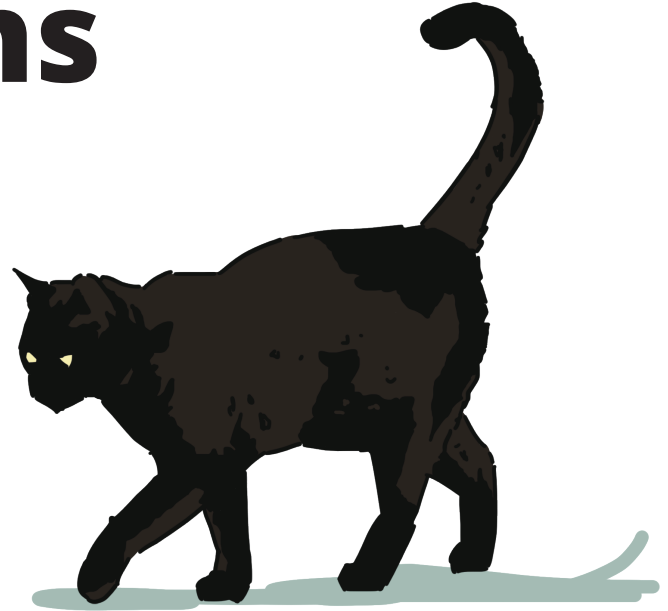
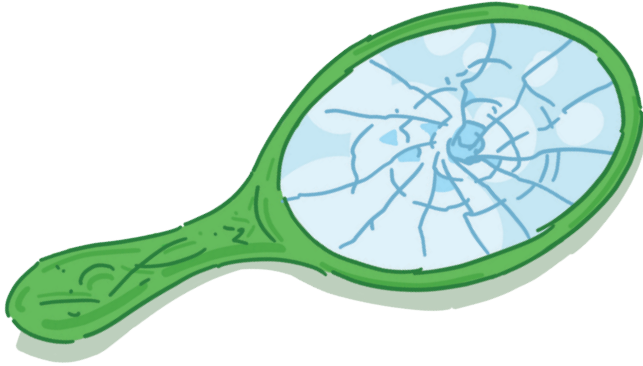


Superstitions



Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. Are you a superstitious person?
2. Name a common superstition from your country or culture.
3. How are superstitions passed on?

B. Vocabulary Preview

Match the words on the left with the correct meanings on the right.

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| _____ 1. nervous | a) lasts forever, does not end |
| _____ 2. superstitious | b) worried about what might happen |
| _____ 3. ritual | c) a place to gamble for money |
| _____ 4. timeless | d) a change in direction, the opposite |
| _____ 5. jinx | e) an action that is repeated due to custom or belief |
| _____ 6. reversal | f) to cause bad luck to happen |
| _____ 7. casino | g) well known for |
| _____ 8. lucky streak | h) to respond to an event or situation |
| _____ 9. notorious | i) good fortune that happens over and over in a short time |
| _____ 10. react | j) believing that certain things can cause good or bad luck |

Reading

SUPERSTITIONS

Would you get married on Friday the 13th?

1. Do you avoid walking under ladders? Do black cats make you **nervous**? Some people are very **superstitious**. They carry a lucky charm such as a rabbit's foot everywhere they go. Why is a rabbit lucky? Because it's born with its eyes open, of course!
2. Where do superstitions come from? Long ago, people didn't have the scientific knowledge we do today. To reduce their fear about unexplainable events, people came up with **rituals**. They passed their beliefs down from generation to generation. Some superstitions are **timeless**. Floors in buildings still go from the 12th to the 14th floor, even though nobody can agree why the number 13 is unlucky!
3. Superstitious people think they can turn bad luck away. They "knock on wood" (or, in Britain, "touch wood") to avoid **jinxing** themselves. For example, if you say "I've never broken a limb" you should immediately search for a table to knock on to avoid a **reversal** of luck. You may break your leg tomorrow if you don't!
4. Many superstitions are related to money. For example, if you give money away on Mondays, you'll give money away all week long. If you leave your purse on the floor, you'll go broke. Gamblers are **notoriously** superstitious. If you're in a **casino**, never get up to use the washroom. Your **lucky streak** will go down the toilet!
5. Superstitions differ from culture to culture. A superstitious African mother won't cut her baby's hair before her child's first birthday! In Mexico, a bride must not wear pearls on her wedding day. Pearls symbolize tears and an unhappy marriage.
6. Are you superstitious? How would you **react** if someone opened an umbrella in your living room?

Comprehension

Discuss these questions in pairs and write the answers in your notebook.

1. Why is a rabbit a symbol of luck?
2. Where did superstitions originate?
3. Why does the reading mention the 13th floor of a building?
4. What superstition do some people have about Mondays?
5. What must a Mexican bride NOT do on her "big day"?

Vocabulary Review

A. Complete the Sentences

Complete the sentences with words from the vocabulary on page 1.

1. Superstitious people feel _____ when a black cat is near.
2. Knock on wood to avoid _____ yourself.
3. If you're having a lucky _____ at the _____, don't get up to use the washroom!
4. Mexican brides are _____ superstitious.
They perform many _____ on their wedding day.

B. Result Clauses

Create a result clause to go with the "if" clause.

1. If you step on a crack,
you will break your mother's back.
2. If you wear pearls on your wedding day,

3. If you walk under a ladder,

4. If you leave your purse on the floor,

5. If you carry a rabbit's foot everywhere,

C. More Superstitions

Write some more examples of superstitions from your own culture. Share them with your classmates.

Discussion Questions

1. Where do you think the superstition about cutting an African baby's hair came from?
2. When can superstitions be dangerous?
3. What superstition will never die?
4. Which countries or cultures are the most superstitious?

Listening – Gap Fill

🔊 <http://blog.esllibrary.com/2012/04/18/podcast-superstitions/>

Fill in the blanks as you listen to the recording.

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1. charm
2. came up with
3. table
4. related
5. differ
6. react

ANSWERS: