

Gulliver's Travels

Jonathan Swift

What makes rope-dancing a satire of political advancement rather than merely a strange custom?

TOTAL TIME

PASSAGE

30 minutes	Rope-dancing for public office
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FIND THE ANCHOR TEXT

Use the Anchor Text Table of Contents in the Enhanced Reader to open the START anchor. Then use the dropdown to select the END anchor.

SECTION / LOCATION	Part I, Chapter III
START	This diversion is only practised by those persons who are candidates for great employments, and high favour at court.
END	some of them two or three.
PASSAGE ID	sec-gul-01

THE MOVE

Read absurd procedure as political satire

WHY THIS PASSAGE

Lilliputian officials gain high office by performing dangerous rope tricks for the court. Swift makes the procedure funny because the skill being tested has no sensible relationship to governing, while success depends on pleasing those already in power.

MARK

Underline what candidates are trying to win. Circle the physical skill they must display to win it. Put a question mark beside every feature of the test that has nothing to do with competent government.

NOTICE

- What qualities does rope-dancing actually measure?
- What qualities would political office logically require instead?
- How does the danger of the performance sharpen the satire of ambition and favoritism?

THINK

Answer provisionally: What makes rope-dancing a satire of political advancement rather than merely a strange custom? Choose the strongest interpretation you can defend from this passage alone.

WRITE

Write a short evidence-based response to: What makes rope-dancing a satire of political advancement rather than merely a strange custom? Use at least two details from the assigned passage and explain how they support your interpretation.

CLOSE

Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and explain why.

STRONG ANSWER	Rope-dancing satirizes political advancement because the skill tested has no rational connection to governing. Office depends on pleasing the court through dangerous performance, so political success looks like favoritism and agility rather than competence.
EVIDENCE	Use what candidates are competing for, what physical tricks they must perform, and the injuries or risks involved.
WATCH FOR	Do not stop at 'the custom is silly.' Explain what real political process the absurd test makes visible.
SOLO	Read the exact passage independently.
SUPPORTED	Use narration and sentence highlighting while reading the same passage.
LISTENING	Listen to the exact passage; visual following is optional. Same question and evidence demand.

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OPEN THE MARKED PASSAGE IN TUMBLELIT

SOLO: read independently. SUPPORTED: use narration + highlighting. LISTENING: listen to the exact passage. The question and evidence task stay the same.

1. MARK - Underline what candidates are trying to win. Circle the physical skill they must display to win it. Put a question mark beside every feature of the test that has nothing to do with competent government.
2. NOTICE - What qualities does rope-dancing actually measure? What qualities would political office logically require instead?

How does the danger of the performance sharpen the satire of ambition and favoritism?

3. THINK - Answer provisionally: What makes rope-dancing a satire of political advancement rather than merely a strange custom?
4. WRITE - Write a short response using at least two pieces of evidence from this passage.

Use evidence from the assigned passage. Show what you noticed and how the text supports your interpretation.