

_____ Name _____ Date _____

Interactive Activity: Gulliver's Travels by Jonathan Swift

Part II: A Voyage to Brobdingnag

June 20, 1702 — June 3, 1706

When the sailing ship *Adventure* is steered off course by storms and forced to go in to land for want of fresh water, Gulliver is abandoned by his companions and found by a farmer who is 72 feet (22 m) tall (the scale of Lilliput is approximately 1:12; of Brobdingnag 12:1, judging from Gulliver estimating a man's step being 10 yards (9.1 m)). He brings Gulliver home and his daughter cares for Gulliver. The farmer treats him as a curiosity and exhibits him for money. The word gets out and the Queen of Brobdingnag wants to see the show. She loves Gulliver and he is then bought by her and kept as a favorite at court.

Since Gulliver is too small to use their huge chairs, beds, knives and forks, the queen commissions a small house to be built for Gulliver so that he can be carried around in it. This box is referred to as his traveling box. In between small adventures such as fighting giant wasps and being carried to the roof by a monkey, he discusses the state of Europe with the King. The King is not impressed with Gulliver's accounts of Europe, especially upon learning of the usage of guns and cannons. On a trip to the seaside, his "traveling box" is seized by a giant eagle, which drops Gulliver and his box right into the sea where he is picked up by some sailors, who return him to England.

The people of Brobdingnag are described as giants who are as tall as a church steeple and whose stride is ten yards. All of the other animals and plants, and even natural features such as rivers and even hail, are in proportion. The rats are the size of large dogs and the flies are the size of birds, for example. This also means that the country is far more dangerous for people of our size, as evidenced by Gulliver using his sword far more often here—namely, on attacking vermin—than in any other of the strange countries he visited; fortunately for Gulliver, the people are civilized. A *splacknuck* is an animal about 6 feet (1.8 m) long, to which Gulliver is compared in size, although it is never explained which animal it corresponds to (probably a rodent of some sort). Fossil records are claimed to show that the ancestors of the Brobdingnagians were once even larger. The King of Brobdingnag argues that the race has deteriorated.