

Rhetoric Literature
Year 2
Gulliver's Travels
Due Co-op #15

"Satire is a sort of glass, wherein beholders do generally discover everybody's face but their own." -J. Swift

Swift wrote a letter to Alexander Pope in 1725 explaining his aim in writing GT. The following is an excerpt:

"the chief end (purpose) I propose to myself in all my labours is to vex (annoy/anger) the world rather than divert (entertain) it . . . I have ever hated all nations, professions, and communities, and all my love is toward individuals: for instance, I hate the tribe of lawyers, but I love Counsellor Such-a-one, and Judge Such-a-one: so with physicians—I will not speak of my own trade—soldiers, English, Scotch, French, and the rest. But principally I hate and detest that animal called man, although I heartily love John, Peter, Thomas, and so forth. This is the system upon which I have governed myself many years, but do not tell, and so I shall go on till I have done with them. I have got materials toward a treatise, proving the falsity of that definition (of man as) *animal rationale* (rational animal), and to show it would be only *rationis capax* (an animal "capable of reason"). Upon this great foundation of misanthropy (hatred of mankind). . . the whole building of my Travels (Gulliver's) is erected. . ."

What is his chief purpose? What is not his chief purpose?

What does he hate? What does he love?

How does his definition of man relate to the Enlightenment? (give it a shot😊)

You are not required to read ALL of GT (though you can if you like). Please follow the instructions below. Each group will be responsible to lead discussion for their particular section. Feel free to do research online – Spark Notes provides lots of info about the specific satire for each section.

Read a summary on Sparknotes of the other sections, so you have a basic understanding of the flow of the story.

All: Read “The Publisher to the Reader”

Purpose of this section:

All: Read “Letter from Captain Gulliver to Cousin Sympson”

Purpose of this section:

Read (according to your assigned group) and answer the questions:

Part I “Voyage to Lilliput”

Jonathan

Katrina

Mariah

Claire

Part II “A Voyage to Brobdingnag”

Michael

Caroline

Jessica

Anne

Part III “A Voyage to Laputa . . . and Japan”

Keaghn

Emma

Willow

Charlie

All: Read Part IV “A Voyage to the Country of the Houyhnhnms”

Answer following questions for your section and for the section on Houyhnhnms
(on a separate piece of paper)

1. What society does Gulliver enter? What are the rulers and people like? Describe the religion, government, and culture.
2. How does Gulliver appear to the natives of that land? (describe both physical and character attributes)
3. What is Swift satirizing in this section? What is he holding up to ridicule and rebuke?
4. What does Swift want the reader to think, feel, do as a result of reading this section?

Next book is *Sense and Sensibility* by Jane Austen. Feel free to start on it 😊