

Irish Literature at GCSE

NEAB English Syllabus 1111

NEAB English Literature Syllabus 1112

Writing assignment

Cal & A Modest Proposal

Gillian Goetzee & Rae O'Malley

Contents

Note for teachers	1
Introduction	3
PART ONE : <i>CAL</i> BY BERNARD MAC LAVERTY	
1. Preparation for <i>Cal</i>	5
2. Formative activities for <i>Cal</i>	6
3. Speaking and listening assignment for <i>Cal</i> The Crown v Mc Cluskey	10
PART TWO : <i>A MODEST PROPOSAL</i> BY JOHNATHAN SWIFT	
4. Preparation for <i>A Modest Proposal</i>	13
5. Historical background for <i>A Modest Proposal</i>	14
6. Formative activities for <i>A Modest Proposal</i>	15
7. Original writing assignment for <i>A Modest Proposal</i>	18
PART THREE : COMPARING <i>CAL</i> AND <i>A MODEST PROPOSAL</i>	
8. Framework for comparing <i>Cal</i> and <i>A Modest Proposal</i>	20
PART FOUR : EXAMPLES OF STUDENTS' WORK	
	21

Note for teachers

Aim

This study unit is aimed at students and is designed to assist the teaching and analysis of Irish writing relevant to the English National Curriculum Key Stage 4. It is specifically aimed at NEAB Syllabuses English 1111 and English Literature 1112. Irish literature has been included in English syllabuses for a long time, but only as part of the English literary heritage, without any acknowledgment.

Tasks on Swift's *A Modest Proposal* to *Cal* by Bernard Mac Laverty build up to an assignment which directly compares what the two writers and texts have to say about suffering in Ireland. Students answer the key questions: What is each writer trying to say? How does each writer present their message? Which text do you prefer and why?

Teaching time

The teaching time for this study unit is roughly fifteen hours.

Background and resources

A brief historical background is provided for *A Modest Proposal* in Chapter 5.

Useful resources for the preparation work on *Cal* include:

Tony McAleavy, *Conflict in Ireland*, Collins Educational, London 1997, ISBN 0003270084, 96 pages; and

two web sites:

<http://www.cain.ulst.ac.uk/>

This Conflict Archive on the Internet, hosted by the University of Ulster, is the best web site on the conflict in Northern Ireland.

<http://www.members.tripod.co.uk/~northernireland/>

This site intends to provide regular and impartial news from Northern Ireland, collecting information from independent sources such as the BBC and Irish Times, subject to only minor editing for clarity.

Of course, preparation work on *Cal* will be greatly assisted if students are also taking the Modern World Study, 'Conflict in Ireland', as part of GCSE History (Schools History Project).

Addressing NEAB English Syllabus 1111/English Literature Syllabus 1112

The assignment relates to the coursework element of the syllabus, 'wide reading' and the following assessment objectives:

- (i) read with insight and engagement;
- (ii) make appropriate reference to texts;
- (iii) develop and sustain interpretation of texts;
- (iv) select material appropriate to purpose;
- (v) collate material from different sources;
- (vi) make cross-references;
- (vii) comment and understand linguistic and structural devices;
- (viii) comment on ways language varies and changes.

The assignment fulfils the criteria of responding to at least two texts, one a complete work of prose fiction published before 1900 and written by an author prescribed as 'English in the National Curriculum' and one a text by an author with a well established critical reputation whose

works were published after 1900. This twentieth century text must be of sufficient substance and quality to merit serious study.

The assignment also fulfils the criteria for English Literature, allowing pupils to demonstrate awareness of social and historical influences on texts, and the cultural contexts within which they were written or are set, together with the significance of relevant literary traditions.

The syllabus itself recommends that a suitable assignment might be ‘The English in Ireland in *A Modest Proposal* and *Cal*.’

Addressing the National Curriculum

The study unit fulfils the following aspects of the English National Curriculum Key Stage 4: attainment target 1: speaking and listening¹; attainment target 2: reading (under which Swift is a prescribed author)²; attainment target 3: writing³.

Thus, for example, for attainment target 1, the tasks involve discussion encouraging pupils ‘to take different views into account, summarise and use salient points, use evidence and construct persuasive arguments.’

Again, for attainment target 2, the tasks and assignment involve pupils being taught how:

- (i) to extract meaning beyond the literal, explaining how choice of language and style affects implied and explicit meanings;
- (ii) to analyse and discuss alternative interpretations, unfamiliar vocabulary, ambiguity and hidden meanings; and
- (iii) to analyse and engage with the ideas, themes and language in fiction.

They also enable pupils to:

- (iv) reflect on the writer’s presentation of ideas, the motivation and behaviour of characters, the development of plot and the overall impact of a text;
- (v) distinguish between the attitudes and assumptions displayed by characters and those of the author; and
- (vi) appreciate the characteristics that distinguish literature of high quality.

¹ Requires that pupils should be given opportunities for exploration; consideration of ideas; development of thinking; and analysis.

² Requires that pupils should be given opportunities to read a wide variety of literature; to respond to the substance and style of texts; to read more demanding texts; to access significant works and authors from the English literary heritage, Swift being a prescribed author; to read texts from other cultures and traditions that represent their distinctive voices and form, and other varied perspectives and subject matter.

