SUMMARY

In each of the three stories in this book, adapted from Gulliver's Travels, the hero, Lemuel Gulliver, embarks on a voyage, but, as in the Voyages of Sindbad the Sailor on which they may in part have been based, some calamity befalls him.

In Part 1, he arrives in Lilliput, where he wakes up to find himself a giant, held prisoner by tiny men. They call him the Man Mountain and are initially afraid of him, but he gradually wins their trust and eventually helps them in their war against Blefescu. He finally decides to leave Lilliput and goes to the enemy island but after a short stay there, he leaves for home. In Part 2, Gulliver is the tiny person in Brobdingnag, a land of giants. He has to work as a freak in a side-show at first but is then rescued by the Queen and has long intellectual talks with the King. His happy stay ends when a huge bird lifts him high into the air then drops him into the sea, but he is soon rescued and on his way back home again.

In Part 3, Gulliver ends up in the land of the Houyhnhnms, peaceable horses who have created a perfect society, except for the presence of monkey-like Yahoos. Although Gulliver looks like a well-kempt Yahoo, he wants to be a Houyhnhnm but in the end he has to leave because he does not fit into the society. Even on his return to England, he prefers the company of horses to the company of men, whom he now sees as bestial Yahoos.

ABOUT JONATHAN SWIFT

At the time that Swift published Gulliver's Travels, he was dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin. The book, which made fun of the political scene and certain prominent people in England, was published anonymously and was an overnight success. Speculation about who had written the book was enormous. Swift's publisher claimed that it had been dropped at the door of his house, but Alexander Pope, Swift's great friend, knew the truth, and gradually it leaked out.

Swift was born in 1667 and came of age at the height of the Glorious Revolution, in which James II, a Roman Catholic, was forced to abdicate in favour of William of Orange, a Protestant. Although he was a great literary figure even in his age, we know very little about his private life. For example, we are not even sure if he married. We do know that Swift was a political animal and, when he realised that the political party which had supported William's accession was about to fall from power, he switched sides.

He became an influential member of the British government but he never achieved the position in the Church of England that he felt he deserved. He was, he felt, banished to the deanship of St. Patrick's and when his party fell from power with the accession of George I, his period in the political limelight was at an end.

Swift died in a mental institution, finally struck down by an illness which had probably been with him for a long time. But he wasn't mad when he wrote Gulliver's Travels, a brilliant satire on politics and society, and a timeless book for children.
ACTIVITIES BEFORE READING THE BOOK

Put students into three groups. Each group must consider the problems of living in a particular fantasy land.

Land 1 – a place where all the people are tiny and you are the only normal sized person.

Land 2 – a place where all the people are giants and you are the only normal sized person.

Land 3 – a place where you are the only person; all the other creatures are animals. Ask students to consider where they would live, what they would eat, how they would travel, the advantages and the dangers of their particular situation. Then bring the class together for each group to present its ideas to the other groups.

ACTIVITIES AFTER READING A SECTION

Part 1

1. Explain to students that *Gulliver’s Travels* was written as a satire – a funny way of looking at politics and society. Ask them to work in pairs and make a list of points that Swift is making about English society and politics in this part of the story. Elicit all the ideas and list them on the board.

2. Put students into pairs to role play a conversation between the king of Lilliput and Gulliver. The king wants Gulliver to help him in his war with Blefescu. Gulliver agrees with certain conditions.

Part 2

1. Ask students to imagine that they all live in Brobdingnag and that two or three of them have been to the market today. They have seen Gulliver. They must explain to the others what he looks like and what he does at the market. The other people don’t believe them and ask lots of questions.

2. Ask students to work in pairs. Student A: Imagine you are in Brobdingnag and the king has asked to meet you and talk about life in your country. Student B: You are the king. You do not understand many things about life in the other country. Ask lots of questions.

Part 3

1. Ask students to discuss this question: Why did Swift choose horses to represent a good society and Yahoos (monkey men) to represent a bad society?

2. Ask students to role play a scene between Gulliver and one of the horses. Gulliver is trying to learn the horse’s language. The horse is trying to teach Gulliver five words. Only Gulliver can speak in English in the scene.

ACTIVITIES AFTER READING THE BOOK

Put students in groups to consider the following questions.

