

KRISHNAGAR ACADEMY

3.6.2020. Class - VII

Subject English II

Dear Students,

Here is a piece of prose for you, a story named 'A Voyage to Brobdingnag', written by Jonathan Swift. You will read the story attentively with the help of the word meanings given to you.

In the next class, I will provide the question answers.

Thank you.



A Voyage to Brobdingnag

Getting Started

- * What is your idea of a magical place inhabited by giant-sized people? Would you be excited or scared to be with them? Write down the first few words that come to your mind when you think of giants.

*'A Voyage to Brobdingnag' has been adapted from the book Gulliver's Travels. Gulliver's ship gets badly **battered** during a storm. The crew and Gulliver make their way to an island, Brobdingnag, so that they may repair the ship. To their surprise, the island is inhabited by giants. Gulliver is taken by a farmer to be the plaything or toy for his daughter.*

My mistress had a daughter who was nine years old. She was very **dexterous** at her needlework and skilful in dressing her doll. Her mother and she arranged a doll's cradle for me for the night. The cradle was put into a small drawer of a cabinet, and the drawer was placed upon a hanging shelf for fear of rats. This was my bed all the time. I stayed with those people, though it was made more convenient as I began to learn their language, and make my wants known.

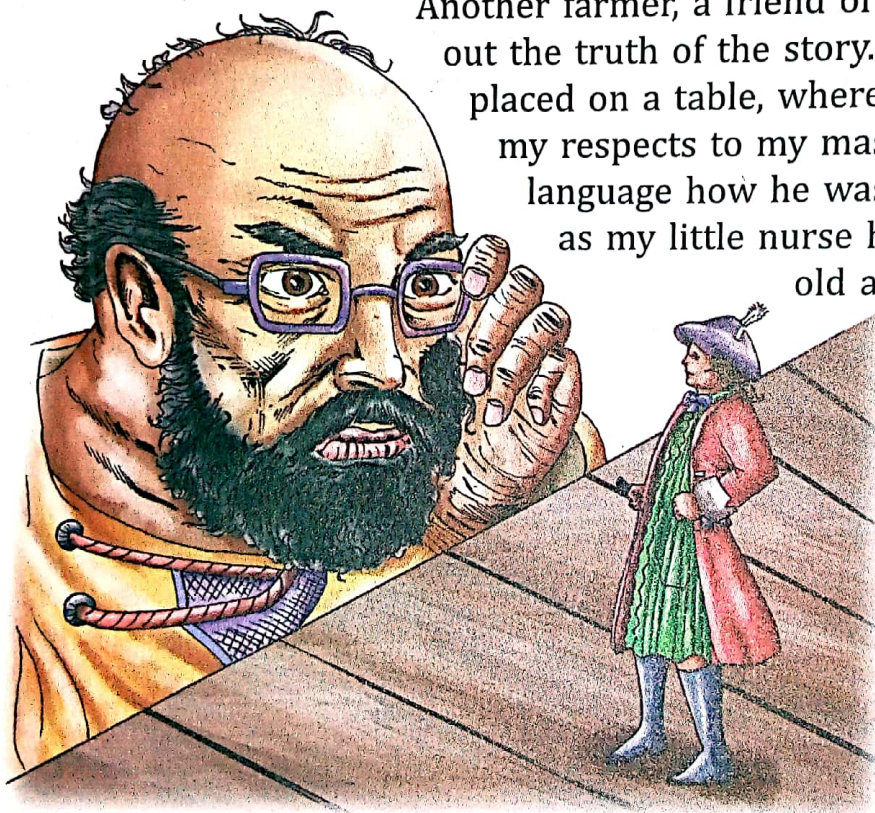
The young girl was very helpful to me. She made me seven shirts and some other clothes, of as fine a material as could be got, which was, in fact, coarser than sackcloth. She washed these clothes with her own hands. She was, likewise, my teacher to teach me their language. When I pointed to anything, she told me the name of it in her own language, so that in a few days I was able to call for whatever I wanted. She was very good-natured and not more than forty feet tall,



being short for her age. She gave me the name Grildrig, which the family used, and later the whole kingdom. In English, the word means *mannikin*. We never parted while I was there. I called her my *Glumdalclitch*, or little nurse.

