

- 0. WHAT IF IT'S TRUE? - Story Preface
- 1. SNOW WHITE - COULD SHE BE MARGARETE?
- 2. SNOW WHITE - COULD SHE BE MARIA?
- 3. THE SEVEN DWARFS - GERMAN MINERS
- 4. CHILD MINERS
- 5. CHILD MINERS - THEN and NOW
- 6. GERMANY'S FAIRY TALE ROAD



7. WHAT IF IT'S TRUE?

In this image we see child miners in Britain. The illustration was included in Lord Ashley's 1842 report on children in mining which is maintained at the UK's National Archives. Curators at the Archives provide a [further description](#): "Although children under ten and all women and girls were banned from working underground as a result of the report, boys over ten continued to be used underground. The conditions shown in the drawings would still have existed during the time of the Great Exhibition [which was open from May 1 to October 31 of 1851]. They show how young persons were used to move the coal to the surface."

As we conclude our examination of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, it's interesting to think about how much reality flows through [legendary tales](#). *

After seeing the mining conditions of yesteryear, and assessing the impact of those conditions on child miners, we are left with a significant question to ponder.

Which is more likely:

The Brothers Grimm heard (or made-up) a story about seven short-statured people called "dwarfs" (or, "[Zwerge](#)," in German) who somehow found each other and decided to live and work together;

OR

The [Brothers Grimm](#) ** learned about child miners, affected with stunted growth, who became friends and decided to work - and live - together when [they became adults](#)?

Here's another issue to consider:

If the glassworks company at Lohr had never made such exquisitely fine glassware, would we have ever heard about a "talking mirror?"

And ... here's one more point to ponder:

If Margarete von Waldeck and/or Maria Sophia von Erthal had never lived, would we ever have heard about a girl called ... Snow White?

* The link, for "legendary tales," takes you to English-language audio recordings for 62 Grimm fairy tales. There is another recording - at the end of the list - "About the Brothers Grimm." You can also hear the stories [in German](#).

** The link, for "Brothers Grimm," takes you to a BBC program about "fairy tales collected by the Brothers Grimm and what they can tell us about the German imagination and 19th-Century romantic nationalism."

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/WHAT-IF-IT-S-TRUE-Snow-White>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/WHAT-IF-IT-S-TRUE-Snow-White>



Seven Dwarfs - Lifesize Sculptures

Sculptures of *Schneewittchen und die Sieben Zwerge* - Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs - located in Bergfreiheit. Photo by Ela2007, online via Flickr.

LICENSE: This photo is licensed via [CC BY-NC-ND 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/)

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Seven-Dwarfs-Lifesize-Sculptures->