

Elementary • A2

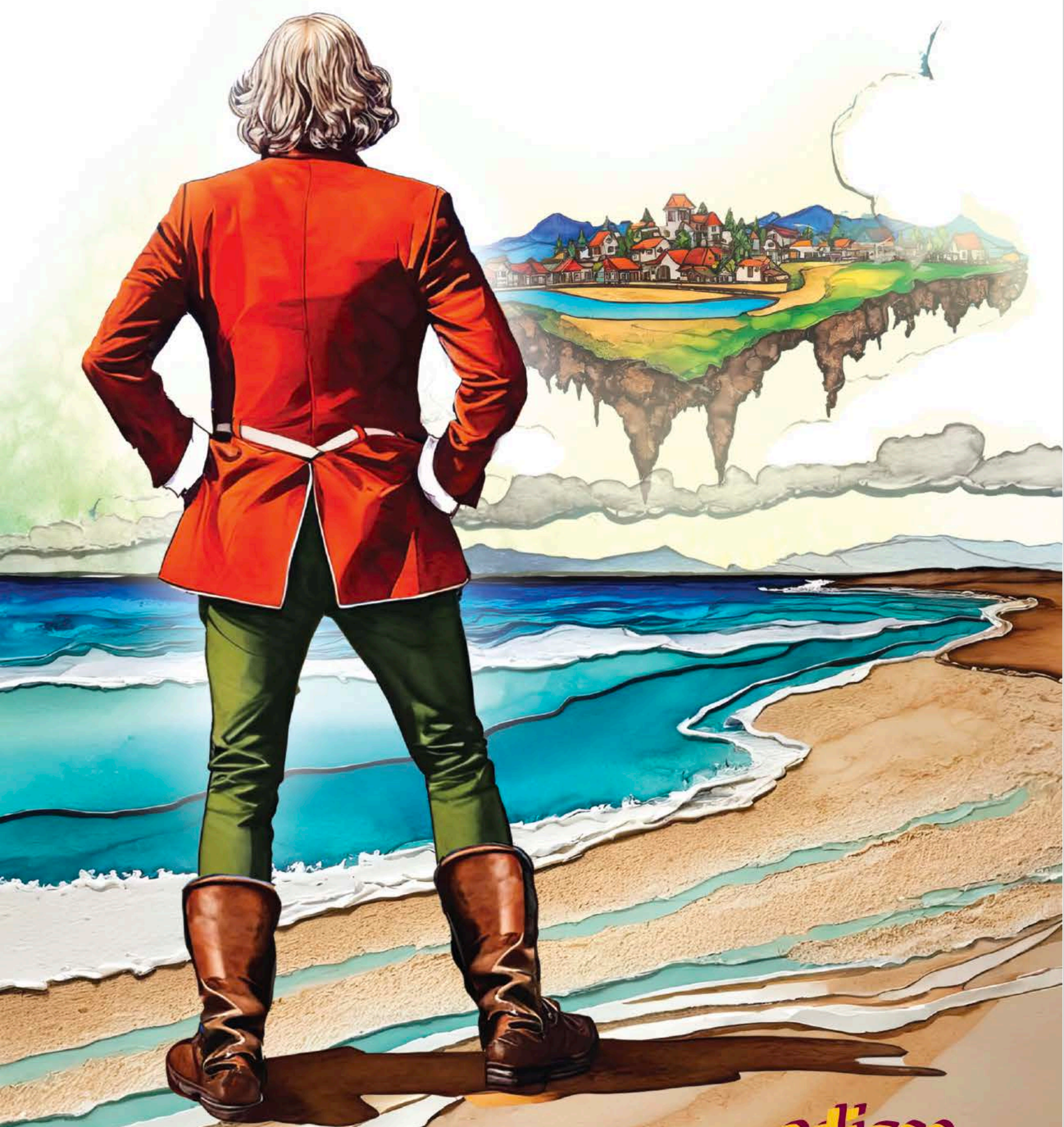


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R A I N B O W S

Gulliver's Travels

Jonathan Swift



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R A I N B O W S

Jonathan Swift

Gulliver's Travels

Adaptation, dossiers and activities
by Rossana Aimo



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Reprint

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The author

Jonathan Swift



Life

Jonathan Swift (1667-1745) is one of the greatest satirists¹ of the English language. He was born in Dublin, but both his parents were English. He never knew his father, who died the same year his son was born.

