

Reading the World *Now*

Rob Jordens • Jeff Zeter
Series Editor Casey Malarcher



1

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Scan and find the tracks.

Adventures on the Mississippi



Pre-Reading Questions

1. What short stories or novels did Mark Twain write?
2. What do you know about the novel *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*?

Vocabulary Preview

These are the key words from the passage. Check the words you are not familiar with.

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> adventure | <input type="checkbox"/> experience | <input type="checkbox"/> reconcile |
| <input type="checkbox"/> represent | <input type="checkbox"/> approve | <input type="checkbox"/> illegal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ban | <input type="checkbox"/> inherit | <input type="checkbox"/> runaway |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fictional | <input type="checkbox"/> legal | <input type="checkbox"/> slavery |
| <input type="checkbox"/> steamboat | <input type="checkbox"/> criminal | <input type="checkbox"/> miner |
| <input type="checkbox"/> critic | <input type="checkbox"/> original | <input type="checkbox"/> struggle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> dynamic | <input type="checkbox"/> publish | |



Adventures on the Mississippi

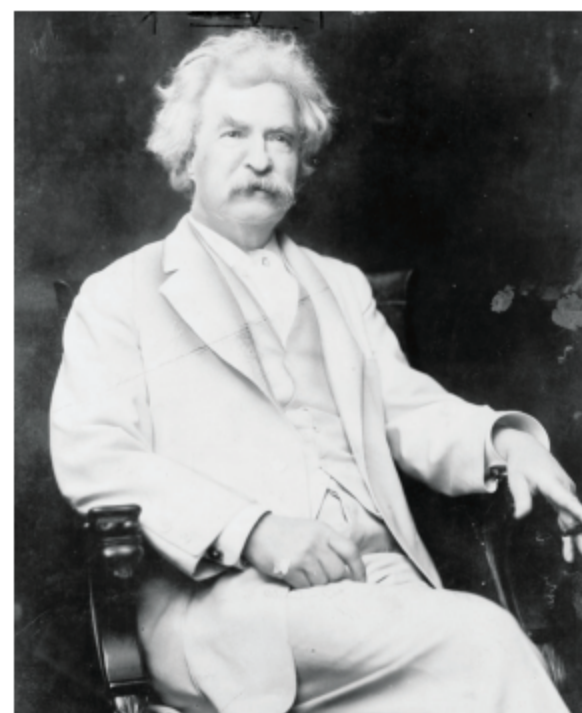


• The Mark Twain House and Museum in Hartford, Connecticut

Samuel Clemens was the real name of the famous writer Mark Twain. Twain grew up in Missouri in the years before the American Civil War. During this time, Missouri still recognized slavery as legal. These conditions had a noticeable impact on Twain's writing. They can be seen in the themes dealt with in his novels. At the time of the Civil War, Twain was in his late twenties. He did not actually fight in the war. He lived in Nevada and California during the war years.

Even though Twain was a successful writer, he held a number of other jobs over his lifetime. He worked as a miner, steamboat operator, and lecturer. His wealth of experiences across the United States provided him with much of the material used in his writing. Twain did not start out writing novels, however. He wrote for newspapers first.

Of his novels, many feel that *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is the best. The story takes place in a fictional town much like Twain's own hometown in Missouri. Huckleberry Finn runs away to escape from his father. His father only wants to claim him as his son in order to get his hands on the money the boy has inherited. Huckleberry decides to escape by traveling down the Mississippi River. In doing so, he meets a runaway slave named Jim, and the two decide that they will head south



to Cairo, Illinois. There they will take a steamboat up the river so that Jim may escape into a state where he will be legally free. The two have many adventures as they travel on the river and become friends.

