

Superstitions

These are some common Western superstitions. Many of them originated during a time when there were no scientific explanations for events that happened. People used to believe in witches, magic, dragons, and fairies. There are still people who continue to believe in superstitions and live their lives according to these beliefs.

Baseball Bat: Spit on a new bat when using it for the first time to make it lucky.

Bed: It's bad luck to put a hat on a bed.

Bell: When a bell rings, an angel has received its wings.

Cats: If a black cat crosses your path, you will have bad luck.

Clover: It's good luck to find a four-leaf clover.

Knives: If a friend gives you a knife, you should give him/her a coin.

Ladybugs: It is bad luck to kill a ladybug.

Ladder: It's bad luck to walk under a ladder.

Mirror: If you break a mirror, it's seven years bad luck.

Salt: If you spill salt you must throw some over your left shoulder.

Umbrella: It's bad luck to open an umbrella in the house.

Wood: Knock on wood anytime you mention good fortune.

Yawn: Cover your mouth so your soul doesn't go out of your body.

Itchy Ear: Someone is talking about you.

Friday the 13th: This day is traditionally unlucky unless you were born on it.

Discussion Questions:

1. How do you feel about superstitions? Why? Are you superstitious?
2. Why do you think people continue to believe in superstitions?
3. Do you know anyone who is very superstitious?
4. Have you ever met anyone who has seen a ghost? Where did they see it?
5. What numbers are lucky in your country? Why?
6. What numbers are unlucky in your country? Why?
7. Do you have a lucky number? What number? Why is this your lucky number?
8. What lucky things have happened to you recently?
9. What unlucky things have happened to you recently?
10. In some western countries a rabbit's foot or a horseshoe is considered to be a lucky charm. What things are considered to be lucky charms in your country?
11. Do you carry a lucky charm? What do you do if you want to have good luck?
12. Make a list of some common superstitions in your country. Try to explain where they came from and why people believe in them. Include lucky and unlucky things.