In 1682, he attended² Dublin University (Trinity College), receiving his B.A.³ in 1686. Because of the troubles in Ireland after the Glorious Revolution⁴, he and his family had to leave for England in 1688. There, his mother helped him get a position as secretary and personal assistant to Sir William Temple, an English diplomat, at Moor Park⁵. When Swift lived at Moor Park, he met Esther Johnson, then 8 years old, the daughter of one of the servants. Swift was her tutor and called her “Stella”, and the two had a close⁶ relationship for the rest of Esther’s life.

In 1694, Swift left Temple and went to Ireland where he became a priest of the Anglican Church⁷, but he soon returned to England to work with Temple again.

When Sir William died, Swift had problems finding a job. So he returned to Ireland, but made frequent visits to London, where he worked a lot to help Ireland. He was a pacifist and hated cruelty, imperialism and war.

Swift became politically active in these years and from 1707 to 1709 and again in 1710, he was in London. He had Whig⁸

1. *satirist*: a writer who uses humour to criticize people.

2. *attended*: went regularly to.

3. *B.A. (Bachelor of Arts)*: a first University degree.

4. *Glorious Revolution (1688)*: the overthrow of King James II.

5. *Moor Park*: large impressive house about 40 miles from London.

6. *close*: near.

7. *Anglican Church*: the Church of England.

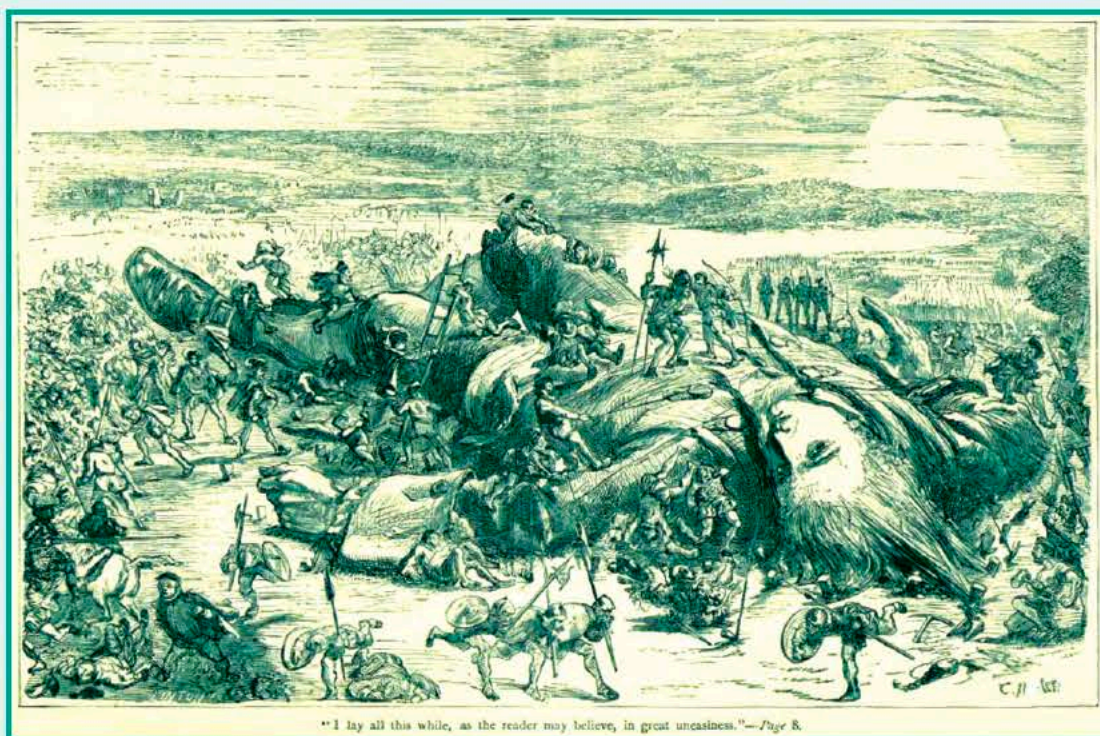
8. *Whig*: a British party that opposed the Tories.

preferences, and Steele and Addison⁹ were his close friends, but later he joined the Tories.

All his life Swift suffered from a strange form of vertigo¹⁰, and his illness¹¹ got worse in 1738. He died in Ireland in 1745 and was buried near Esther Johnson in St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin. Part of his fortune (twelve thousand pounds) was left to build a hospital for the mentally ill, which still exists as a psychiatric hospital.