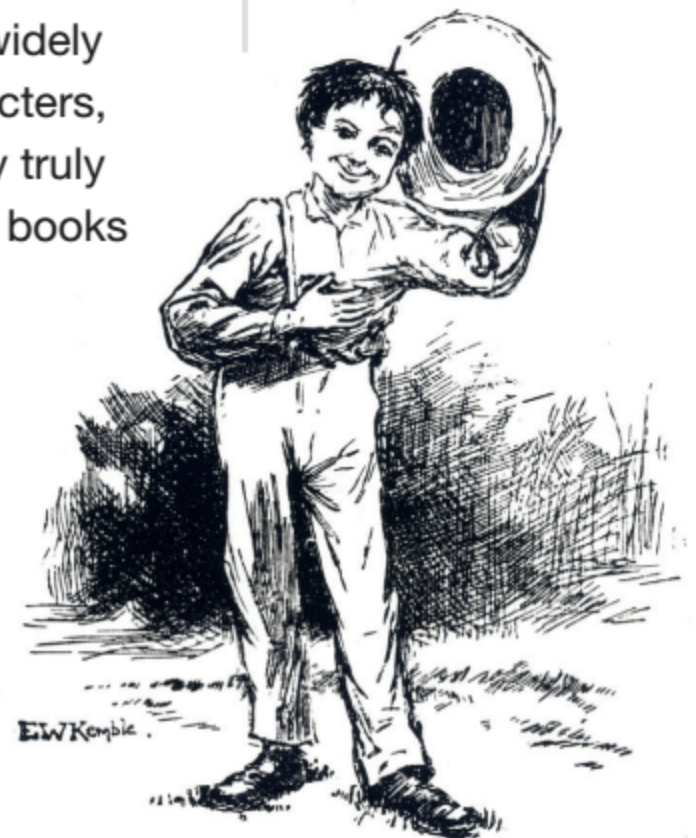
However, Huckleberry is torn. He knows that Jim is a runaway slave, and in helping him, he is doing something illegal. Coming from a slave state, Huckleberry was taught through churches and schools that slavery was both right and legal. People who helped slaves escape were viewed as criminals themselves. Throughout the novel, Huckleberry is torn between what he has been told is right and what he knows is right in his heart. He finally throws off the ideas he was raised with and helps Jim escape. The novel ends with Huckleberry's return to his hometown, where he finds that his father has died. Jim is freed, and Huckleberry states his plan to head westward.

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is notable for a number of reasons. It explores the ties of family and friends. Further, Huckleberry can be seen as one of the most dynamic characters in American literature. Throughout the story, he struggles to reconcile the views he has been raised with and what he knows is actually right. Some critics have even suggested that Huckleberry's experiences and internal struggles represent Twain's own struggles with the practice of slavery.

The novel itself is also stylistically remarkable. It shows the true spoken language of the time; that is, Twain wrote the characters' speech the way it was, rather than using the proper spelling. This gives the book a feeling of realism that was quite fresh at the time. However, the novel included a word for African Americans that was and still is considered "bad." The main character also acts in ways that some parents and teachers do not approve of. As a result, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* has been banned at times from schools and libraries.

Twain wrote a number of books, but *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is by far the most popular. It continues to be widely read in public schools across the United States today. Its characters, settings, original use of language, and biting social commentary truly set the novel apart. Many consider it one of the most important books published in the United States.

- 20 head — to go toward
- 24 be torn — to have a hard time choosing between two options
- 52 biting — critical with wit along with insight



Reading Comprehension

A Mark each statement as true (T), false (F), or inferred (I) according to the passage.

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Mark Twain was not the name this writer was born with. | T | F | I |
| 2. Mark Twain did not own slaves. | T | F | I |
| 3. Mark Twain used many of his own experiences in his novels. | T | F | I |
| 4. Mark Twain was familiar with the way people naturally spoke. | T | F | I |
| 5. <i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> is not Twain's most famous book. | T | F | I |

B Choose the best answer.

- According to the passage, all of the following are true of the character of Huckleberry Finn EXCEPT
 - He has been noted for his dynamic character.
 - He did not have a good relationship with his family.
 - He has been seen as a way for Twain to voice his own opinions on slavery.
 - His relationship with Jim was typical of young people at that time.
- Which of the following did Huckleberry Finn struggle most with?
 - How he should act and feel toward Jim
 - What to buy with his inheritance
 - Where to live after he left his hometown
 - Who would take care of his father after he left
- Why did some people not approve of the language used in the novel?
 - Twain did not use the proper spelling of words.
 - Twain included a word that many people did not like.
 - Twain put states where slavery was legal in a bad light.
 - Twain used too many words that people did not understand.

