

# Reading Skill

## UNDERSTAND SATIRE IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

You can clarify your understanding of a satire from an earlier period by focusing on the **historical context**—the conditions and events that inspired or influenced the work’s creation, Swift participated on both sides in the struggle between England’s two political parties, the Whigs and the Tories. As a clergyman, he was deeply concerned about religious differences that divided Europe. These conflicts inspired much of his satire in *Gulliver’s Travels*.

**Directions:** In the first column of the chart, record descriptions of people and events that Swift pokes fun at. In the second column, tell what Swift is satirizing about England. Use background information, the author biography, and footnotes to help you understand the historical context of Swift’s satire. An example has been done for you.

Description in <i>Gulliver’s Travels</i>	What Swift is Satirizing
Politicians dance on a tightrope for the emperor to attain a political office.	The politicians are performing political tricks for the king of England to win his favor.

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