Novels and short stories should include works that include a range of narrative structures and literary techniques; extend pupils’ ideas and their moral and emotional understanding; offer perspectives on society and community and their impact on the lives of individuals; show the variety of language used in fiction.

³ Requires that pupils should be encouraged to inform others through explanation and argument; develop thinking through analysis, hypothesis and summary.

Introduction

Comparing *Cal* and *A Modest Proposal*

Both *Cal* by Bernard Mac Laverty and *A Modest Proposal* by Jonathan Swift have something to say about the experience of suffering in Ireland.

What is each writer trying to say?

How does each writer present their message?

Which text do you like the best and why?

Part one

Cal by Bernard Mac Laverty

1. Preparation for *Cal*

Your teacher may divide the class, with one half participating in one activity and the other half participating in a second activity.

You may have to work in groups or pairs.

Activity one

1. **Research the causes and the events of the troubles in Ireland that have happened since 1900.**
2. **Write an account for Primary School children that will be included in a new encyclopaedia, a 'Horrible History of Ireland' or as a report for Newsround.**
3. **Think about the appropriate content, tone and language.**

Activity two

1. **Research what has happened very recently in Ireland, especially Northern Ireland.**
2. **Create a display using newspaper articles and pictures, information from the Internet etc.**
3. **Include your own short commentaries.**

You may have to present your research findings to other members of the class.

2. Formative activities for *Cal*

At first you will work slowly through the text, focusing on small details. You may be asked to work in pairs.

As you become more familiar with the text and become more skilled, you will deal with larger extracts at a time and you will work on broader tasks.

1. Read to the break on page 5

Why does Mac Lavery choose to set the opening of a text about Northern Ireland in an abattoir?

Pick out and comment on three quotations.

Why are the presence of the Preacher and the details about him significant?

Is Cal Protestant or Catholic?

How does Mac Lavery make the reader understand that the conflict between Catholic and Protestant is so much part of life in Northern Ireland?

What do you learn about the character of Cal?

Think about his hair 'screening him from the world'.

Think about the way he wished 'to curse himself more thoroughly'.

Think about his smoking, and anything else.

Why might Gaelic be important to Catholics?

Why do you think Mac Lavery makes Cal so poor at Gaelic?

2. Read to the break on page 8

How does the account of the Post Office add to our understanding of the experience of living in Northern Ireland?

Why does Cal go to the library?

What does this add to your knowledge of his way of life?

Do you think his way of life is unusual for people his age in Northern Ireland?

What may have caused this way of life?

Why is Cal interested in the new librarian?

How does Mac Lavery bring suspense and tension into his storyline?

To help you, pick out three quotations and comment on them.

3. Read to the break on page 15

Find out what 'yahoos' are and which writer made up the term.

**The News on the television is a recurring motif in the text.
Why and how does Mac Lavery use this device?**

What do you think Cal has done?

How does Cal get on with his father?

Who is Crilly?

What do you think is his connection with Cal? (*Look at what has been on the television just before he is mentioned on page 12.*)

Why do you think Mac Lavery gives this particular, detailed flashback about Crilly?

4. Read to the break on page 20

What do you now know for sure about Crilly?

Does Mac Lavery want you to like Skeffington?

Pick out three details and comment on them.

Do you think there is ever a time when violence has to be done, when it is a responsibility?

Why do you think Mac Lavery includes the details about Crilly's house and about his mother?

Do you think Cal should agree to drive 'just this once'?

5. Read to the break on page 26

Why is Cal so determined in his pursuit of Marcella? Is he right to track her like this?

Is there any evidence that the relationship may develop?

We have seen Catholic intimidation with Crilly and Skeffington.

How does Mac Lavery show the Protestant actions?

What point is he trying to make?

How did Cal first get involved with Crilly and Catholic activists?

6. Read to the end of the chapter, page 30

How is Cal's relationship with his father changing?

How does Mac Lavery make you feel sorry for Cal and his father?

Why does Mac Lavery want you to feel sorry for them?

What do you think is the significance of Cal's dream?

You are now going to read larger sections of the text and the activities will be broader in scope.

You may wish to keep a reading log where you write down anything you find difficult, or you think is important, or adds something new to the ideas or storyline.

7. Read to the break on page 42

List five key moments.

For each key moment give a reason why it is important and pick out a quotation.

8. Read to the end of the chapter on page 54

**Imagine you are a teacher producing a worksheet for these pages.
Write down five questions you would ask.**

Swap these with another pupil's questions and write the answers to their questions.

9. Read to the break on page 66

Write a newspaper account of the robbery.

Have a headline which is striking.

Use word play, alliteration etc.

Include the most dramatic details in the first paragraph.

Put background detail in the second paragraph.

Interview a Nationalist with views like Skeffington.

Interview a Unionist.

10. Read to the break on page 79

Imagine that you are Shamie, Cal's father.

Write a letter to your brother in America about recent events. (200 words)

Plan first, listing points to include.

Remember to describe all your thoughts and feelings.

11. Read to the end of the chapter on page 89

What narrative device does Mac Laverly use in these last pages?

Why is it so important ?

Why is it placed at this particular point in the text ?

12. Read to the break on page 107

'Although she was light years away from him he felt the enormous pull of her. And yet, like the moon and the earth, he knew that, because of what he had done, they could never come together. His sin kept them apart as surely as cold space.'

(page 91)

Explain why this extract is so important. Explain Mac Laverly's use of imagery here.

**Explain how the relationship makes progress in this section.
Try to explain Cal's dream on page 107.**

13. Read to the end of the chapter on page 122

Look again at pages 111-112.

List Cyril Dunlop's arguments.

Try to answer each point that he makes.

Can you see Dunlop ever changing his ideas in the future?

Why does Mac Lavery include this conversation ?

Pick five quotations that tell you more about Marcella's character and feelings.

List five new facts about Marcella.

14. Read to the second break on page 144

How do you think the story is going to end ?

15. Read to the end of the novel on page 156

Try to write down what the ending makes you feel, and why it makes you feel this, and how it makes you feel this.

The ideas and message of the story work through images not just character, action and dialogue.

What do you think the relationship of Cal and Marcella may represent ?

Can you think of five reasons from the story to hope for the future of Northern Ireland?

Can you think of five reasons from the story to despair for the future of Northern Ireland?

Which do you think is the more powerful emotion, hope or despair?

3. Speaking and listening assignment for *Cal* The Crown v Mc Cluskey

Your teacher may wish to work on the following assignment to help you know and understand *Cal*, and to be part of your Oral grade.

After Cal's arrest he appears in a Crown Court charged with terrorist activities: murder and robbery of a Post Office.

Your class is going to enact the proceedings in the Crown v Mc Cluskey.

Cast

Cal Mc Cluskey

Crilly

Skeffington

Cyril Donnelly

Shamie

Marcella

Mrs Morton

Other witnesses the class decides on such as Mr Henderson, a neighbour

Judge

Clerk of the Court

Prosecuting Team

Defence Team

Jury

The defendant and the witnesses should spend time recalling their actions, words, reasons etc.

The Prosecution Team and the Defence team should decide the key points of their cases, the witnesses they are going to call, the questions they are going to ask, and who is going to ask which questions.

The Judge, Clerk and Jury should provide themselves with names, personalities and backgrounds.

Procedure

The Judge runs the proceedings with the help of the Clerk.

The Clerk of the Court reads out each count, each charge.

The defendant is asked whether he pleads guilty or not guilty. ('Not guilty')
The Clerk calls on each member of the jury by name.

(In a real court the Prosecution or Defence could object to any juror. In the class court it should be an opportunity for each juror to introduce themselves and their circumstances.)

The clerk administers an oath to the jurors where they swear to try the issues according to the evidence.

One of the Prosecution Team addresses the jury outlining the charges and the evidence. The witnesses are called one at a time.

The Prosecution Team should take it in turns to examine the witnesses.

The Defence Team take it in turns to cross-examine each witness.

Finally one of the Prosecution Team should say to the Judge, 'This is the case for the prosecution.'

The Defence Team may wish to call new witnesses.

They should be examined and cross-examined as before.

The Defendant should leave the dock and enter the witness box to give evidence, be examined and cross-examined.

One of the Prosecution Team should address the jury, summing up the case after examining the witnesses.

Then one of the Defence Team should do the same for their case.

The Judge should review the facts and state the defence against each charge.

The jury should retire to consider their verdict.

The foreman of the jury should announce the verdict.

If necessary the Judge should pronounce sentence.

Part two

A Modest Proposal by Jonathan Swift

4. Preparation for *A Modest Proposal*

Class drama activity

Imagine a city centre like Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester or Nottingham in the year 2000.

One third of the class are begging or selling *The Big Issue*.

Each character has to create a story line for themselves and have a begging catch phrase of their own.

Two thirds of the class are shoppers and workers.

They too have to create a personality, situation and storyline for themselves.

They could be in family or friendship groups.

Build a physical sense of the street with the beggars placed at intervals.

The shoppers and workers have to walk down the street with beggars calling out their catch phrase.

The teacher will freeze the action.

Each shopper and worker has to say how they feel about the people begging.

5. Historical background for *A Modest Proposal*

James II

James II became king of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland in 1685. He was a Catholic, and the Protestants in England were afraid that he would take power away from them.

James was expelled from the throne in 1688. His daughter, Mary, and her husband, William of Orange (The Netherlands), became King and Queen.

James tried to get his throne back by taking a French army to Ireland. He planned to use Ireland as a base to invade England.

William of Orange

William of Orange brought his own army to Ireland and defeated James II at the battle of the Boyne in 1690.

The Protestants tried to stop Catholics from ever having power again. In Ireland there was a Parliament which was mainly Protestant.

Penal laws

This Parliament passed special laws called Penal Laws designed to keep political power out of the hands of Catholics:

No Catholic may bequeath his lands as a whole but must divide it amongst his sons, but if one of these sons becomes Protestant he will inherit the whole estate. No Catholic can buy land or lease it for more than 31 years.

No Catholic shall be allowed to vote or become a member of Parliament or a town councillor. No Catholic shall join the civil service. No Catholic may be a solicitor or lawyer.

No Catholic may join the army or navy. No Catholic may possess a horse of greater value than £5. Any Protestant offering that sum may take possession of a horse of his Catholic neighbour. Catholics keeping guns are liable to a whipping.

Catholics may not receive higher education or take professional jobs.

Most Irish people were Catholic. These laws meant they had lost all power and had become even poorer.

It is in this context that Jonathan Swift wrote *A Modest Proposal* in 1729.