C Read the passage again, and then write the main idea of the passage in one or two sentences. Use your own words.

Vocabulary Review

A Choose the correct definition of the word in bold.

1. Huckleberry's experiences and internal **struggles** represent Twain's own struggles with the practice of slavery.
(A) long and difficult fights
(B) ways to move ahead slowly
(C) attempts to escape from danger
2. Throughout the story, Huckleberry struggles to **reconcile** the views he has been raised with and what he knows is actually right.
(A) become friendly again with
(B) make both acceptable
(C) understand more deeply
3. Huckleberry can be seen as one of the most **dynamic** characters in American literature.
(A) changing
(B) having energy or power
(C) relating to sound or volume

B Choose the best word to fill in the blanks.

1. He was surprised to learn that he had _____ a farm from his uncle who had died.
(A) escaped (B) inherited (C) reconciled (D) represented
2. She needed _____ advice, so she went to see a lawyer.
(A) dynamic (B) fictional (C) legal (D) original
3. The movie made the president look bad, so the government tried to _____ it.
(A) approve (B) ban (C) inherit (D) publish
4. The teacher asked us to write an essay using _____ ideas.
(A) criminal (B) banned (C) internal (D) original
5. We can learn a lot from hearing about the _____ of others.
(A) critics (B) results (C) slaves (D) experiences

Language Form and Meaning

A Choose the correct form of the word to fill in the blanks.

1. Few of the _____ who reviewed the movie gave it a good rating.
(A) critical (B) critically (C) criticized (D) critics
2. She has a hard time explaining to others many of the things she _____ while abroad.
(A) experienced (B) experience (C) experiencing (D) experiential
3. The three children each _____ one-third of the money from their mother's fortune.
(A) inheritance (B) inherited (C) inheriting (D) to inherit
4. I don't believe that what the company did was _____.
(A) legal (B) legalism (C) legalize (D) legally
5. My mother often says she feels like she spends half of her life _____ away in the kitchen.
(A) slave (B) slavery (C) slaving (D) slavish

B Underline the correct word or phrase in parentheses.

1. Criminals could not (escape from / escape with) the prison because it was on an island.
2. In his job, my father has to (deal out / deal with) difficult legal problems quite often.
3. Few people can (throw off / throw up) the cultural practices they were raised with.
4. The book (starts out / starts up) as a love story, but it quickly turns into a funny adventure story.
5. I am (torn apart / torn between) studying math and studying music in university.

