



PRESTWICK HOUSE

Activity Pack

GULLIVER'S TRAVELS

BY JONATHAN SWIFT



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Item No. 307629

Written by Rebecca Challman

Name: _____

Date: _____

Part I: Chapters I – IV**Resume Writing****Objective:** Gathering details from the text**Activity**

Despite his education and experience, Lemuel Gulliver cannot seem to earn a good and consistent living by practicing medicine on land. He decides, therefore, to accept a position as a ship's surgeon, as he has done in the past.

Imagine that Gulliver must compete with many other applicants for the profitable position on the *Antelope*. Review what you have read about his education and professional experience. Make a list of all the relevant information you can extract from the text. Then, create a resume for Gulliver that will ensure he gets hired. The resume must include Gulliver's education, prior work experience, skills, personal interests, and references. A blank resume template has been provided.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Part I: Chapters V – VIII**Analysis Chart**

Objective: Applying critical thinking to ideas from the story

Activity

Gulliver analyzes the laws and customs of the land of Lilliput. Some of them he sees as brilliant improvements over the way people do things in England. Others he finds difficult to comprehend or accept. Many of the customs are simply traditional, and, thus, are dispensed with by some residents. Some of the laws, however, have been given a great amount of thought and are designed to improve life for the Lilliputians.

Examine the laws and customs of Lilliput. For each Lilliputian law or custom listed on the following chart, determine whether it is reasonable and, therefore, valid, and record your vote either for or against it. Provide a brief explanation for your opinion.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Part II: Chapters I – IV**Jargon**

Objectives: Recognizing jargon in a literary text
Analyzing an author's use of language

Activity

Swift opens Part II of *Gulliver's Travels* with descriptions of the *Adventure* and its struggle to survive a storm. The passage is convoluted and difficult to understand, not just because of the archaic language, but because Swift wrote it in nautical jargon. He meant for it to be difficult to understand to highlight the absurdity of people who use the jargon of their profession to impress others and make themselves feel superior.

Almost every profession or hobby has its own terminology, or jargon. Even something as simple as using a cell phone or a computer has its own jargon. We text, we IM, we send pix, we email, and we even tweet when we use twitter. We understand it, but try talking about it to someone who does not have a cell phone or computer.

Journalism students are taught to avoid any type of jargon in their articles unless it is absolutely essential to the story and easily explained. This is because average newspaper readers are put off by jargon. They don't have time to wade through words that make no sense to them, and, unless it interests them personally, they won't.

Write a paragraph of pure jargon. You may use language specific to any field. For example, medicine, science, education, journalism, sports, etc. You might start by thinking about what interests you, since that will be easier and more enjoyable to write. Are you a gamer? A chess player? An equestrian? A gardener? Your paragraph must have a topic sentence, a body, and a concluding sentence. It must be at least five sentences long and include proper punctuation.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Part II: Chapters I – IV**Letter to the Editor**

Objectives: Exploring a theme from the novel
Writing an effective letter to the editor

Activity

In Part II, the giant Brobdingnagian farmer exploits Gulliver. Gulliver is powerless to prevent it. The farmer treats Gulliver like a circus animal, forcing him to perform on command without adequate rest or nourishment. The farmer's actions are obviously despicable, but he somehow feels justified in using the tiny Gulliver to obtain a small fortune.

What situations do you see going on around you in which someone is being exploited? Do you see it in the news on a national level? Do you see it on a local level, perhaps at your school? Are students being victimized by bullies? Are employees in local businesses being exploited, forced to work longer hours for less pay? What about the exploitation of animals used to make movies and entertain people at parks?

Write a letter to the editor of your local paper in which you outline a case of exploitation and then speak out against it. This is your chance to express your outrage about an issue you really care about. Use the Internet or other reputable sources to gather your facts. Then, brainstorm solutions to the problem so that you can

- reveal a truth,
- express emotion,
- and conclude on a hopeful note.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Part II: Chapters V – VIII**Metaphorical Phrases**

Objective: Creating original metaphorical phrases to express an opinion

Activity

Based on what Gulliver has related, the King of Brobdingnag has formed a negative opinion of the English and their religious and political views, practices, and institutions. For instance, he disagrees with religious and political preaching, feeling that if one is in the minority about a particular belief or opinion, one should keep that belief private. The King uses a metaphor to illustrate his point: "...for a man may be allowed to keep poisons in his closet, but not to vend them about for cordials."

