

Gulliver's Travels

by Jonathan Swift

Jonathan Swift's sharp satirical fantasy takes ship's surgeon Lemuel Gulliver to four extraordinary lands as biting commentary on human nature, politics, and the absurdities of civilization.

Rank #15

Power Words

| # | WORD | DEFINITION |
|---|-----------------------|---|
| 1 | abominable | adj. causing disgust or hatred; very unpleasant. <i>"The master Houyhnhnm declared war an abominable practice, unable to conceive why rational creatures would choose it."</i> |
| 1 | condescending | adj. showing that you feel superior to others. <i>"The Emperor received Gulliver in a condescending manner, inspecting him as one might examine a curious insect."</i> |
| 1 | contemptible | adj. deserving of scorn or dislike. <i>"The Houyhnhnms found human warfare so contemptible that they could scarcely believe Gulliver's calm descriptions of it."</i> |
| 1 | degenerate | v. to decline in quality or strength. <i>"Swift suggests that civilized societies degenerate precisely when they mistake clever argument for genuine moral virtue."</i> |
| 1 | diminish | v. to make or become smaller or less. <i>"Each voyage seemed to diminish Gulliver's faith in humanity, until he preferred the company of horses to men."</i> |
| 1 | diminutive | adj. very small in size or amount. <i>"The diminutive Lilliputian soldiers marched in formation beneath Gulliver's outstretched hand, proud of their tiny discipline."</i> |
| 1 | exaggerate | v. to make something seem larger or more important than it really is. <i>"Gulliver did not need to exaggerate the cruelties of European civilization — the plain facts horrified his hosts."</i> |
| 1 | irrational | adj. not based on reason or logic. <i>"The Yahoos were irrational and filthy, yet Gulliver could not deny a troubling resemblance to his own kind."</i> |
| 1 | methodically | adv. in an orderly and systematic way. <i>"Gulliver methodically catalogued the vices of European kings, presenting each atrocity with the detachment of a naturalist."</i> |
| 1 | ostentatiously | adv. in a way that is meant to impress others. <i>"The courtiers ostentatiously displayed their skill with rope-dancing, competing for titles that carried no practical meaning."</i> |
| 1 | pompously | adv. in a way that shows self-importance. <i>"The Lilliputian ministers pompously debated which end of an egg ought properly to be broken first."</i> |
| 1 | preposterous | adj. something that is absurd or ridiculous. <i>"The flying island of Laputa seemed preposterous, yet its absurdity mirrored the futility of purely theoretical learning."</i> |
| 1 | satirical | adj. showing humor to criticize something. <i>"Swift's satirical portrait of the Lilliputian court left no doubt that he meant to skewer English politics."</i> |
| 1 | scrupulously | adv. in a way that shows careful attention to detail and ethics. <i>"Gulliver scrupulously recorded every custom he observed, presenting the most barbarous practices in the driest possible prose."</i> |
| 1 | tyrannical | adj. behaving in a cruel and absolute way. <i>"The tyrannical demands of the Lilliputian Emperor grew bolder with every concession Gulliver was willing to make."</i> |