It now began to be known and talked about in the neighbourhood that my master had found a strange animal in the fields, about the size of a *Splacknuck*, (an animal in that country which was about six feet long), but exactly shaped like a human being, which it imitated in all its actions. It seemed to speak in a little language of its own, and had already learnt several words of theirs. It went erect on its legs, was tame and gentle, would come when it was called, do whatever it was bid, and had a complexion fairer than a nobleman's daughter of three years old.

Another farmer, a friend of my master, came on a visit to find out the truth of the story. I was immediately produced and placed on a table, where I walked as I was commanded. I paid my respects to my master's guest, asked him in his own language how he was, and told him he was welcome, just as my little nurse had instructed me. This man, who was old and dim-sighted, put on his spectacles



to see me better, at which I could not help laughing very heartily, for his eyes appeared like a full moon shining into a chamber through two windows. Other people laughed too when they discovered the cause of my mirth, but the old man was angry. He was a miser, and to my misfortune, he advised my master to display me on market day in the next town.

When *Glumdalclitch* heard of this plan, she laid me on her chest and began to cry. She felt worried that harm would be done to me by some crude people, who might squeeze me to death, or break one of my limbs by taking me in their hands. She felt it was an indignity to me to be exposed for money as a public **spectacle** to the people.

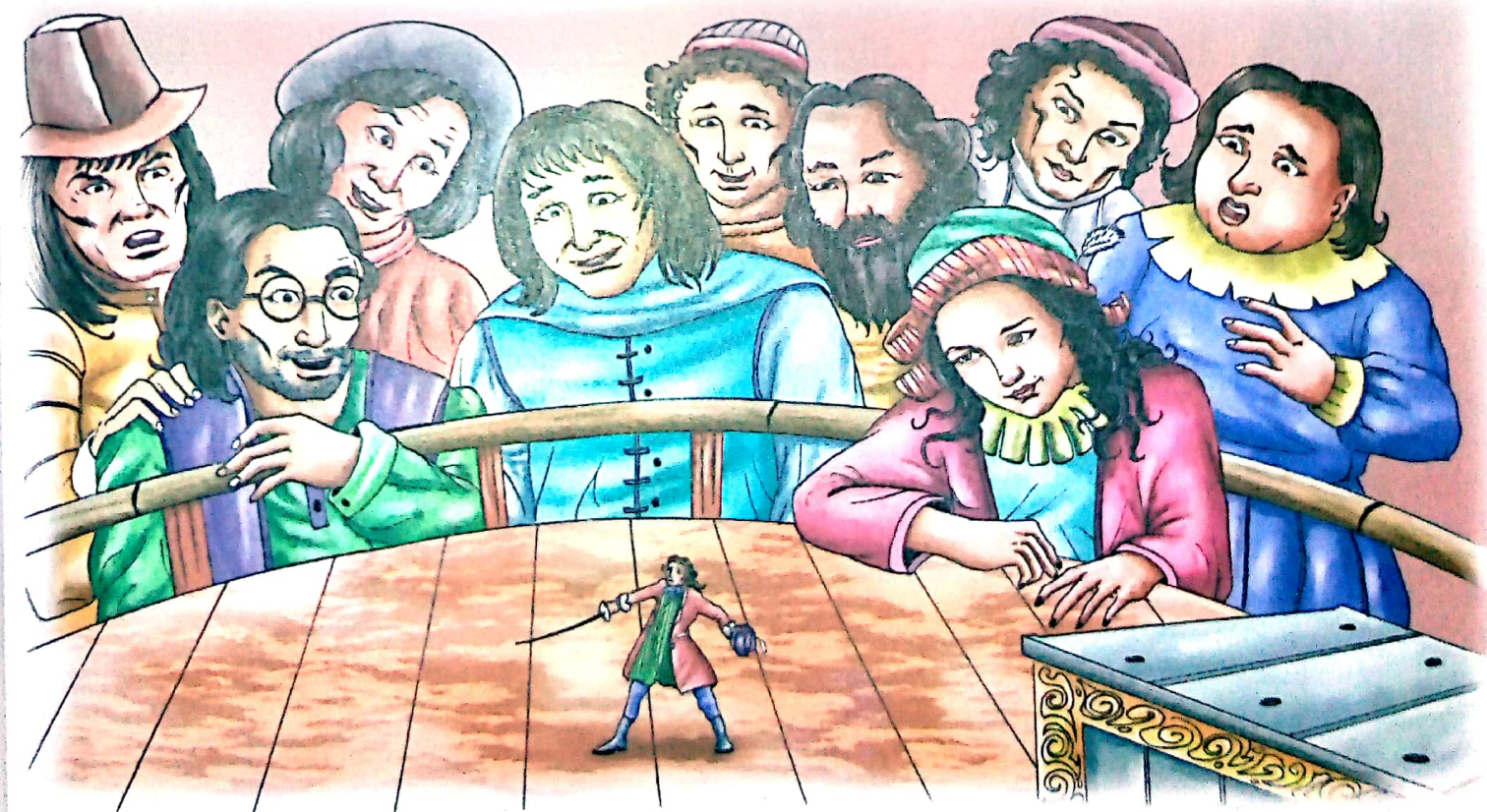
Following the advice of his friend, my master carried me in a box to the next market day to the neighbouring town; and took along with him his little daughter, my nurse, on the **pillion** behind him. The box was closed on every side, with a little door for me to go in and out, and a few holes to let in air. The girl had been thoughtful enough to put her doll's quilt into it, for me to lie on. However, I was terribly shaken by the end of the journey, for the horse went about forty feet at every step, and trotted so high, that the movement was equal to the rising and falling of a ship in a great storm.