6. Formative activities for *A Modest Proposal*

***A Modest Proposal* is a bit difficult to understand as it is nearly 200 years old. Language and ideas have changed since then. It is one of the most powerful pieces of persuasive writing ever written, and it is short!**

You are going to look at the text paragraph by paragraph so that you understand clearly what Swift is writing about, what his message is and how he presents his message.

For each paragraph look up any words that you do not understand.

Paragraph 1

The Pretender was the son of James 11 who claimed to be the real king of England. The 'Pretender' is an insulting nickname.

What is the 'melancholy Object' that people walking through the town of Dublin can see?

What is the narrator's attitude to the women and children?

Is there any indication that this attitude is not sincere?

What is the reason that the women cannot work, according to the narrator?

Who do you think is Swift's target audience?

Paragraph 2

How does the narrator make the number of children seem enormous?

How do all these children affect the state of the kingdom?

What has to be done to deserve a statue set up for a 'Preserver of the Nation'?

And who is going to commit this deserving act!?

Paragraph 3

Why is the narrator's scheme aimed at all the children in Ireland not just the children of beggars?

Paragraph 4

What personality is Swift giving to the narrator?

What does 'dropt from his dam' suggest about the narrator's attitude to the Irish?

Why does the narrator's scheme affect one year old children, not new born babies?

Have you any idea what the narrator's scheme may be, which will enable children to 'contribute to the Feeding, and partly to the cloathing, of many Thousands'?

Paragraph 5

What is another advantage of the narrator's scheme?

How does this paragraph make you feel about the mothers?

Which words influence you?

Does it move you to 'Tears and Pity'?

What should you feel about women killing their children rather than letting them suffer death by starvation?

Paragraph 6

What do you feel about the narrator's mathematical approach to the Irish?

What is the narrator's attitude to the 'Livelihood of stealing'?

What does this add to your idea of the narrator's personality?

Paragraph 7

Why does the narrator reject the idea of selling the children?

Do you think Swift's audience will agree or disagree with the narrator's attitude to the Irish?

Paragraphs 8 and 9

What is the narrator's proposal for the children?

How does Swift want his audience to react to his proposal?

Paragraphs 10 and 11

How does the narrator show he regards the Irish like any other animal bred for food?

Paragraph 12

The narrator is not criticising landlords but Swift is.

Explain how Swift manages this.

Paragraph 13

How is Swift exposing people's prejudices against Catholics?

Paragraphs 14,15 and 16

How does Swift make the proposal more appalling?

Pick out at least three quotations to help you answer.

Keep on considering the role of the narrator.

Paragraph 17

Why does the narrator reject the idea of 12 - 14 year olds being sold for meat?

What do you feel about the narrator rejecting the idea that his scheme is a 'little bordering upon cruelty'?

Paragraph 18

Why does Swift include the narrator's American acquaintance and the Native of Formosa?

What do you think is the real occupation of the 'several plump young girls in this town'?

Paragraph 19

Why is the narrator not concerned about the 'vast Number of poor People, who are Aged, Diseased, or Maimed'?

Does Swift agree with the narrator?

Paragraphs 20-28

List the advantages the narrator sees in his scheme.

Choose two to comment on in detail.

Paragraph 29

The narrator rejects other schemes for helping Ireland.

List three of the other schemes, putting them in your own words.

What do you think is Swift's opinion of these schemes?

Paragraph 30

What is Swift saying about the Irish and English parliaments if there has never been 'some hearty and sincere Attempt to put them in Practice'?

Paragraph 31

Which country is Swift referring to in 'I could name a country, which would be glad to eat up our whole Nation'?

What is Swift implying here?

Paragraph 32

What two points does the narrator ask the reader to consider?

Why does Swift put these into his text?

Why would the Irish find it 'a great Happiness to have been sold for Food at a Year old?

Who means this, Swift or the narrator?

What does Swift want the reader to feel?

Paragraph 33

How does the narrator try to convince the reader of the selflessness of his motives?

What does this actually make you feel about the narrator?

7. Original writing assignment for *A Modest Proposal*

A charity for the homeless commissions you to write a twenty-first century Modest Proposal - that shooting beggars and turning them into dog food would resolve the problem of homelessness.

The aim is to shock readers into realising that their attitude to homeless beggars is inhuman, and to appreciate there are solutions.

(If you produce this text carefully it may be submitted as an Original Writing assignment.)

It would be a good idea to re-read the text quickly.

Look up and discuss with you teacher the word SATIRE.

Part three

Comparing *Cal* and *A Modest Proposal*

8. Framework for Comparing *Cal* and *A Modest Proposal*

Remind yourself of the title again.

Both *Cal* by Bernard Mac Laverty and *A Modest Proposal* by Jonathan Swift have something to say about the experience of suffering in Ireland.

What is each writer trying to say?
How does each writer present their message?
Which text is the most effective and why?

Use all the work you have done to help you answer this. You may wish to use the following as a writing framework to help you plan.

You should write at least a thousand words. Use at least twenty quotations.

Cal

What is Mac Laverty specifically saying about the experience of suffering in Ireland? (Just sum this up in a paragraph - 100 words?)

What type of writing, genre, has Mac Laverty chosen to show all this?

Why and how may this genre succeed in informing and affecting readers?

What particular methods does Mac Laverty use to engage readers' interest and to show them his personal vision of the experience of suffering (eg, dreams, news flashes, suspense, a main character who is both a victim and a perpetrator, imagery, language).