Works

Swift wrote a large number of works. Many were attacks on political and religious ideas. Among his most famous early works is *A Tale of a Tub*, a satire on corruption, and *The Battle of the Books* (1704). After his final return to England, he began to work on his most famous novel, *Gulliver's Travels*. First published in November 1726, it was a great success. Everyone read it: politicians, adults and also children. There were three printings¹², and another in early 1727. French, German, and Dutch translations appeared the same year.



Gulliver in Lilliput (illustration by T. Morten, 1864).

9. *Steele and Addison*: the founders of the publication *The Spectator* (1711-1712).

10. *vertigo*: the feeling of losing your balance.

11. *illness*: disease, sickness.

12. *printing*: producing books.



BEFORE READING

1 What do you already know?

a. Gulliver is a

☐ novelist

☐ doctor

☐ sailor

b. Lilliput is

☐ an island

☐ a ship

☐ a travel book

c. The Lilliputians are

☐ giants

☐ very little people

☐ pets

2 Make predictions. Which words will you find in the first chapter? Tick them.

☐ storm

☐ sailor

☐ snow

☐ ice

☐ water

☐ captain

☐ wind

☐ fish

3 Match the illustrations with the words.

a. bow and arrow

f. wheel

b. rope

g. handkerchief

c. ladder

h. pistol and bullets

d. chains

i. needle

e. padlock

j. basket

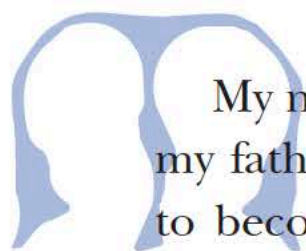


Gulliver's Travels

Lilliput, a strange island



Chapter 1




My name is Lemuel Gulliver. When I was fourteen years old, my father sent me to Emanuel College in Cambridge to study to become a doctor. Then I worked in London, but life was difficult there because I couldn't earn¹ enough money for my wife and myself. So I decided to make voyages as a ship's doctor.

One day I accepted a good offer from Captain William Prichard, captain of the *Antelope*, who was organizing a voyage to the South Sea. We left from Bristol on May 4, 1699 and our voyage was quiet at first, but on our way to the East Indies a strong wind pushed us in the wrong direction. The wind was very violent and our ship hit something in the water and broke! Six of the crew² (I was one of them) put a small boat into the sea and we rowed³ for some time, but a sudden⁴ wind overturned⁵ our boat! We fell into the water! I swam for a long time. I was exhausted, but then I put my feet down and I could stand! I came to a beach, continued walking for about half a mile and then fell asleep on the grass⁶ because I was so tired.

I woke up some hours later; it was daylight and I tried to stand up, but I couldn't move! My arms, legs, hair and hands were tied⁷ to the ground. It was hot and I was very uncomfortable. Suddenly I felt something moving on my face and body! I saw a very small man, about fifteen centimetres tall, walking on my face. He had a bow and an arrow in his hands and behind him I could see forty or more other little men. I shouted⁸ with surprise and they all jumped back⁹ because they were frightened¹⁰! Then I tried to free my left arm of the

1. *earn*: get money for what you do.
2. *crew*: people working on a ship.
3. *rowed*: made the boat move across water.
4. *sudden*: unexpected.
5. *overturned*: turned (our boat) upside down.

6. *grass*: 
7. *tied*: fixed with ropes.
8. *shouted*: made a loud noise with my voice.
9. *jumped back*: went back with a jump.
10. *frightened*: feeling afraid.

ropes but I felt a lot of arrows hit my face and body. They were painful, like many needles. So I decided to be quiet and the tiny¹¹ people didn't shoot any more arrows. After some time they put two or three ladders on the left side of my body. Hundreds of those small people climbed¹² my body and walked towards my mouth! They had baskets full of meat in their hands and I ate it with a lot of bread, because I was very hungry. We didn't speak the same language and so they couldn't understand me, but I made a sign that I wanted to drink and after a while they brought something that tasted like¹³ wine.

Then I heard noises around me. I turned my head and I saw that some little men were cutting down lots of trees. They were building a platform with wheels to carry me. Hundreds of strong men worked for about three hours to put me on it and then one thousand five hundred horses pulled me to the capital city of Lilliput.



11. *tiny*: extremely small.

12. *climbed*: went up.

