

# Gulliver's Travels

## 7: Island in the sky

*This is not a word-for-word transcript*

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### Language focus: Participle clauses

#### Sailor

Dr Gulliver! I see a ship coming toward us.

#### Gulliver

Let me look... Pirates! Quick – fill the sails... full speed ahead!

#### Gulliver narrator

Yes, pirates. They caught us. Luckily, they spared my life but set me **adrift** in a small canoe with paddles and enough food for only three days.

I'm Gulliver – and this is my third voyage – to the mysterious land of Laputa.

Once again a voyage I'd begun full of hope ended in **misfortune**. My luck ran out when the pirates arrived, so here I was, **floating** in a canoe.

For three days I saw nothing and no one – just mile upon mile of water and sky. Then I came upon a tiny rocky island and survived there by roasting birds' eggs, eating dried seaweed and drinking from pools of water. My situation seemed hopeless. But one morning... a black shadow crossed the sun and the air went cold. I looked up and there ... in the sky, to my amazement, was what looked like a huge mountain slowly **moving** towards me...

#### Gulliver

It's an island, **floating** in the air!

#### Gulliver narrator

It was about two miles deep, smooth and flat at the bottom. Through my telescope I could **make out** people moving up and down green slopes...

Near me, a long line of rope **dangled** from its edge all the way down to the sea...

#### Gulliver

They're fishing! ...

Hey! Hello! Over here! Here ... Come and rescue me! Hello, hey!

**Gulliver narrator**

A fisherman leaned over and peered at me. He shouted and more people arrived and pointed at me.

Not long after, a long chain was **winched** down with a seat. I climbed in and was gently pulled up. I felt on top of the world.

I was greeted by some of the strangest-looking **mortals** I'd ever seen... they had a dreamy, faraway look as if they were thinking about anything but what was in front of them.

**Gulliver narrator**

I was **escorted** to the King, though this took a while as my guides kept forgetting where we were going.

**Gulliver**

Where am I?

**Laputian**

Where are... oh, you're... sorry? What did you ask?

**Gulliver**

Where am I?

**Laputian**

Why, Laputa, of course.

**Gulliver narrator**

The King, too, was deep in thought, seated in front of a table with all kinds of mathematical and astronomical objects. He looked up, but after acknowledging me, then ignored me. It was an hour before he remembered I was there.

But now, it seemed, it was finally time to join the king for supper.

**King**

Our food? Does it please you?

**Gulliver**

It's... um, delicious...

**Gulliver narrator**

Actually, it was the oddest-looking food I'd ever seen – the meat was cut in the shape of triangles, the bread was shaped like cones and cylinders and the puddings, like flutes.

**King**

The dish you are eating is my favourite – it's like a beautiful **symphony**. I hope you are enjoying our music... Is your music **harmonious** like ours?

**Gulliver**

It is... different. So this land is called, Laputa?

**King**

Oh yes. It is the only part of my kingdom that can fly. We float continuously from one part of the country to the other. We are currently passing over Lagudo, our capital city...

**Gulliver narrator**

The king told me they were on their way to the Grand Academy of Science and Research in their capital city... He told me the Laputians are great mathematicians and musicians. I had already realised this.

**King**

Would you like to visit the academy? Come with me.

**Gulliver narrator**

We went onto the balcony and from there I looked down onto the huge city of Laguda. Badly constructed houses with **crooked** roofs leant to one side. The people were poorly dressed and looked miserable. In the distance I could see a huge building with smoke and strange substances rising from it. This was the famous Academy.

**King**

I have no more time to entertain you. I have to get back to my... thinking.

[bell]

**Laputian**

Yes, your Majesty.

**King**

Send for Lady Monodi.

Lady Monodi will take you to the Academy and be your guide. She is not very intelligent and is quite unfashionable, but she is from Laguda **visiting** and is very welcoming...

**Laputian**

[announcing] Lady Monodi.

**Lady Monodi**

How can I help you, Your Majesty?

**Gulliver narrator**

I have to admit that I wasn't really looking forward to visiting Laguda and its crooked Academy guided by an ignorant, unfashionable woman. But when Lady Monodi entered, I

quickly changed my mind. She was **stunning!** Her eyes were bright, intelligent and sparkling, full of curiosity and humour, not vague like those of everyone else on Laputa.

Suddenly I was glad to be leaving this floating island with its dreamy mathematicians. It was time to explore the Academy. I had no idea what I would find.

## **Vocabulary**

### **adrift**

(of a boat) moving on the water not controlled by anyone

### **misfortune**

bad luck

### **floating**

staying on the surface of water

### **make out**

see, with difficulty

### **dangled**

hung

### **winched**

pulled using a machine with a rope or chain

### **mortals**

an ordinary person (not a god)

### **escorted**

taken somewhere by someone

### **symphony**

music played by many instruments

### **harmonious**

(of music) having a good tune

### **crooked**

not straight

### **stunning**

very beautiful

## Questions

1. How did Gulliver get up to Laputa?  
(Hint: What does 'winched' mean?)
  - a) He was pulled up using a fishing line.
  - b) He was pulled up on a chain with a seat.
  - c) The island came down to meet him at ground level.
  
2. What best describes the people who live in Laputa?  
(Hint: Listen carefully to Gulliver's narration.)
  - a) Forgetful and slow.
  - b) Distracted but highly intelligent.
  - c) Harmonious and welcoming.
  
3. Why was Gulliver surprised when he saw Lady Monodi?  
(Hint: She was not how Gulliver had expected her.)
  - a) She was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen.
  - b) She was ignorant and unfashionable.
  - c) She was very different to the other Laputians.

## Answers

1. How did Gulliver get up to Laputa?
  - a) He was pulled up using a fishing line. That's not right. He saw fisherman but they pulled him up using something else.
  - b) He was pulled up on a chain with a seat. That's right. He was winched up on a chain with a seat.**
  - c) The island came down to meet him at ground level. That's not right. Try again.
  
2. What best describes the people who live in Laputa?
  - a) Forgetful and slow. They are forgetful, but what else?
  - b) Distracted but highly intelligent. That's right. Well done.**
  - c) Harmonious and welcoming. Their music is harmonious, in their opinion. But they're not very welcoming.
  
3. Why was Gulliver surprised when he saw Lady Monodi?
  - a) She was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. She was beautiful, but he doesn't say she was the most beautiful
  - b) She was ignorant and unfashionable. The king said she was ignorant and unfashionable, but Gulliver doesn't think so.
  - c) She was very different to the other Laputians. That's right. She's also different to how the king described her.**