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grammar, style, and proofreading exercises

The Grammar dog Guide to Gulliver's Travels

by Jonathan Swift

**All exercises use sentences from the novel.
Includes over 250 multiple choice questions.**

About Grammartdog

Grammartdog was founded in 2001 by Mary Jane McKinney, a high school English teacher and dedicated grammarian. She and other experienced English teachers in both high school and college regard grammar and style as the key to unlocking the essence of an author.

Their philosophy, that grammar and literature are best understood when learned together, led to the formation of Grammartdog.com, a means of sharing knowledge about the structure and patterns of language unique to specific authors. These patterns are what make a great book *a great book*. The arduous task of analyzing works for grammar and style has yielded a unique product, guaranteed to enlighten the reader of literary classics.

Grammartdog's strategy is to put the author's words under the microscope. The result yields an increased appreciation of the art of writing and awareness of the importance and power of language.



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GULLIVER'S TRAVELS by Jonathan Swift – Grammar and Style
All exercises use sentences from the novel.

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SAMPLE EXERCISES - GULLIVER'S TRAVELS by Jonathan Swift

EXERCISE 5 COMPLEMENTS

Identify the complements in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

d.o. = direct object

p.n. = predicate nominative

i.o. = indirect object

o.p. = object of preposition

p.a. = predicate adjective

- ___ 1. The last of these voyages not proving very fortunate, I grew weary of the sea, and intended to stay at home with my wife and family.
- ___ 2. When the people observed I was quiet, they discharged no more arrows.
- ___ 3. These people are most excellent mathematicians, and arrived to a great perfection in mechanics by the countenance and encouragement of the Emperor, who is a renowned patron of learning.

EXERCISE 6 PHRASES

Identify the phrases in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

par = participial

ger = gerund

inf = infinitive

appos = appositive

prep = prepositional

- ___ 1. My hours of leisure I spent in reading the best authors ancient and modern, being always provided with a good number of books.
- ___ 2. In a little time I felt something alive moving on my left leg, which advancing gently forward over my breast, came almost up to my chin.
- ___ 3. This prince hath several machines fixed on wheels for the carriage of trees and other great weights.

EXERCISE 9 STYLE: FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Identify the figurative language in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

p = personification

s = simile

m = metaphor

o = onomatopoeia

h = hyperbole

- ___ 1. He desired I would stand like a colossus, with my legs as far asunder as I conveniently could.
- ___ 2. Although we usually call reward and punishment the two hinges upon which all government turns, yet I could never observe this maxim to be put in practice by any nation except that of Lilliput.
- ___ 3. He appeared as tall as an ordinary spire-steeple, and took about ten yards at every stride, as near as I could guess.

SAMPLE EXERCISES - GULLIVER'S TRAVELS by Jonathan Swift

EXERCISE 12 STYLE: ALLUSIONS AND SYMBOLS

Identify the type of allusion in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

a. history b. geography/landmarks c. religion d. folklore/superstition

- ___1. In like manner, the disbelief of a divine Providence renders a man incapable of holding any public station.

- ___2. But my good star would have it, that he appeared pleased with my voice and gestures, and began to look upon me as a curiosity, much wondering to hear me pronounce articulate words, although he could not understand them.

- ___3. We passed over five or six rivers many degrees broader and deeper than the Nile or the Ganges.

EXERCISE 13 STYLE: LITERARY ANALYSIS – SELECTED PASSAGE 1

Read the following passage the first time through for meaning.