My master arrived at an inn, and after consulting the innkeeper, hired the town crier to give notice through the town of a strange creature to be seen at the inn, not as big as a *Splacknuck* and in every part of the body resembling a human being, which could speak several words, and perform a hundred entertaining tricks.

I was placed on a table in the largest room of the inn. My little nurse stood on a stool close to the table, to take care of me, and direct what I should do. To avoid a crowd, my master would only allow thirty people at a time to see me.

I walked about on the table as the girl commanded. She asked me questions as far as she knew my understanding of the language reached, and I answered them as loudly as I could. I paid my respects to the gathering several times, and made some other speeches that I had been taught. I took up a *thimble* filled with a drink, which *Glumdalclitch* had given me as a cup, and drank to their health. My nurse gave me a part of a straw, which I treated as a *pike*. That day, I was shown to twelve sets of people and forced to do the same acts till I was half dead with weariness and annoyance.

My master would not allow anyone to touch me except my nurse. To prevent danger, benches were put around the table to keep me out of everybody's reach. However, a schoolboy aimed a hazelnut as big as a pumpkin, at my head, which very narrowly missed me. For this he was scolded and sent out of the room.



I was so tired with my first journey, and with entertaining people for eight hours together, that I could hardly stand on my legs or speak a word. It was at least three days before

PADPWA MEMO

I recovered my strength. I had no rest at home either as all the neighbouring people, hearing of my fame, came to see me at my master's house. And my master demanded the rate of a full moon whenever he showed me to the people. Therefore, for some time, I had little rest during the week, although I was not carried to the town.

Finding how profitable I was likely to be, my master **resolved** to carry me to the most important cities of the kingdom. Having provided himself with all things necessary for a long journey, and settled his affairs at home, he took leave of his wife. On the 17th of August, about two months after my arrival, we set out for the **metropolis**. My master made his daughter, *Glumdalclitch*, ride behind him. She carried me on her lap, in a box tied about her waist.

We travelled distances of not more than a hundred miles a day, for *Glumdalclitch*, on purpose to comfort me, complained she was tired with the **trotting** of the horse. She often took me out of my box at my own desire, to give me air and show me the country, but always held me fast by lead strings. On our journey, we passed many rivers broader and deeper than the Nile or Ganges. We travelled for ten weeks before we arrived at the metropolis, called in their language *Lorbrulgrud*, or *Pride of the Universe*, on the 26th day of October.

—Adapted from Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*

About the Author

Jonathan Swift was an Anglo-Irish satirist, essayist, political pamphleteer, poet and cleric, who became Dean of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin. He was born on 30 November 1667, Dublin, Republic of Ireland and he died on 19 October 1745 in Dublin.

Words to Know

battered	to hurt by repeated attacks	thimble	a small cover, usually of metal or plastic, worn to protect the finger that pushes the needle when sewing
dexterous	to be skilful, especially with hands	pike	a sharp point or a spear
sackcloth	thick, rough material used to make sacks	resolved	determined
mannikin	old English for a very short man	metropolis	a very large city, the most important city in a big country
spectacle	unusual situation that attracts interest or attention	trotting	slow movement of a horse
pillion	a place behind the person riding a motorcycle for a passenger to sit		
town crier	a person responsible for making announcements in public		