1. What is similar about the three lands and Gulliver’s experiences in the three lands?

2. Which was the best of the three lands? Why?

3. Which was the worst? Why?

GLOSSARY

It will be useful for your students to know the following new words. They are practised in the ‘Before You Read’ sections of exercises at the back of the book. (Definitions are based on those in the Longman Active Study Dictionary.)

Part 1

*arrow* (n) a thin straight weapon with a point at one end that you shoot from a bow

*body* (n) the physical structure of a person or animal

*island* (n) a piece of land completely surrounded by water

*king* (n) a man from a royal family who rules a country

*law* (n) the system of rules that people in a country or place must obey

Part 2

*queen* (n) the female ruler of a country

*rule* (n) an instruction that says how something should be done or what is allowed

*ruler* (n) someone such as a king who has official power over a country

*servant* (n) someone whose job is to live in another person’s house and do cleaning and cooking, etc.

*string* (n) a thin rope made of several strands twisted together

*sword* (n) a weapon with a long sharp blade and a handle

*tie* (v) to fasten something with string or rope

*travel* (v) to make a journey from one place to another

*true* (adj) based on facts and not imagined or invented

*war* (n) a long period of fighting between the armies of two or more countries

Part 3

*corn* (n) the grain or seeds of crops such as wheat

*farm* (n) an area of land used for keeping animals or growing food

*parliament* (n) the group of people who are elected to make a country’s laws

*powder* (n) a dry substance in the form of very small grains

*rat* (n) an animal like a large mouse, with a long tail
Gulliver’s Travels

1 Work in pairs. Look at the pictures in the book and decide. What was strange about each country that Gulliver travelled to?

2 Read the Introduction. Answer these questions.
(a) What is the name of the first land?
(b) Is Gulliver little or big there?
(c) What creatures does he meet in the other two lands?
(d) Why did Swift write these stories?
(e) When, roughly, did Swift write these stories?

Part 1: A Journey to Lilliput
1 Gulliver gives very exact numbers in several places in Chapter 1. Complete each sentence with a number from the box.

(a) Gulliver was the youngest of ... brothers.
(b) He left school when he was ... years old.
(c) He left Bristol on the ship Antelope in May ...
(d) On his way to the East Indies, ... men died.
(e) When the ship hit something and broke, ... of the men got into a boat.
(f) Gulliver got to an island after ... at night.
(g) He slept for ... hours.
(h) He couldn’t move because there were ... of strings across his body.
(i) He saw ... little men.
(j) He tried to catch some little men and he felt a ... small swords in his hand.
(k) ... people came and cut the strings round his head.
(l) He ate a lot of very small animals and drank ... cups of milk.
(m) ... men worked for three hours to pull him onto some wood.
(n) ... of the king’s largest horses pulled him to an old church.
(o) It was about ... metres from the city.

2 Work in pairs. Why does the writer use the very exact numbers in the sentences in Exercise 1?

3 Do you remember these sentences from Chapter 2? What do the words in italics refer to?
(a) I saw people on top of it.
(b) It began to jump up and down.
(c) He was very afraid.
(d) Make a bed for him.

4 Find the sentences in Exercise 2 and check your answers.

5 Complete these sentences about the war with Blefuscu. Use one word from the box in each case.
clothes   eggs   end   island   law   letter   men   people
sea   ship   string   war   wind
(a) The war is about ...
(b) For many years, people in Lilliput cut them at the big ....
(c) One day the king made a new ....
(d) The Little-enders left the ... and went to Blefuscu.
(e) ‘I can help you in your ... ’ Gulliver said to the king.
(f) ‘The ships of Blefuscu are waiting for the right ...’
(g) Gulliver asked questions about the ... between Lilliput and Blefuscu.
(h) He found some strong ...
(i) He walked to Blefuscu and put string round the front of every ... and pulled them back to Lilliput.
(j) But he said to the king, ‘Don’t kill these .... it’s wrong.’
(k) Six important ... came from Blefuscu to end the war.
(l) Gulliver got a ... from the king of Blefuscu.
(m) He put his ... and his other things on a large ship and went to the island.

