical of English policy in Ireland and fought to correct the injustices done to the Irish people.

# “A MODEST PROPOSAL”

- Swift's satirical essay “A Modest Proposal” appeared in 1729.
- “A Modest Proposal” targets the English government for oppressing the Irish people for a number of years.
- The essay also targets the Irish themselves for letting themselves become victims of English laws and regulations.
- “A Modest Proposal” presents a shockingly satirical solution to the severe poverty of the Irish.

# POLITICAL CARTOON EXAMPLE

- 1) What problem is the cartoonist satirizing?
- 2) What is the satirical solution?
- 3) Which of the three satirical elements does the cartoonist use: exaggeration, sarcasm, and/or irony?