I lay down on the grass, which was very short and soft, where I slept sounder than ever I remember to have done in my life, and, as I reckoned, above nine hours; for when I awaked, it was just daylight. I attempted to rise, but was not able to stir: for as I happened to lie on my back, I found my arms and legs were strongly fastened on each side to the ground; and my hair, which was long and thick, tied down in the same manner. I likewise felt several slender ligatures across my body, from my armpits to my thighs. I could only look upwards, the sun began to grow hot, and the light offended my eyes. I heard a confused noise about me, but, in the posture I lay, could see nothing except the sky. In a little time I felt something alive moving on my left leg, which advancing gently forward over my breast, came almost up to my chin; when bending my eyes downwards as much as I could, I perceived it to be a human creature not six inches high, with a bow and arrow in his hands, and a quiver at his back. In the mean time, I felt at least forty more of the same kind (as I conjectured) following the first. I was in the utmost astonishment, and roared so loud, that they all ran back in a fright; and some of them, as I was afterwards told, were hurt with the falls they got by leaping from my sides upon the ground. However, they soon returned, and one of them, who ventured so far as to get a full sight of my face, lifting up his hands and eyes by way of admiration, cried out in a shrill, but distinct voice, *Hekinah degul*: the others repeated the same words several times, but I then knew not what they meant. I lay all this while, as the reader may believe, in great uneasiness: at length, struggling to get loose, I had the fortune to break the strings and wrench out the pegs that fastened my left arm to the ground; for, by lifting it up to my face, I discovered the methods they had taken to bind me; and at the same time, with a violent pull, which gave me excessive pain, I a little loosened the strings that tied down my hair on the left side, so that I was just able to turn my head about two inches. But the creatures ran off a second time, before I could seize them; whereupon there was a great shout in a very shrill accent, and after it ceased, I heard one of them cry aloud, *Tolgo phonac*; when in an instant I felt above an hundred arrows discharged on my left hand, which pricked me like so many needles. (From *A Voyage to Lilliput*)

Read the passage a second time, marking figurative language, sensory imagery, poetic devices, and any other patterns of diction and rhetoric, then answer the questions below.

- 1 I lay down on the grass, which was very short and soft, where I slept sounder than ever I remember
- 2 to have done in my life, and, as I reckoned, above nine hours; for when I awaked, it was just daylight.

SAMPLE EXERCISES - GULLIVER'S TRAVELS by Jonathan Swift

3 I attempted to rise, but was not able to stir: for as I happened to lie on my back, I found my arms and
4 legs were strongly fastened on each side to the ground; and my hair, which was long and thick, tied
5 down in the same manner. I likewise felt several slender ligatures across my body, from my armpits
6 to my thighs. I could only look upwards, the sun began to grow hot, and the light offended my eyes.
7 I heard a confused noise about me, but, in the posture I lay, could see nothing except the sky. In a little
8 time I felt something alive moving on my left leg, which advancing gently forward over my breast, came
9 almost up to my chin; when bending my eyes downwards as much as I could, I perceived it to be a human
10 creature not six inches high, with a bow and arrow in his hands, and a quiver at his back. In the mean time,
11 I felt at least forty more of the same kind (as I conjectured) following the first. I was in the utmost
12 astonishment, and roared so loud, that they all ran back in a fright; and some of them, as I was afterwards
13 told, were hurt with the falls they got by leaping from my sides upon the ground. However, they soon
14 returned, and one of them, who ventured so far as to get a full sight of my face, lifting up his hands and eyes
15 by way of admiration, cried out in a shrill, but distinct voice, *Hekinah degul*: the others repeated the same
16 words several times, but I then knew not what they meant. I lay all this while, as the reader may believe,
17 in great uneasiness: at length, struggling to get loose, I had the fortune to break the strings and wrench out
18 the pegs that fastened my left arm to the ground; for, by lifting it up to my face, I discovered the methods
19 they had taken to bind me; and at the same time, with a violent pull, which gave me excessive pain, I a
20 little loosened the strings that tied down my hair on the left side, so that I was just able to turn my head about
21 two inches. But the creatures ran off a second time, before I could seize them; whereupon there was a great
22 shout in a very shrill accent, and after it ceased, I heard one of them cry aloud, *Tolgo phonac*; when in an
23 instant I felt above an hundred arrows discharged on my left hand, which pricked me like so many needles.

- ___1. The underlined words in Line 1 are examples of . . .
 a. assonance b. consonance c. alliteration d. rhyme
- ___2. Line 23 contains an example of . . .
 a. metaphor b. simile c. personification d. onomatopoeia
- ___3. The word *ligatures* in Line 5 most likely means . . .
 a. swords b. strings c. wounds d. ropes