

English III Summer Work

Reading Assignment: Part 1 and 2 of *Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathan Swift

Many people are familiar with the classic premise of *Gulliver's Travels*—of the man who in his voyaging found himself stranded on an island with six-inch people (and later with giants!). You may have read an abridged version of this book yourself earlier in school.

However, there's a lot more to *Gulliver's Travels* than just an adventure in fantastical lands. Jonathan Swift is a satirist and he's interested in mocking a lot of different aspects of human societies, including:

- How ridiculous political parties are.
- How arrogant kings and other government leaders can be.
- How petty we can be in the ways we treat our friends.
- How useless college academics can be.
- How foolish it is to want to be immortal.
- ...and many other aspects!

Gulliver's Travels is a humorous (and at times biting) look at human societies, and you may be surprised to see how many of the things Gulliver mocks in 18th century England are still present in 21st century America. It will lead to a number of important discussions about American society—and hopefully plenty of laughter as well!

Please read Parts One and Two of *Gulliver's Travels* before we return to school next year—you do *not* need to read Parts Three and Four (we'll be reading those after the school year starts). You should be able to find a copy of *Gulliver's Travels* from any decent-sized book store. The Dover edition is \$6 on Amazon (ISBN: 978-0486292731), and the library system should also have several copies of the work (as long as you all aren't trying to borrow library copies at the same time!). Just make sure you get an *unabridged* version of the text, *not* an abridged version!

I look forward to discussing the big ideas of *Gulliver's Travels* with all of you come August.

-Mr. DeGraaf

Writing Assignment

Please write a 400-650 word essay (MLA, double-spaced) about one of the two topics below.

1. **Option #1:** One of the central themes of *Gulliver's Travels* is the foolishness of humankind as Swift is rather critical about our foibles and follies. How does Swift mock the irrationality of human beings in Lilliput and Brobdingnag? Explain how Swift uses the different countries Gulliver visits to reveal the ludicrousness of humanity.
2. **Option #2:** Over the course of Gulliver's first two travels, he visits two different countries with inhabitants of varying sizes. Compare and contrast the inhabitants of Lilliput and Brobdingnag. Aside from the obvious size difference, how else are these countries similar or different from each other? Which do you think is the better country and why?

Project Assignment

Please complete one of the two projects below.

1. **Option #1:** Imagine you are a Lilliputian. You are visiting a modern city (take your pick!) and are learning about what life in the modern world is like. Write a brief journal about what it's like to live in the modern world. Be sure to talk about what things are different between Lilliput and the modern world. The journal should have at least five entries.
2. **Option #2:** Create a travel brochure for one of the two countries Gulliver visits advertising the place for tourists. The travel brochure should be crafted on a 8 ½ x 11 sheet of paper and should include enticing descriptions of some of the destinations in the countries along with images of what tourists can expect to see. You may want to include advice about what travelers should or should not do when visiting that country. Be creative with your brochure (you can get bonus points)!