

# Snow White and the Seven Dwarves\*

(A Mathematical Skit)

By ALICE E. SMITH

*Dana Hall School, Wellesley, Mass.*

CHARACTERS: Snow White, a new Senior and very bright.  
Queen, an old Senior, who had previously been the top ranking student.  
Prince Charming, a college man of great learning.  
The Dwarves: "Doc" Formula  
Grumpy Fraction  
Sneezy Percent  
Happy Ratio  
Sleepy } the Congruent triangles  
Bashful }  
Dopey Decimal  
Mirror

## ACT I

*(Queen enters and crosses stage to stand in front of mirror.)*

QUEEN: Mirror, mirror on the wall,  
Who is the smartest one of all?  
Shining glass in which I gaze,  
Has anyone else here got four A's?

MIRROR: Noble Senior, you're the tops  
Of past and present student crops.  
You're the smartest one there is.  
To be quite frank—you are a whiz.

QUEEN: I know I beat the school last year;  
The old girls give me naught to fear.  
But tell me, mirror, tell me true,  
What bright *new* girls have come to view?

MIRROR: Flash! I've got the latest news,  
A girl will step into your shoes.  
You *were* the smartest one in sight,  
But now *beware*, beware Snow White!

*(Queen stamps angrily across the floor. Snow White enters and walks timidly across the stage.)*

SNOW WHITE: They said you could help me.

QUEEN: Let's see your program. Ah-hah! Snow White! And what is your trouble, my dear?

SNOW WHITE: I'm trying to plan my program. I know I have to take English, and Biology, and French, but what else shall I take?

QUEEN: What kind of a student are you?

SNOW WHITE: Well in my last school I always got A's, but I hear that this school is much harder.

\* Presented in a Mathematical Assembly at Dana Hall School on November 6, 1942.

QUEEN: Then what you need is a snap course, so something will be easy. I suggest Mathematics III—that's a cinch! (aside) I ought to know. That's how I got four A's, by *not* taking it!

SNOW WHITE: Oh, thank you. I'll go tell the schedule committee right away. (*exit*)

QUEEN: (*to the mirror*) That will fix the little minx,  
She'll find it harder than she thinks.  
Won't she be glad of my insistence,  
When she's involved in "Rate-Time-Distance"?

(Curtain)

## ACT II

(*Snow White is studying her homework.*)

SNOW WHITE: I don't see how *anyone* could possibly say this was a *snap* course. Maybe, it's because she's so awfully bright, and everything's a snap. How will I ever learn all these awful things! If it were just Algebra or Geometry, I wouldn't mind, but it's filled with *Arithmetic*! Ugh! How I despise decimals and fractions, and I never did understand per cent.

(*Enter dwarves, all but Dopey.*)

DWARVES: Did you mean us when you said all those things?

SNOW WHITE: Well, who are you?

DOC FORMULA: Let me introduce us. I'm Doc Formula. (*Bows deeply.*) And this is Grumpy Fraction.

GRUMPY: (*sourly*) Hullo.

SNOW WHITE: Why is he so Grumpy?

DOC: Someone has been spreading rumors about his family. Called them *improper* fractions.

SNOW WHITE: Oh, how dreadful.

DOC: Next we have Happy Ratio. (*He bows.*)

SNOW WHITE: Why are you so happy?

HAPPY: Wouldn't you be when you're in the news all the time? Why they're rationing everything, now. Of course once in a while I'm down in the dumps, but that's only when I'm all out of proportion.

DOC: And this is Sneezy Percent.

SNOW WHITE: Sneezy? Why Sneezy?

SNEEZY: Doesn't it sound like it. Percent. Percent. (*Sneezes each word.*)

DOC: And these are the twins, Sleepy and Bashful, the Congruent Triangles.

SLEEPY: (*yawns*) I can sleep whenever I want to, now. He's just like me, so why should both of us stay awake? (*Yawns again.*)

*Bashful acts it and says nothing.*

SNOW WHITE: But shouldn't there be seven of you? I can count only six.

GRUMPY: Dopey must be lost again. (*He goes outside and drags him in by the ear.*) Come here and meet Snow White. This is Dopey Decimal.

DOPEY: Hullo, hullo, hullo.

SNOW WHITE: Why do you call him Dopey?

DOC: 'Cause he's always repeating himself.

DOPEY: I'm worried. I'm worried.

SNOW WHITE: Why shouldn't you worry? We all worry about you.

DOPEY: I heard some sophomores talking about rounding off decimals, and I'm scared. I'm scared. Next thing you know I'll be thrown away completely.