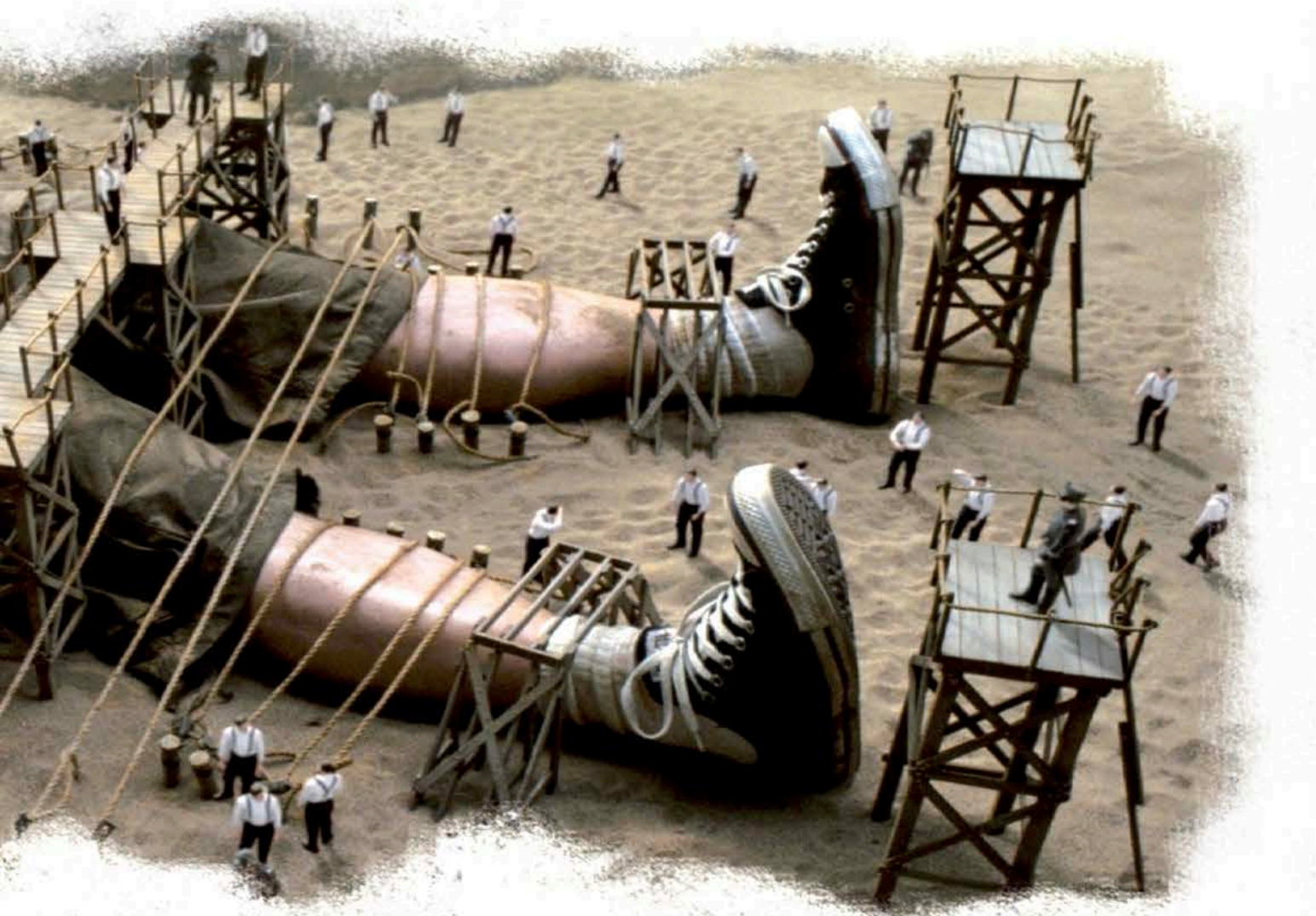
13. *tasted like*: had the particular flavour of.

Lilliput, a strange island

I slept during that long journey. I woke up when we stopped outside the city, where there was a big church, one of the largest buildings in the country. Its door was small and I could only get inside on my hands and knees. When I was inside, they tied me up again: they used ninety-one chains and thirty-six padlocks! The chains were long, so I could walk around but couldn't go away.

When I stood up, I looked around and was surprised to see that the country of Lilliput was as small as a garden! The tallest trees were just about two metres high and the town on my left was like the scene in a theatre.

After some time, the King came to the church and ordered his cooks¹⁴ to give me food and drink. He spoke to me and I answered him but we couldn't understand each other. He ordered his people to make me a bed using six hundred Lilliputian beds. He told his men to bring me food and drink



Gulliver (actor Jack Black) in the 2011 film version.

