

Snew White Study Guide

- 1) The seven dwarves in the Snow White story seem to have been first given names in the 1938 Walt Disney movie. As in that version, the dwarves in *Snew White* have names that indicate an aspect of their character. What do the names of the dwarves in *Snew White* tell you about their characters? Can you think of some other dwarf names? What character attributes do your names suggest?

- 2) One character in *Snew White* is based on and named after a real historical character, the famous psychiatrist Dr. Sigmund Freud. The real Dr. Freud believed that much of the way a person acts and feels is a result of that person's relationship with his mother. Does knowing this make the scenes with Dr. Freud funnier? Are these scenes funny even without knowing about the real Dr. Freud. Why or why not?

- 3) Many of the fairy tale characters in *Snew White* have real world jobs—toll booth attendants, air traffic controllers, and insurance adjusters, for instance. In what other ways do the real world and the fairy tale world intersect in the play? Which of these intersections do you find funny? Why (or why not)? What jobs would you give to the dwarves you names in question #1?

- 4) Many audience members have a favorite dwarf. Who is your favorite? Why? Does the playwright do anything special or different in creating the character of this dwarf? Compare your answer with your classmates. Did you all like the same dwarf or did you all have different answers?

- 5) *Snew White* is a silly play, but it is also about something more serious than just some dwarves and a couple of young ladies doing funny things. What do you think is the real subject of the play? What makes you think this?

- 6) On page 9.24, Dean says of the governor's plan, "That's true leadership." Do you think the governor is a good leader? Why or why not? If you were the governor, how would you solve the problem of the evil queen?

- 7) According to the instructions, all questions asked of the magic mirror must rhyme. If you had a magic mirror what would you want to ask it? How could you ask your questions so that they rhymed?

- 8) Where do you think the names Crabtree and Evelyn and Dean and Deluca come from? Why might they be considered funny in the context of a fairy tale? Why is Evelyn's line, "But why should they listen to us? We're only Crabtree and Evelyn" (page 3.28) funny in this context?
- 9) On page 3.37, the Mirror says, "True beauty is found within. True beauty is the ability to love others more than we love ourselves." Later, Dr. Freud tells the queen, "Inner beauty comes from love" (page 7.25). Do you agree with the mirror and Dr. Freud? Why or why not? If true beauty comes from the ability to love, who is the most beautiful person you know? Why?
- 10) On page 11.20, the Mirror tells Snow White that she will know the members of her family by three signs. Can you think of three signs that would identify the members of your family or your group of friends? They don't necessarily have to be physical signs, but what are three things that make your family or friends different from others? Are these things that you like or dislike about your family or friends?
- 11) On page 13.3, Dr. Freud says that Snow White and Rose Red have a Cinderella complex. In what ways is their situation similar to the situation near the end of the story of Cinderella? What sort of situation might you be in if you had a "Red Riding Hood Complex"? How about a "Rapunzel" complex? What fairy tale character do you think your own life is the most like? Why?
- 12) On page 14.9, Evelyn explains that the word "assonance" means a forced rhyme. The words "mirror" and "fairer" are an example of assonance since they sound alike, but don't quite rhyme. Can you find a poem with examples of assonance in it? Can you write a poem using assonance?
- 13) Do you suspect that there is anything special about the apple that Lou the UPS Guy delivers to the dwarves' house on page 14? Why or why not? On the top of page 15, Twitchy decides that the dwarves should throw away the apple. He says (15.3) "What she doesn't know won't hurt her?" Can you think of two meanings this line might have?
- 14) A good play or story will tie up all the loose ends and answer any remaining questions by the final scene. What loose ends get tied up in scene five? What questions get answered? Were you surprised by any of the information revealed in the final scene? Why or why not?