DOC. You seemed to be having trouble, Snow White, when we came in. I'm a doctor, and I've got formulas for everything. What's wrong?

SNOW WHITE: It's just this Math. I *can't* do Arithmetic. And if I can't do Arithmetic, I won't pass my Math. And if I don't pass Math, Prince Charming won't love me.

HAPPY: He won't?

SNOW WHITE: No, he's a Math genius. He teaches aviators to work airplane problems and helps engineers build bridges, and scientists invent new things, and tells the Navy how to run their ships. He knows *everything* about Math, and if I flunk it, he'll never look at me again.

DOC. Well, don't worry. We'll help you. If we're your friends, nothing in Math can bother you.

DWARVES: (*sing*)   Heigh ho, heigh ho,  
                      It's off to work we go,  
                      To make things bright  
                      For sweet Snow White,  
                      With a heigh, heigh ho;  
                      Heigh ho, heigh ho, heigh ho,  
                      We'll say, "I told you so."  
                      When you have made  
                      The highest grade,  
                      With a heigh, heigh ho!

(Curtain)

### ACT III

(*Snow White is taking her final examination in Math III.*)

SNOW WHITE: The first part of that exam wasn't so bad. Now if I can only manage to do these problems, everything will be all right.

(*Enter the Queen, disguised as a Rate-Time-Distance problem.*)

QUEEN: I am your first problem. (Reads) "What is the rate of speed in feet per second at which a bullet travels if a marksman hears his bullet strike a target 2200 feet away, six seconds after the discharge? Sound travels 1100 feet per second." (*Hands problem to Snow White and exits laughing.*)

SNOW WHITE: Oh, heavens, that sounds terrible. How can I ever do that?

(*Enter Grumpy and Doc.*)

DOC: Now don't let that problem bother you. Just use one of my formulas.

SNOW WHITE: But that gives me fractions.

GRUMPY: Just remember those fractions are *my* family. You're not afraid of us, are you?

(*Both watch over her shoulder while she works.*)

SNOW WHITE: That wasn't so bad. I wonder what's next?

(*Enter Queen, disguised as a mixture problem.*)

QUEEN: A milkman has 1000 quarts of milk that test 4.7% of butter fat, but the city in which he sells his milk requires only 3% butter fat. How many quarts of cream testing 23.2% butter fat may he separate from the milk and still meet the city requirements?

SNOW WHITE: Percentage and decimals! Oh, if only Sneezy and Dopey were here to help me out.

(*Enter Sneezy, pulling Dopey.*)

SNEEZY: Kind of chilly here. Percent! Percent!

DOPEY: God bless you. God bless you.

SNEEZY: Did you say you wanted us?

SNOW WHITE: Yes, I'm stuck with percent.

SNEEZY: Now you know all my family. We're not a bit stuck up.

SNOW WHITE: Then it must be the decimals that bother me.

DOPEY: But you know I'm harmless, harmless. Just forget I'm even here. Move me over if you want.

*(They stand by her and watch her work it out.)*

SNOW WHITE: Well, that's done. Just one more.

*(Enter Queen, disguised as a Geometry problem.)*

QUEEN: If D and E are midpoints of sides AC and BC of triangle ABC, and if DE is prolonged its own length to F, prove that  $AC:FB::BC:CE$ .

SNOW WHITE: Oh, where will I ever start on this one? It seems all mixed up.

BASHFUL and SLEEPY: *(entering)* What about trying us? We're easy to do and ought to help you out.

HAPPY: And don't forget me. If I had my twin along, we could be that proportion. I'll stand by this mirror and you'll think you have two equal ratios.

SNOW WHITE: Why, this problem practically does itself. *(Writes busily.)* That finished my exam. *(She takes it off to one side to pass it in, and then returns.)*

*(Enter Prince.)*

PRINCE: Ah, Snow White, they said you had just finished your exam and could see me. How was it?

SNOW WHITE: Well, I hope I did well. You see, it was Mathematics.

PRINCE: If you pass, Snow White, I want you to wear my fraternity pin.

SNOW WHITE: Which one? You belong to so many honorary fraternities. You're so brilliant.

PRINCE: Take your pick, or take them all.

*(Enter Queen.)*

QUEEN: Mirror, mirror, on the wall,  
Who *now* is the smartest one of all?  
Tell me, have I reached my goal?  
Shall I lead the honor roll?

MIRROR: Smart you are, but not enough.  
She is made of better stuff.  
You get A's without a fuss,  
But Snow White's marks are all A+!

*(Snow White selects a fraternity pin from Prince and pins it on her own dress.)*

Curtain

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