14. cook:





WORKING ON THE TEXT

- 1 Answer these questions.
- a. Why did Gulliver decide to work on a ship as a doctor?
 - b. What happened on May 4, 1699?
 - c. What happened to Gulliver's ship?
 - d. Why couldn't Gulliver move when he woke up on the island?
 - e. What is Lilliput?
 - f. What did the Lilliputians call Gulliver?
 - g. What did the King's men find in Gulliver's pockets?

- 2 Fill in the spaces with the words given.

ship • doctor • language • tired • island • place • water • little

Lemuel Gulliver worked as a (1) on a ship. One day his (2) sank and he was the only one who survived. He swam and was (3) but then he arrived on an (4) He slept and when he woke up, he was tied to the ground! The inhabitants of the island, the Lilliputians, were very (5) people and they were afraid of him! After that, they understood that Gulliver was good and so they gave him food, (6) and a (7) to live in. They also taught him to speak their own (8) and Gulliver promised to help them.

WORKING ON VOCABULARY

- 3 Match the words in column A with the words in column B that have a similar meaning.

A	B
a. deep	1. very tired
b. voyage	2. powerful
c. strong	3. journey on a ship
d. exhausted	4. profound
e. uncomfortable	5. scared
f. shout	6. scream
g. frightened	7. painful



4 Read the definitions and write the corresponding words. Be careful – one word is unnecessary.

strong • earn • wind • powder • padlock • row • shore • ladder

- a. To get money in return for work or service.
- b. A strong current of air.
- c. With great physical force.
- d. Use oars on a boat.
- e. The land along a sea or a lake.
- f. A wooden or metal object used for climbing up or down.
- g. A pulverized substance.

WORKING ON GRAMMAR

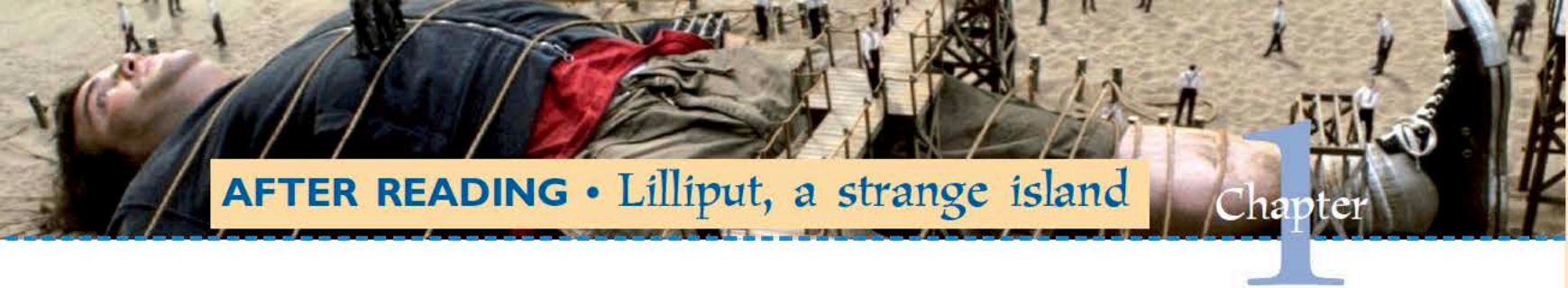
5 Put the following irregular verbs in the correct column, then complete the chart.

fell • broken • woke • send • feel • seen • threw • drank • build • stand

INFINITIVE	PAST SIMPLE	PAST PARTICIPLE	INFINITIVE	PAST SIMPLE	PAST PARTICIPLE

6 Make questions for the words in *italics*.

- a. Gulliver went to Oxford *to study to become a doctor*.
.....
- b. Gulliver left *on May, 4 1699*.
.....
- c. Gulliver arrived *on an island*.
.....
- d. The island was called *Lilliput*.
.....



- e. The Lilliputians gave him *food and water*.
.....
- f. The King's men found *some strange objects* in Gulliver's pockets.
.....

WORKING ON SKILLS

Listening



7 Gulliver is talking about his arrival in Lilliput. Listen and fill in the blank spaces.

"When I woke up the next (1), I tried to get up but I could not move! My body, my (2) and legs were fastened to the (3) My hair, which was long and (4), was tied to the ground, too!
Suddenly I felt something moving along my leg and my (5) and then on my (6) I looked down and I saw a little (7), he was about 15 centimetres (8) He had a bow and (9) in his hands and I was so surprised that I gave a great (10)! He jumped back frightened!"