Put these methods in a sensible order and explain each one with examples.

What would you use to link writing about *Cal* and *A Modest Proposal*?

A Modest Proposal

While writing about *A Modest Proposal* you should refer back to *Cal* explaining similarities and differences.

Who was Swift's target audience?

What was his specific intention?

What genre did Swift choose? Why?

How is this different to the novel form?

What was Swift's overall method and intention?

How does this method work on the reader?

Pick out about five details and explain how they work?

Evaluation and conclusion

Which text did you find the most effective and why?

Part four

Examples of students' work

Both *Ca* by Bernard Mac Laverty and *A Modest Proposal* by Jonathan Swift have something to say about the experience of suffering in Ireland.

What is each writer trying to say?

How does each writer present their message?

Which text is the most effective and why?

1. Weak student - transcript of handwritten assignment, original punctuation etc. preserved
2. Middle ability student - transcript of handwritten assignment, original punctuation etc. preserved
3. Able student - word processed assignment

1. Weak student

Mac Lavery is trying to get a point across that the Catholics and Protestants are causing suffering and unemployment all over Ireland which is leading to people getting killed. Both sides are going too far.

Mac Lavery is trying to get a point across that the Catholics and Protestants are causing suffering and unemployment all over Ireland which is leading to people getting killed. Both sides are going to far which is leading to innocent people being killed. People are under a lot of pressure. the Catholics are doing these things like shooting and beating people. They would not have to do this if they were put in the place. People are living in fear of being killed or stuck in their homes when they are on fire. There is such a spot that if they do not kill then they would be killed themselves. The tragedy has been going on for hundreds of years.

McClavery has chosen this novel because of the suffering and the tension between two different types of people. It shows you life in Ireland around a boy named Cal who had an uneventful life. He shows the suffering through one person, hes done this because you get more involed in the book as you can identify it as a real life. The language used and he intensity make you go into death with the book. As you go on you start to have feelings for the characters. Mac Lavery shows the life and pain that happens to Cal. Cal is used to show the misery, what life is like always looking over your shoulder, Woundering weather your house is going to be on fire when you go to sleep. Mac Lavery shows a lost of pain and hurt, he starts of with just his job being lost. Afterwards he then gets beaten up by a group of men that levee him laying down on the floor. Cal also starts to get flash backs of the murder that had happened a While ago even thou he did not pull the triger it still haunts him with the sounds of the gun going of with an echo. Then another shot was fired on a second person on which put a hole throught his head. Blood was on the wall as if it was flied on with a paint brush. If this was not enought while Cal was out and hid dad siting in the front room falling asleep a group or just tow men came up to the house and trough petrol bombs through the letter box. His dadjumping up out of his chair not being able to see panic and ran out side. While still thinking that Cal was still in his bedroom. When Cal came back to his house all that was left was black beams and burn marks above the windows. After all this his dad then got to a home as he broke down. Now Cal being on his own.

Mac Lavery shows an ordinary person in a normal life but with these events happening to him. The reader shows the suffering and experience as you go into deaths when you can imagin one person and feel for him.

An other book which we have been reading called Modest Proposal show the same suffering, pain, hurt as Cal but they were written at different times a Modest Proposal was done in 1729 Mac Lavery was done in the 1980s about 300 years apart and not much had change since them. Apart from people or the land lord would own the land a lot of land and people would live on but these land lords live in England and did not care what stat the land was in but they still wanted their money even tho they did not fixed anything, with this many people got evicted.

Swift creates an narrator who sees Irish as just a problem. They are pests just like animals. He shocks the readers into see the Irish as animals. He makes up a narrator who discredet Irish people. The readers most of the time go along with this. Again the read gets shocked again as what the narrators solution is to the problem of Ireland is eating babyes and then does an long list of advantages to it. He says young healthy child well nursed is at a year old boy or girl a most delicious, nourishing and wholesome Food Weather Stewed Roasted, Baked or Boiled. He puts the point across that their attitude towards the Irish is wrong.

2. Middle ability student

'Cal' was written in 1983 by an author called Bernard MacLaverty who was born in Belfast. He wrote the novel 'Cal' to show the suffering which was happening to the Irish people in Ireland.

'Cal' was written in 1983 by an author called Bernard Mac Lavery who was born in Belfast. He wrote the novel 'Cal' to show the suffering which was happening to the Irish people in Ireland.

I think the novel is aimed at all people to show them what the suffering was like in Ireland.

√ What Mac Lavery is saying is in Ireland it is extremely hard for a Catholic family living in a Protestant area and vice versa for fear of being burnt out of their house or their house being vandalised or them even being killed.

√ Mac Lavery is also trying to show that pressure can make ordinary people do things that they wouldn't normally do and because of this if he person does something wrong it is not entirely their fault.

He is also saying that the conflict between Catholics and Protestants can get out of hand and he shows this through the way Cal is burnt out of his home.

√ Mac Lavery chose to show these problems through a Novel. He could have chosen any form of Media like leaflet, documentary to get these points across.

√ I think he chose a novel to get the audience to identify with the problems and so the audience can sympathise with the characters and with his ideas.

tension √ He can express the problems better in a novel by creating tension and he does this to keep the audience involved. He expresses the problems in different forms.

