London Travel Diary

Oh, the places we've seen!

Paste your doll's picture here
London - Day 1

2:15 p.m.
Dear Diary,

Here we are in London, Diary! Our hotel overlooks Hyde Park, so I can see trees and water and even people horseback riding! It’s a huge park, hundreds of acres, and I would love to spend lots of time exploring it—but lunch is being served downstairs, and I’m really hungry after traveling so long. Not to mention tired, so I may need a nap more than a walk in the park. :^)

8:10 p.m.
Dear Diary,

Well, I wasn’t too tired to ride the London Eye tonight! I’ve never been on a wheel this tall—which isn’t surprising, since there isn’t one this big anywhere else in the world. I can see Big Ben and the houses of Parliament and and, of course, the Thames River. I’m riding in a “capsule,” which is like a little room with windows everywhere and a big wooden bench in the middle. I can stand up and walk around or sit down. I was afraid I might be a little dizzy (I have been on Ferris wheels before), but the Eye moves so slowly that I’m fine. My first night in London has been brilliant, as the Brits say!
**Day 2**

**11:40 a.m.**
Dear Diary,

This morning we visited the Tower of London. It was totally fascinating and maybe a little sad and gross, Diary. The sad part was the Bloody Tower, where so many famous people were imprisoned—like Sir Walter Raleigh, who lived there for thirteen years. (Even though he had a nice bed and a table and chairs and things, not like a prison cell with just straw on the floor or something.) Two young princes, Edward and Richard, were murdered in the Bloody Tower in 1483 (a long time ago, Diary!). The gross part was seeing the wooden block where people had their heads chopped off. But the armor and crown jewels were spectacular, dazzling, amazing! Now we’re off to the Kings Arms pub for lunch. I think I can get my appetite back...

**4:00 p.m.**
Dear Diary,

We went to Pollock’s Toy Museum this afternoon. It has all kinds of wonderful stuff, some of which you’d expect to find, like dolls and teddy bears, but also some things I’ve never seen before. My favorites were the toy theaters—miniature stages made out of paper or wood. A hundred years ago, children (continued, next page)
used to put on plays with them, using paper dolls for the actors. The stages were painted in beautiful colors with lots of tiny details to look at. I’m going to make my own version when I get home, Diary. Then I can put on a ballet whenever I want!

My nose almost smushed into my crumpled pet and sandwich. It was sooo embarrassing! Luckily, we were at a corner table and it was kind of dark—and I woke up before I started drooling or something equally awful. It’s early to bed for me tonight, Diary!

7:00 p.m.
Dear Diary,

The change in time zone has caught up with me! We were sitting in the hotel lounge having a late afternoon tea (Coconut even had her own little poufy cushion on the floor. The British really love their dogs—I mean really!) when my eyes closed and my head drooped and I was asleep, right in front of everyone.

8:40 p.m.
Dear Diary,

Just one more scribble before I go to bed. It’s raining, and there’s even a little bit of fog. In most places, that would bum me out, dear Diary—but in London, I think it just makes it more magical and English, don’t you? It’s the way London is supposed to be. Ta-ta, DD, TTYL.
10:30 a.m.
Dear Diary,

I may have thought rain and fog were romantic last night, but I’m really glad they’re gone this morning, because we are on a big red bus and on a city tour! I’m sitting on the top deck, and already we’ve seen Westminster Abbey and the Marble Arch, Trafalgar Square, and Piccadilly Circus. I was disappointed to learn that the “Circus” part just refers to the roundabout that traffic has to drive around, not any kind of show with animals and clowns. And a piccadilly was some kind of fancy collar in the 17th century. Borrrrinnggg! OK, must stop writing. The bus is going again and I’ll get car…er, bus sick!

Crown of Jewels
Add gems to your own royal headgear.