Writing

8 Write a short letter to a friend about how you arrived on Lilliput Island. Use these words: *sea, storm, ship, wind, boat, swim, alone, tired, shore*.

Speaking

9 Imagine you are a Lilliputian. Say what you saw when you found Gulliver sleeping on the shore and what you did afterwards.

GAME

10 Write the correct letter and you will have the name of an object the Lilliputians found in Gulliver's pockets!

	I	2	3	4
A	S	H	E	M
B	A	P	J	X
C	Z	R	C	L
D	T	I	W	F

A1	B2	A3	C3	D1	B1	C3	C4	A3	A1

FAMOUS EXPLORERS AND NAVIGATORS

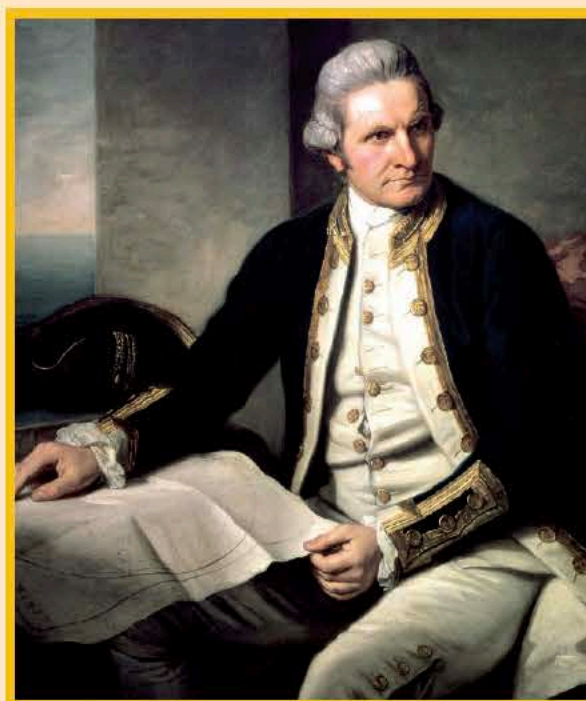
Sir Francis Drake was an Elizabethan sailor and navigator. He was born in Devon, England, in 1540 and went to sea at an early age. In 1567, Drake made one of the first English *slaving voyages*¹, bringing African people to the 'New World'. Spanish ships attacked the expedition and only two ships escaped.

The Spanish became a lifelong enemy for Drake; they in turn considered him a pirate. In 1588, he was a vice admiral in the *fleet*² that defeated the Spanish Armada. He is also famous for the first English *circumnavigation*³ of the world, from 1577 to 1580.

Drake's last expedition, with John Hawkins, was to the West Indies. Drake died in Panama on 28 January 1596. Hawkins died on the same day, and their bodies were buried at sea.



James Cook was born on October 27, 1728 in Yorkshire, England. Cook commanded⁴ three voyages of discovery⁵ for Great Britain, and sailed around the world twice. He was the first British ship commander to circumnavigate the globe in a solitary ship. He is considered one of the world's greatest explorers. In October 1769, he was the first European to land on New Zealand.



1. *slaving voyages*: long journeys on ships carrying people that are forced to work for others.
2. *fleet*: a group of ships.
3. *circumnavigation*: sailing all the way

- around the world.
4. *commanded*: was the leader of.
5. *discovery*: the act of finding somebody/something.



Gulliver's Travels

Fantasy and satire are the main ingredients of the novel, parody of travel literature, and vitriolic criticism of Swift's society and of human nature. Lemuel Gulliver recounts his travels to exotic lands: Lilliput, where he meets tiny beings; Brobdingnag, the country of the giants; Laputa, the flying island inhabited by scientists and philosophers; finally, he describes his encounter with rational horses, the Houyhnhnms, wise beings who live together with savages, the Yahoos, similar to men. The book contains in-depth analyses connected to the issues of the novel.

beginner

✓ elementary

pre-intermediate

intermediate

post-intermediate

• A1 (Breakthrough)

• A2 (Waystage)

• B1 (Threshold)

• B2 (Vantage)

• C1 (Effectiveness)

Levels of accredited examination boards:

Cambridge ESOL: Flyers / KET

Trinity: Grade 3, 4

City & Guilds (Pitman): Elementary

ESB: Foundation 3

Edexcel: Basic



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