Discussion Topics

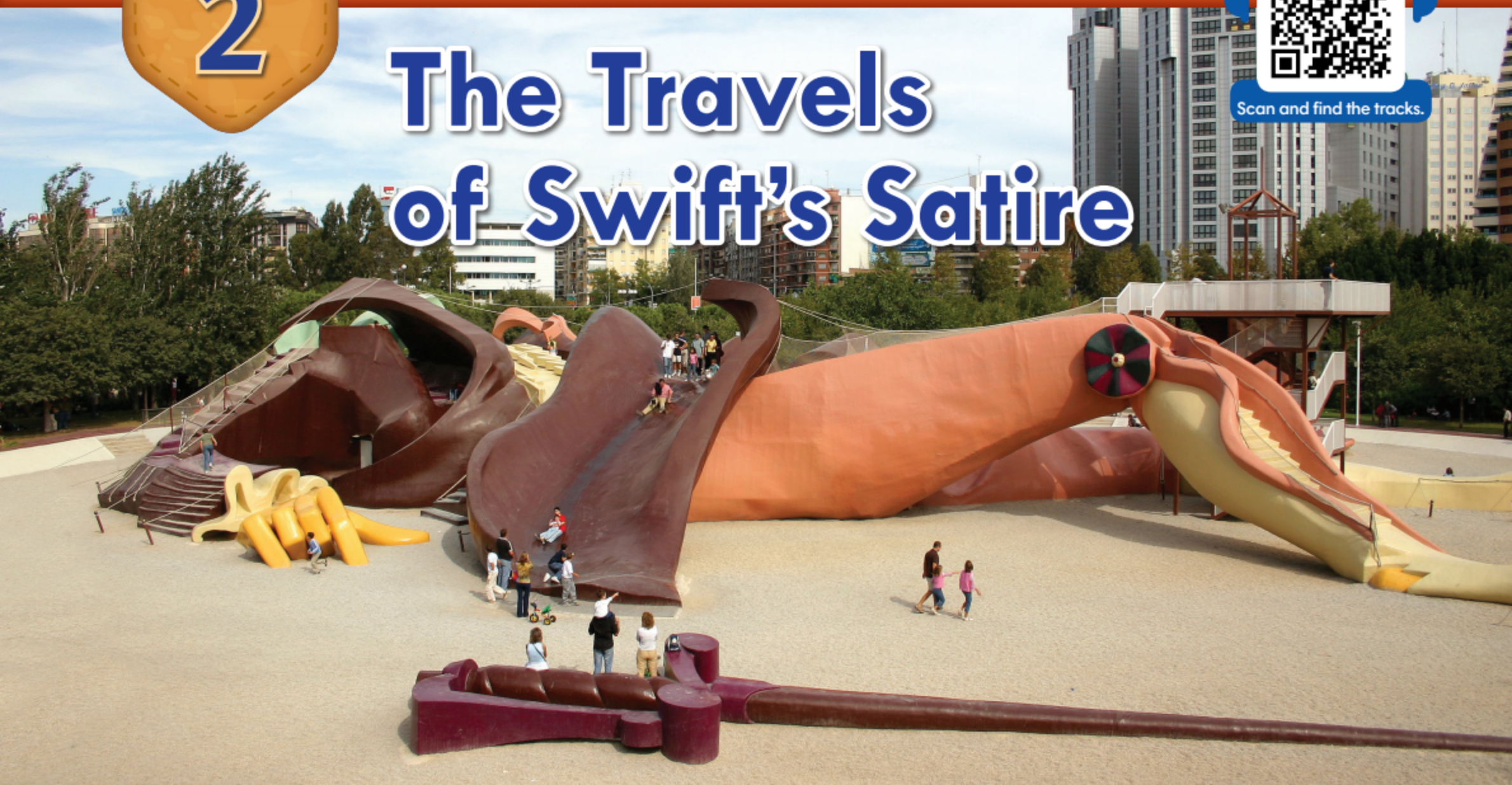
Discuss these questions with your class.

1. What can students learn from reading *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* in school?
2. What are some other books or movies that have been banned? Why were they banned?



Scan and find the tracks.

The Travels of Swift's Satire



Pre-Reading Questions

1. What does the word "Lilliputian" mean?
2. What do you already know about *Gulliver's Travels*?

Vocabulary Preview

Match the words with their definitions.

- | | | |
|--------------|---|--|
| 1. absurd | • | • a. to take by force |
| 2. capture | • | • b. violent; unpleasantly severe |
| 3. disgust | • | • c. a distinct sort or kind |
| 4. fascinate | • | • d. to live or dwell in a place |
| 5. inhabit | • | • e. utterly or obviously senseless |
| 6. inspire | • | • f. to attract and hold attentively |
| 7. invade | • | • g. a feeling of loathing or nausea |
| 8. satire | • | • h. to make someone have a particular feeling |
| 9. species | • | • i. to enter forcefully as an enemy |
| 10. vicious | • | • j. the use of irony and sarcasm to expose and denounce |