Day 3
5:30 p.m.
Dear Diary,

After the bus tour, we went to Buckingham Palace to watch the changing of the guard. Then for lunch, I had real fish and chips, wrapped in newspaper, with malt vinegar on them instead of ketchup (which they call “tomato sauce” here). They were yummy! After that, we took a taxi to Regent Street to do a little shopping, but it started raining again. New fact: Tea tastes better when it’s cold and rainy out, Diary. Maybe that’s why they drink so much of it in London!

Here’s the postcard I’m sending to a friend back home.

Write a message on the back of the card.
8:40 a.m.
Dear Diary,

Last night was so wonderful! We went to the Royal Opera House in Convent Garden and saw the ballet Swan Lake! The costumes were amazing, and I love the music by Tchaikovsky—so beautiful and exciting that just hearing it start made my heart thump! Even though I know the story is very sad and turns out all horrible, I still cried when Odette died at the end. I want to dance ballet at the Royal Opera House! I want to wear that beautiful feathery costume and headpiece and float like a graceful swan across the stage! Dance is the best thing in the world, don’t you think so, Diary? And there’s even more dance stuff coming...I can’t wait!

4:30 p.m.
Dear Diary,

This afternoon we went to a ballet exhibit. I got to see costumes worn by some of the most famous dancers ever, including prima ballerinas Margot Fonteyn and Moira Shearer. I also saw some of their toe shoes, some paintings done of them, and lots of photographs. There was even a little film showing Anna Pavlova (the famous Russian ballerina) dancing, which is amazing because it was made in 1924. I didn’t know they even had movies back then, Diary! (continued, next page)
And they were showing *The Red Shoes*, the ballet movie that made Moira Shearer famous around the world, practically. The cool thing about ballet movies is that you don’t hear any of the foot-thumping on the stage when someone jumps. It makes the dancers seem lighter than air. That’s how I want to feel about my own dancing!

**Swan Lake**

*Design a beautiful ballerina costume!*
Day 5

11:00 a.m.  Dear Diary,

OK, so this is not what I expected to do in London, but this morning we walked around a bunch of caves! The Chislehurst Caves cover more than 20 miles of underground passages, and they’re about 8,000 years old! You get to grab a lantern and travel in a small group on the tour. The guide told us all about the caves’ history—how they were mines for a long time, then were used for ammunition storage in World War One and underground shelters for people during World War Two. There are ancient Saxon, Druid, and Roman sections, and lots of stories about the caves. The spookiest one is about a haunted pool, where a woman’s ghost is supposed to rise. It wasn’t the kind of story I wanted to hear when I was in the dark, underground! But the caves were still a cool place to visit.

2:00 p.m.  Dear Diary,

I made some real brass rubbings this afternoon at the London Brass Rubbing Centre at St. Martin-in-the-Fields church. They give you paper and special colored waxes (like crayons) as part of the ticket price. Then you can pick from lots of different brass images (continued, next page)
Dear Diary,

It’s pretty late, but tonight we went to a revival of Riverdance, so I had to write something before I sleep! When the show first came out I was just a baby, but my mom has told me lots of things and, of course, I’ve seen films of Riverdance on television. It was awesome to see all those dancers in person and to feel their shoes hitting the stage; the sound went right through my skin into my body, like I was a big drum being beaten. I couldn’t help moving my feet, even while sitting down. Now I’m not sure what to do. I love ballet, but Irish dancing is just so much fun! Maybe I can do both when I grow up?

10:30 p.m.

Psst! Turn the page for some medieval magic!
Day 6

7:20 a.m.
Dear Diary,

Up super early for breakfast in my room before we go to the airport. As usual, time has flown by and now I’m leaving. I saw only a little bit of London, but I know I’ll be back to see a lot more, dear Diary! Maybe someday I’ll even get to dance here (outside of my hotel room, that is)! What exciting and wonderful place will we go next? I’m ready!

Medieval magic
Draw your idea of the perfect unicorn.
Print and paste photos of your doll's head to complete the picture.