6 One word is wrong in each of these sentences from Chapter 4. Find the word and correct it.
clothes   eggs   end   island   law   letter   men   people
sea   ship   string   war   wind
(a) Gulliver saw a coat in the sea a long way away.
(b) He asked the king for 20 large ships and 2,000 women.
(c) They tried strings round the boat and pulled it nearer Blefuscu.
(d) ‘Now I can go back to my island.’ Gulliver said.
(e) ‘I do not want you to go,’ said the thing.
(f) But he gave Gulliver food and money to help him.
(g) He took six people which him and put them in his hat.
(h) He was at sea for three years then he saw a ship.
(i) He went onto the ship and the people were unkind to him.
(j) He told the people about his journey but they
said ‘You’re tired from your travels.’
(k) He showed the people the little animals in his head.

Part 2: Gulliver in Brobdingnag
1 Match the questions (a–n) and answers (i–xiv) about the information in Chapter 1.
(a) Why did Gulliver leave the ship and go to the strange country in a boat?
(b) What did Gulliver see in the sea near the boat?
(c) Why did he run away to the mountains?
(d) What were the trees really?
(e) Who did the man in the corn field take Gulliver to?
(f) What did the farmer’s wife do when she saw Gulliver?
(g) What did the baby do to Gulliver.
(h) How big was the bed?
(i) What did Gulliver kill on the bed?
(j) Who helped Gulliver?
(k) What did the farmer’s daughter call Gulliver?
(l) What was the farmer’s plan?
(m) How fast did they travel to the town?
(n) What did Gulliver have to do for the people?
(i) A rat.
(ii) A very big man.
(iii) About 20 metres wide.
(iv) About eighty kilometres an hour.
(v) Gridulug or very small man.
(vi) He was afraid for his life.
(vii) She screamed.
(viii) She threw him on the floor.
(ix) Talk, walk, drink, fight.
(x) The farmer.
(xi) The farmer’s daughter.
(xii) He wanted to find water.
(xiii) They were corn.
(xiv) To show Gulliver to the people of the town.
2 Are these sentences about the information in the first part of Chapter 2 true or false?
(a) The farmer got a lot of money for Gulliver.
(b) The farmer’s daughter went with Gulliver to the house of the king and queen.
(c) The king’s men did not like Gulliver.
(d) The queen built a house for Gulliver.
(e) Gulliver had dinner every day in his new house.
(f) The king was interested in Europe.
(g) The king thought it was funny that things were the same in Brobdingnag and Europe.
(h) Gulliver was angry when the king laughed.
3 What does Gulliver mean by each of these sentences from the second part of Chapter 2?
(a) My country is really three great countries.
(b) The three countries are in two islands.
(c) ... but we also have places in America.
(d) A father gives this place to his sons when he dies.
(e) They learn to kill animals and they learn to fight.
(f) Nobody pays them.
(g) They push this powder into a long gun.

4 Put these events from Chapter 3 in the correct order.
(a) A boy carried Gulliver’s box to the sea.
(b) A great seabird picked up Gulliver’s box and carried it away.
(c) Glumdalclinch shut the windows and door of Gulliver’s box.
(d) Gulliver heard a loud noise and someone pulled his box out of the water.
(e) Gulliver showed the men the things in his box.
(f) Gulliver travelled home to his family.
(g) Gulliver travelled with the king and queen to the towns and cities in the south.
(h) Gulliver went to sleep.
(i) Gulliver, the king and the queen arrived near the sea.
(j) Gulliver’s box fell into the sea.
(k) Someone opened the box.
(l) The bird fought with another bird over Gulliver’s box.

Part 3: Gulliver in the Country of the Houyhnhnms
1 Decide if each sentence describes Houyhnhnms or Yahoos. Copy the sentences in two groups.
(a) Nobody could teach them.
(b) Their hair was different colours – brown, red, black and yellow.
(c) They ate dry food.
(d) They ate meat.
(e) They could talk to each other.
(f) They had a lot of hair on their heads. Their faces and their backs.
(g) They had feet the same as a man.
(h) They had front feet not very different from a man’s hands.
(i) They hurt people with their teeth.
(j) They lived in trees.
(k) They love everybody in their country.
(l) They marry for strong children.
(m) They met for games and to talk about the country’s important problems.
(n) They walked on their front feet.
(o) They were different colours – grey, brown, red-brown.
(p) They were dirty.
(q) They were friendly.
(r) They were ugly.
2 Discuss in pairs. What does Gulliver mean when he says?
(a) The rulers of my country are Yahoos.
(b) I don’t like my face or body now.
(c) I cannot live with Yahoos!

Activities after reading the book
Work in pairs. Choose the story you remember best. Take turns to tell parts of the story.