√ Firstly though Storyline. The situation of Cal and his father is one that a lot of Irish people had to face then especially the conflict between the Protestants and Catholics and the way they threatened to burn Cal out of his home 'Get Out You Fenyan Scum or we'll burn you out! This unfortunately was a regular thing for 80s and I think that this was the point he was trying to get across when writing 'Cal'.

and still √ Mac Lavery was trying to show how pressure can make people do things that they wouldn't usually do and this point refers to Cal more than any other person.

Secondly through characters, as well as through what they do I think that Mac Lavery was trying to get the viewpoint of the two different religions through the characters. Cyril Dunlop's protestant views are that an innocent person died and nothing was done about it and that Robert Morton never did anything and he was killed. 'A nicer man you couldn't meet and now he's dead.' He also says 'Sometimes I think Hitler had the right idea, he knew how to fight a war.' This shows that Dunlop feels that fighting could be the answer of solving the problem.

Wipe out Catholics like Hitler wiped out Jews

√ Skeffington has Catholic views and it helps us to understand what he believes in when they go to Crillys house and on the wall there is a plaque that says 'Ireland Unfree Shall Never Be At Peace. He believes that by doing what he is, he is helping Ireland to be free from from Britain and he will use violence to get there: 'legitimate right of violence'.

√ Mac Lavery's views on both these opinions are that they are wrong.

√ Crilly's character represents the bad and the people who thrive on violence. 'Crilly then lifted the boy bodily and thumped his knee into his balls.' This was while Cal and Crilly where at school so this makes the audience wonder how much worse his behaviour has become whilst he has grown up.

were

√ This makes the reader realize the bad people in Ireland who cause violence for

√ no reason.

Mac Laverty uses a lot of methods to engage the readers.

Firstly that Cal the main character was involved with a murder but at the same time is a victim through Crilly and Skeffington pressurising and blackmailing him to do what they want. That creates a big problem. 'I wouldn't want to see you hurt.' One thing which is striking to the audience is the opening image of the abattoir. The reason this is striking is because an abattoir is a place of death and is where innocent animals are killed.

√ Mac Laverty wants the readers to realise that Cal was involved in the murder but at the same time he wants us to empathise with Cal's character.

√ I think that Mac Laverty has written Cal's character to represent hope for the Irish Society by the way he wants to be punished for what he has done 'grateful that at last someone was going to beat him to within an inch of his life.'

*Very good
personal
view*

√ I think that through Cal's character Mac Laverty was trying to express to the readers that not all Irish people are bad even if they have done bad things.

Mac Laverty also used dreams in the Novel to show what's on Cal's mind. I think that Mac Laverty included this to show that Cal couldn't forget about what he had done and that he had strong feelings for Marcella but because of what he had done they could never be together. 'His sin kept them apart as surely as cold space.' This quotation is trying to show that there is a thing that separates them and that is what he's done.

√ His dream that he has reflects his feelings for Marcella and he also experiences the feeling of someone being killed in it and watching the blood spout out makes it even more gruesome. 'Blood fountained and gushed from the wounds.'

√ Mac Laverty uses a particular method to build up suspense in the novel and that is the use of flashbacks which don't fully reveal what they have done until half way through the Novel which leaves readers wonder why Cal's following Marcella and what it actually is he's done. This will make the readers want to read on to find out what it is.

Good √ 'His Sin clawed at him.' The word 'clawed' in this quotation adds the feeling of it digging into him and causing him pain.

√ The message in the Novel 'Cal' is the same as the one written by Jonathan Swift A Modest Proposal. This message is to show the suffering which happened in Ireland.

'A Modest Proposal' was written in the Year '1729' by Jonathan Swift he wrote this aimed at the British people who were causing problems in Ireland. He wrote 'A Modest Proposal' with the specific intention of trying to change the minds of people in power of Britain so that the pain and suffering would end.

√ Swift chose to write 'A Modest Proposal' as a sort of leaflet but as Mac Laverty did in 'Cal' he expressed his opinions through a character, the narrator's personality is the total opposite to Cal's.

In 'Cal' Mac Laverty expressed hope through his main character but in 'A Modest Proposal' Swift's character has the total opposite effect on the readers because of the impression that he agrees with what the British do and he has ideas how to lessen the number of beggars 'and maturely weighed the several schemes of other projectors'. The first time we get the impression that the narrator's attitude towards the beggars is not sincere is where he says 'turn to thieves' which is indicating that he thinks that all the poor children will probably turn to thieves. You get the impression that he despises the suffering people.

√

I think Swift chose to do 'A modest proposal' in leaflet form because he can concentrate on one person's thoughts and feelings and can express what he is thinking more easily, as satire.

Through the method that he has chosen Swift is able to get his own opinions across to the readers.

- √ He does this through the character the Narrator but he does this by having the Narrator have the same views about the Irish as the British but really he is just trying to shock them into changing their views and opinions about the Irish.

This is different to the Novel 'Cal' because in 'Cal' the point was to show there was hope for the Irish Society whereas in 'A Modest Proposal' the point is to change the minds of the British.

Swift's methods work on the reader in many different ways.

- √ Firstly the way he starts off by saying that he has an idea for the beggars children 'shall take in the whole number of Infants as those who demand our charity in the streets.'

- √ Secondly is his use of Metaphors, this is to create an image to what he says 'dropt from its Dam' to create an effect on the audience to make them seem like criminals and this would help the passage have more of an impact on the reader.