The Travels of Swift's Satire

Track 2

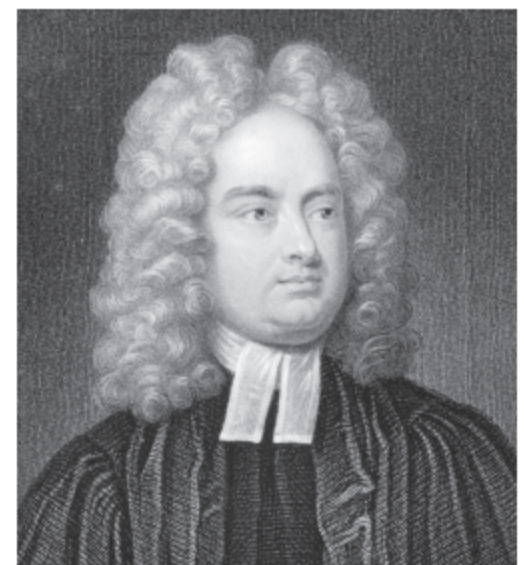
• Jack Black starring in the 2010 movie adaptation of *Gulliver's Travels*

Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* is considered by many to be one of the most important pieces of literature ever written. During Swift's lifetime, satire was a popular form of writing. It sought to highlight absurd practices by taking a practice and the ideas related to it to an extreme degree. Satire lies at the heart of *Gulliver's Travels*.

5 Swift used this form of writing to criticize many of the ideas and practices of eighteenth-century Europe.

The book is written as a log of Gulliver's adventures in different countries. The first part of the book is about Lilliput, a country inhabited by people that are only fifteen centimeters tall. Gulliver finds that the Lilliputians are at war with another country. He is forced to aid their war effort by capturing all of the enemy's ships used for war. However, Gulliver becomes an enemy of the king for refusing to invade the other country. Gulliver escapes, and the enemies of Lilliput end up helping him repair a boat to use to return home. In his log, Gulliver writes what he sees and thinks about the war between the two countries of little people. Much of this writing is clear criticism of the war between France and Britain.

15 Next, Gulliver visits Brobdingnag, a country inhabited by people twelve times his size! After some adventures in the country of giants, he gets the chance to discuss the state of Europe with Brobdingnag's king. The giant king



expresses disgust on hearing about such a strange land. Swift uses this opportunity in the story to present his own critical opinions about Europe.

After leaving the giants, Gulliver finds himself on the floating nation of Laputa. The people of Laputa spend all of their time studying mathematics and making music. However, its people do not know how to use either of these for practical purposes. Swift uses this strange country to criticize scientific advancements with no practical applications. Gulliver also gets to visit other countries on the way home from Laputa. Most of Gulliver's observations about these countries relate to Europe again.

Upon reaching home in England, Gulliver plans to remain there for the rest of his life. However, with the chance to captain a ship, he travels abroad again. Gulliver then visits the nation of the Houyhnhnms. Two very different species inhabit the country. One species is the Houyhnhnms. These are a race of kind and wise horse-like beings. The other species is the Yahoos. These are humans, but they are cruel and vicious. Gulliver finds himself preferring the company of the Houyhnhnms to the Yahoos, even though the Yahoos are more like the human race. Here, Swift is criticizing the practice of slavery, a common practice and business in his time.