The King sums up his feelings about what he sees as the deterioration of a once-decent nation of people by comparing them to vermin: "...I cannot but conclude the bulk of your natives to be the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that Nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth."

Brainstorm a list of things that you hate. Perhaps it's reality TV, banal pop songs, or trite greeting cards. Select five items that you truly dislike, and create a metaphorical phrase for each.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Part III: Chapters I – V

Horoscope

Objective: Writing a horoscope

Activity

In Part III of *Gulliver's Travels*, Swift mocks astrology and those who base their whole lives on the alignment of the planets. The Laputans, perhaps because one of their eyes is always looking up, value astrology and are terrified of any changes in the stars.

Astrology is the study of celestial bodies and their influence over natural behaviors, particularly human behaviors. Each of the twelve star (zodiac) signs is assigned certain personality traits and characteristics. Astrology can be used to create horoscopes, which are commonly found in newspapers and magazines. While most people read horoscopes purely for entertainment, others rely on them for daily guidance.

Based on what you have read so far, write a horoscope for Gulliver. You can assign him any zodiac sign you want. The horoscope should consist of a brief paragraph about the upcoming week, which includes a prediction about Gulliver's finances, personal life, and mental state or mood. Relate the horoscope to the events in Chapters I – V. The following is an example:

Aries, your stubbornness holds you in good stead today. You will get quite an education if you manage to hold on. Your future exploration holds great promise, though it will have its ups and downs. However, you must remember to keep your feet firmly planted on the ground, even if your head is in the clouds. You will be rewarded for your ability to listen. Emotionally, you need to relax and let things happen with a special someone. Your positive attitude attracts the right people.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Part III: Chapters VI – XI**Historical Interview**

Objectives: Writing interview questions
Drawing inferences about historical figures

Activity

Gulliver discovers that Glubbdubdrib is the island of sorcerers. It is governed by a tribe of magicians and attended by dead people temporarily resurrected by the governor to act as servants. The governor invites Gulliver to choose dead people to resurrect for his edification, adding that the dead are incapable of lying.

Gulliver chooses Alexander the Great, Hannibal, Caesar, Pompey, Brutus, and the Senate of Rome, to name a few. He visits with too many “destroyers of tyrants” and “restorers of liberty” for him to count. His interviews with these great historical figures satisfy him beyond words.

Imagine you are given the chance to resurrect people from the pages of history. Who would you most want to interview, and why? What questions would you ask?

Select an historical figure to interview. You may choose a writer, president, general, scientist, religious leader, philosopher, or any other person you think made a noteworthy contribution to history. Write a list of ten questions to ask the historical figure.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Part IV: Chapters I – VI**Venn Diagram**

Objective: Using a Venn Diagram to compare and contrast characteristics

Activity

A Venn diagram visually organizes the similarities and the differences between two people or two things. The Houyhnhnms are very different from the Yahoos.

Using the following words, fill in the Venn diagram to compare and contrast the Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos. In the center area that both types of characters share, write their similarities, if any. On the left side, write the traits of the Houyhnhnms; on the right side, write those of the Yahoos. We have provided a few traits to get you started.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Part IV: Chapters VII – XII**Alternate Ending****Objective:** Writing an alternate ending to the story**Activity**

One of the most important and exciting parts of a story is how it ends. After carefully developing the characters and plot, the writer must make sure that all the conflicts in the story are resolved.

The writer has a great deal of latitude in deciding how the novel will end. Swift chose to have Gulliver return home to his wife and children, whom he now cannot tolerate. Swift's ending is not the only possible way to conclude the story, however. Write an alternate ending to *Gulliver's Travels*. You are free to end the story however you choose, but all conflicts or plot elements must be resolved.