- √ Swift also uses a similar method as Mac Lavery does in 'Cal' which is a revelation half way through the piece of writing this was used to create Suspense because up until the middle of the leaflet the narrator has talked about a method that he has proposed so the readers will be left wondering what the proposal is going to be. 'I shall now therefore humbly propose my own thoughts.'

I think that the main thing that Swift uses to change people's minds is his proposal which is to eat the beggars children at a year old. 'child at a year old is a most delicious, nourishing and wholesome food.'

The way the narrator describes the cooking the children is particularly gruesome and is why Swift wrote it so that people would be so horrified they would change their minds about their attitude towards the Irish people.

'whether the child Stewed, Roasted, Baked or Boiled.'

- √ Another way that shows the author doesn't care about the beggars is the way he refers them to animals 'sheep, black cattle or swine'.

As the narrator's opinions reflect those of the British if they are reading them on paper may make them realize how horrible it really is.

- √ Swift also tries to make the British realize that the landlords have no sympathy for the poor and because of them a lot of them die due to hunger etc. 'I grant this food will be somewhat dear, and therefore very proper for Landlords, who, as they have already devoured most of the parents, seem to have the best title to the children.'

Swift is also trying to show that what the British are doing is wrong.

- √ He expresses this where the narrator dismisses all the reasonable solutions for the problem just as the British have done. 'Of teaching Landlords to have, at least, one Degree of Mercy.'

Out of the two texts the one I found most effective was 'Cal' by Bernard Mac Lavery.

The reason I found this the most effective was because you follow Cal and you can sympathize with Cal. I think that the reason I found this more effective was because the pain and suffering was expressed through a Storyline and characters and with this you are getting different people's opinions and feelings.

Another reason why I think I found 'Cal' more effective was because 'A Modest Proposal' was written in 1729 so the language is a bit harder to understand.

What I also think helps to make 'Cal' more effective is that his situation with

the Protestants is a situation that a lot of Irish people could relate to because he can never escape the violence from them. 'Somebody clubbed him in the mouth and his head jerked back.'

I am so impressed, Robert. In a simple, straightforward way you analyse the moral context of both texts, & their contemporary & historical relevance. You fully appreciate their methods, analysing structure, language, imagery & make clear, interesting comparisons.

3. Able student

In the novel "Cal" Bernard MacLaverty is trying to explain how ordinary people in Ireland can be forced in to committing criminal offences, often violent, because of the immense pressure put upon them. He explains how you can never escape this pressure and that both the Catholics and the Protestants are as much to blame for the trouble in Ireland as each other.

MacLaverty also shows the poverty in Ireland, the unemployment and life on the dole. Cal the main character in the novel, is unemployed and on the dole. MacLaverty has purposely chosen a likeable character to show the poverty so that you feel sympathy towards the unemployed. MacLaverty also portrays that the main reason Cal can not get a job is because he is a Catholic in a very Protestant town.

- √ MacLaverty has chosen to write a novel about Ireland. I think that he has chosen to use this type of writing so that the reader can empathise with the characters. This style of writing is more personal as it shows the problems that the characters have, you can get inside their heads and understand how they really feel about the sufferings around them. Because you get to know the characters it is easier to understand how innocent people can be forced in to crime unwillingly. Again MacLaverty uses Cal, a likeable character to show this, Cal, who can not stand violence and blood "It was Crilly who was largely responsible for Cal's stomach having felt like a washboard over the past year" is an accessory to murder.

Another advantage to writing a novel is that MacLaverty can choose the incidents, events and happenings he wants to put in to the storyline e.g. choose the worst possible thing for Cal to be involved in, murder. MacLaverty can intensify the language and go into depth about certain issues, for instance when Cal and his father receive threats about being burned out because they are Catholics.

**"GET OUT YOU FENYAN SCUM OR WE'LL BURN YOU OUT.
THIS IS YOUR 2ND WARNING, THERE WILL BE NO OTHER.**

UVF"

The storyline can be as violent or traumatic as MacLaverty wishes, which will shock the reader in to understanding what life in Ireland is like. As you get to now the characters you sympathise with them e.g. Shamie going insane after they are burned out, or Cal's constant guilt about the murder at the Morton's farm.

MacLaverty tries to keep the reader interested in the novel by using techniques such as suspense. Throughout the novel we know that Cal has done something very wrong, however MacLaverty does not reveal what until about half way through the book. Instead he gives the reader clues as to what Cal has done such as his immense guilt when he meets Marcella.

In some way, he didn't know how, he would have to make it up to her"

To make the storyline more interesting MacLaverty introduces a love interest between Cal and Marcella. This complicates Cal's life further as he is in love with the wife of a man he helped to kill. This immediately makes the reader more interested in the novel. MacLaverty uses imagery to show how Cal thinks that their relationship is impossible.

"Although she was light years away from him he felt the enormous Pull of her. And yet, like the moon and the earth, he knew that, because of what he had done, they could never come together. His sin kept them apart as surely as cold space."

- √ This is a very powerful image and it shows the intensity of Cal's guilt about the murder and his feelings towards Marcella.

MacLaverty also uses flashbacks, this is a more dynamic way of telling the story than straight storyline as it breaks up the novel and draws the reader in more. In one flashback Cal is remembering how Crilly beat up a boy in school "Crilly wanted praise and went over the incident many times" this shows how Crilly enjoys violence which is why he works for the IRA Crilly is another way of showing the violence in Ireland.

The other flashbacks are of the murder at the Morton's farm. MacLaverty purposely repeats this one flashback to show how it plays on Cal's conscience and with each flashback the murder seems more horrifying to the reader.

"Crilly shot him twice in the chest. The gun sounded unreal - like a child's cap gun."

At the beginning of the novel MacLaverty purposely sets the opening scene in an abattoir "Men in white coats and baseball caps whistled and shouted as they moved between the hanging carcasses" this gives an image of brutality, killings and death. I believe MacLaverty feels that Ireland is like one giant abattoir because people are always killing each other.

MacLaverty also includes news flashes throughout the novel such as robberies and murders to show that the violence is on going in Ireland.

"There had been no murders otherwise that would have been on first"

- √ This is a subtle way of comparing the novel to real life as the news lets people know of the bad things that are happening in the world.

MacLaverty gives Cal bad dreams in the novel. These dreams signify how helpless he feels. There is one dream where he tries to help a girl in a fire but he can't get to her and it ends tragically.

"He looked out and as always she was below, skewered on some railings, screaming unceasingly"

MacLaverty is trying to make people see how immense the troubles in Ireland are, and how they can affect everyone living there. He also shows how good people can be forced into a life of crime because of their situations. Another writer, Jonathon Swift, also had these ideas and although his text is a lot older and written in a different genre the message about the poverty and sufferings in Ireland is the same.

Jonathon Swift's target audience was the upper class people in England. Most of these people hated the Irish people and treated them like animals. Swift wanted to shock the English into seeing how wrong their views of the Irish were.

Swift has chosen to write "A Modest Proposal" which means a little suggestion. I think he has chosen to write it as a suggestion so that it seems more realistic and believable to the people reading it. If Swift had chosen to write a novel like Bernard MacLaverty did, his particular message would not have been very effective.

"A Modest Proposal" is different to the novel "Cal" as it is written as a piece of factual information and the use of irony is prominent throughout. MacLaverty relies on the events in his novel to portray his message about Ireland, Swift however relies on irony. Swift focuses around one idea, that the Irish should sell their children for food. MacLaverty uses lots of ideas because he has chosen to write a novel.

Swift's overall method and intention when writing this was to shock upper-class English people out of their small minded views about the Irish people.

“A young healthy Child, well nursed, is, at a Year old, a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome Food.”

This method makes the reader realise how awful they have been and question why they have had those views of the Irish. They feel sorry for the people of Ireland and immense guilt that they have treated them in this way. Swift, like MacLaverty has been successful in explaining how awful things are in Ireland for the people.

“When they see the Streets, the Roads, and the Cabin - doors Crowded with beggars.”

This shows the conditions that many Irish people were forced to live in, mainly because their Landlords have evicted them for not making the rent on time. You feel great sympathy towards the Irish because you can imagine how bad it must be for them, especially the children.

“Children, all in Rags”

Like MacLaverty, Swift also uses the technique of suspense. He deliberately waits until the ninth paragraph to explain his idea. He builds himself up to it.

“to have his Statue set up for a Preserver of the Nation”

It keeps the reader guessing, thinking what has this man come up with that is so ingenious that it will solve the problem of poverty in Ireland? This is so that when he does reveal his 'ingenious' idea it will shock the people even more.

Swift uses irony throughout the text. The narrator that he has created thinks of the Irish as animals.

“It is true that a Child, just dropped from it's Dam”

This shows that the English whom he is writing for have similar views to these that they see Irish mothers as “Breeders” just making more poverty in the country.

Swift makes his proposal seem even more horrifying by listing the ways in which you could cook the children.

“Stewed, Roasted, Baked, or Boiled and, I make no doubt, that it will

equally serve in a Fricassee, or Ragouts”

This makes the proposal sound as though he really means it, that Swift has really thought this through.

Swift also mentions Protestant England's view on the Catholics. He writes “There are more children born in Roman Catholic countries” The narrator is saying that because the children are Catholic there is even more reason to eat them so that the population of Catholics will become less. Swift does not feel this way he is just using satire and showing how other people think and feel about the Irish and the Catholics.

Swift is being ironic towards the “Absent Landlords” who live in England. They are never there for their tenants and all they care about is getting the rent on time. Swift is blaming them for people being on the streets as they have the power to evict.

“I Grant this food will be somewhat dear, and therefore very proper for Landlords; who, as they have already devoured most of the parents, seem to have the best title to the children”

Swift is saying that although the Landlords have not literally devoured the parents, they have destroyed their lives and therefore will carry on to destroy the childrens' lives. Swift wants the Landlords to feel guilty about how they have treated their tenants. He hopes that after reading “A Modest Proposal”

they will treat their tenants better.

Personally I found that “Cal” was more effective than “A Modest Proposal” because the novel is more personal. You can understand people’s feelings better because you get to know the people in the novel and how they think and feel about their situations. There are lots of interesting things going on in the which makes it easier for the reader to stay focused on the text as well as explaining the message of the troubles in Ireland. I think the main reason I could relate more to “Cal” was because it was a modern piece of writing and the language was not as complicated. However at the time Swift’s “A Modest Proposal” would have been more effective because the English were unaware of how they were treating the Irish and they would not have been interested in reading a novel about Ireland like MacLaverty’s.