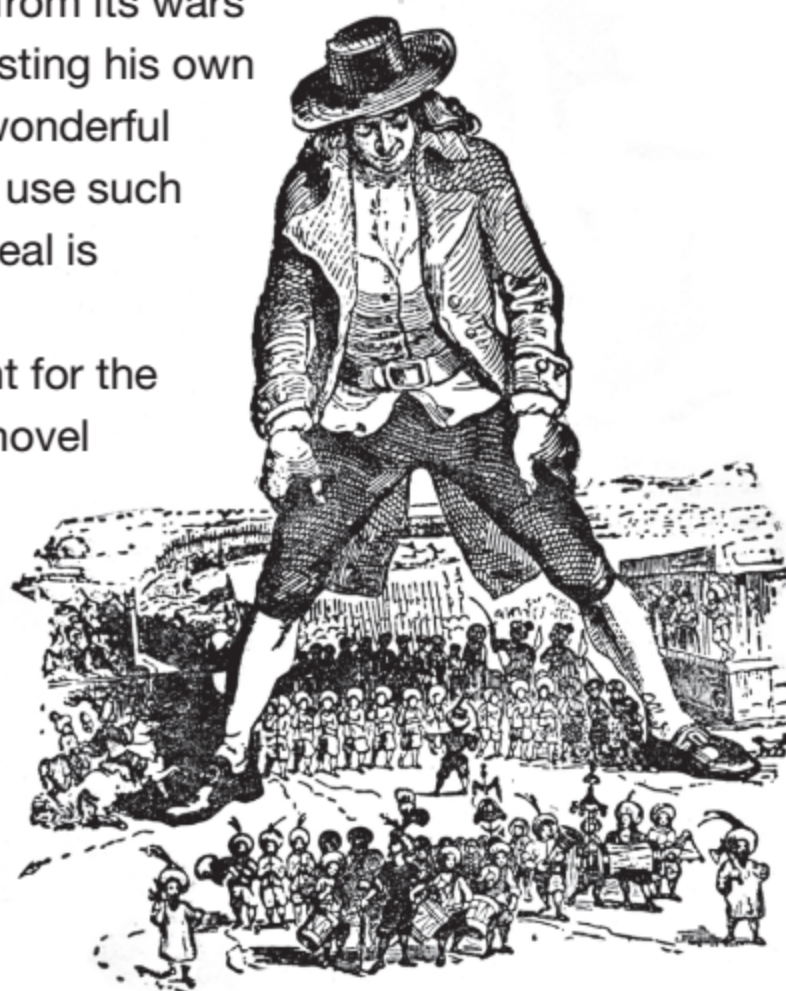
Gulliver's Travels is clearly an important piece of literature. First, it is beautifully well planned; there are a number of levels to the satire that Swift created. Even more important is the way that Swift used the novel to criticize the culture of the time. Using satire, he managed to criticize many aspects of eighteenth-century European culture, from its wars to its ways of thinking. Interestingly, Swift avoids suggesting his own ideas for a better society. Every place Gulliver visits is wonderful in some way but also lacks something. Swift's ability to use such clever satire while holding out on suggesting his own ideal is remarkable.

If nothing else, *Gulliver's Travels* remains important for the way it fascinates and inspires readers even today. The novel has also clearly made a mark on English language and literature. In fact, many words created by Swift for his story are now commonly used in English. In addition, many films and books continue to reference Swift's famous satirical novel.

7 log — a book recording regular or daily events during a long journey

37 Yahoo — the name of a race of brutes in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*; today the word refers to a person who is an uncultured brute

50 hold out — to not do some expected action



Reading Comprehension

A Mark each statement as true (T), false (F), or inferred (I) according to the passage.

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| 1. Satire was a common genre during Jonathan Swift's lifetime. | T | F | I |
| 2. Swift used satire to criticize the status quo and to suggest new ideas. | T | F | I |
| 3. The Lilliputians are much larger than Gulliver. | T | F | I |
| 4. Swift did not support the practice of slavery in England. | T | F | I |
| 5. Gulliver prefers the horse-like creatures to the human-like ones. | T | F | I |

B Choose the best answer.

- Which of the following best describes the purpose of this passage?
 - To persuade people to read *Gulliver's Travels* before watching the movie
 - To criticize the war between Britain and France
 - To entertain readers with a summary of *Gulliver's Travels*
 - To teach readers about satire and the meaning of *Gulliver's Travels*
- According to paragraph 1, how does satire work?
 - By demonstrating a practical approach
 - By criticizing practices through cultural comparisons
 - By making common practices seem extreme
 - By suggesting alternative ideas and practices
- How does Gulliver become an enemy of the Lilliputian king?
 - By refusing to capture enemy ships
 - By openly criticizing the Lilliputians
 - By refusing to invade the other country
 - By accidentally crushing a tiny Lilliputian family

C Complete the table below to tell what Swift wanted to satirize through each land.

Land	What Swift wanted to satirize
Lilliput	
Brobdingnag	
Laputa	