
Superstitions

WORKSHEET A

Exercise 1

Try this quiz on American superstitions.

1. What do superstitious Americans say will happen if you step on a crack in the sidewalk?
 - a) You will have a heart attack.
 - b) You will break your mother's back.
 - c) You will be eaten as a snack by cannibals.

2. If you see a penny lying on the ground, what should you do for good luck?
 - a) Spit on it.
 - b) Jump on it three times with both feet.
 - c) Pick it up.

3. Which of these objects is supposed to bring good luck if you attach it to the outside of your house above the front door?
 - a) a shoe somebody threw out of a car window for good luck (but only if you find it by the road and don't throw it yourself)
 - b) a horseshoe (but only if the curved part is at the bottom, in the shape of a "U")
 - c) a baby shoe belonging to a child living in the house (but only if it is the left shoe)

4. What is the superstition associated with the thirteenth day of a month falling on a Friday?
 - a) The day is unlucky, so there is a high chance of bad things happening.
 - b) People born on that day have special powers, such as an ability to see into the future.
 - c) The day is lucky, so there is a high chance of good things happening.

5. Which of these parts of a dead animal is supposed to bring good luck if you carry it with you?
 - a) the skin of a snake
 - b) the tail of a mouse
 - c) the foot of a rabbit

6. Which of these is supposed to bring bad luck?
 - a) walking underneath an open ladder
 - b) talking to your mother-in-law on a Saturday
 - c) having a black rose grow in your backyard

Superstitions

WORKSHEET B

- Rob:** How much did you get your flight to Michigan for?
- Danny:** Two hundred and twenty bucks.
- Rob:** Was that the cheapest they had?
- Danny:** No. It would have been one hundred and fifty to leave on Friday, but then I realized it was Friday the 13th, so I decided to go on Saturday instead.
- Rob:** You paid an extra seventy bucks because you didn't want to fly on Friday the 13th?
- Danny:** Look, I'm not superstitious – it's just, well, you know ... just in case.
- Rob:** You're hilarious! Not superstitious – yeah, right! Will you take your lucky rabbit's foot with you on the plane? What about a horseshoe? I'm not sure you'd get that through the metal detector.
- Danny:** Very funny. Look, of course I know it's not rational ...
- Rob:** You can say that again! What will you do if a black cat runs in front of your car on the way to the airport? Turn back and go by bus instead? Honestly, I've never heard anything like it.
- Danny:** Well, I have. What about you and your red socks?
- Rob:** Oh, that's different.
- Danny:** How?
- Rob:** The Tigers have only ever lost two games when I've been wearing them.
- Danny:** So, they don't *always* work, then?
- Rob:** No, not quite. But the times I've forgotten to wear them, which isn't often, the Tigers have never won. That's the difference – my behavior is based on evidence; yours isn't.
- Danny:** I see. And how do your socks affect the Tigers players' performance? Don't tell me – they look at the stands in the middle of the game, pick you out in the middle of 40,000 people, see that you're not wearing red socks, and start getting freaked out.
- Rob:** I don't know how it works, dude. It's one of the great mysteries of the universe.

Superstitions

WORKSHEET C

Exercise 2

Decide whether the following statements are true (T) or false (F), or if the text doesn't say (D).

1. Danny has decided not to fly to Michigan at all.
2. Danny denies that he is superstitious.
3. Rob says the Tigers have never lost when he's worn his red socks.
4. There have been three occasions on which Rob has forgotten to wear his red socks to Tigers games.
5. Danny will be flying to Michigan on a Saturday afternoon.
6. Danny's flight on Friday the 13th would have been in the less expensive.
7. Rob finds Danny's behavior amusing.
8. Rob travels by plane less often than Danny.

Exercise 3

Answer the questions about the text on Worksheet A.

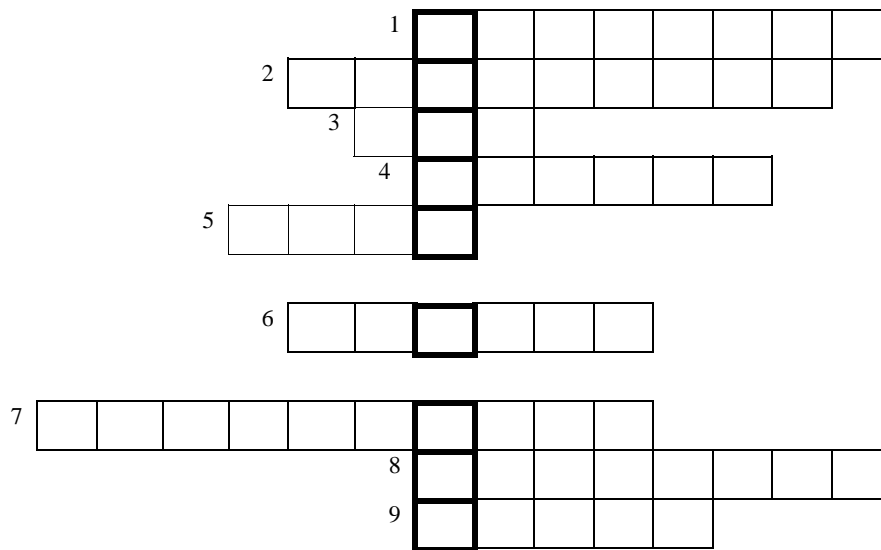
1. How much extra money did Danny have to pay to avoid flying on Friday the 13th?
2. Rob and Danny agree on one point regarding Danny's superstition – what is it?
3. What problem does Rob suggest Danny would have if he wanted to take a horseshoe with him on the plane?
4. In what way does Rob think his own superstitious behavior is different from Danny's?
5. The text mentions three other superstitions (two involving things that bring good luck, and one that brings bad luck) – what are they?
6. There are three examples of slang words or expressions in the text – what are they?
7. Would you say that Rob and Danny respect each other's superstitions? Justify your answer.
8. What do you think is the relationship between Rob and Danny, and why?

Superstitions

WORKSHEET D

Exercise 4

Complete the crossword below. If all the words are correct, reading from top to bottom will be the expression that American actors use to wish each other luck before a performance (because they think saying “Good luck” is bad luck).



1. Rob thinks his _____ is more rational than Danny's.
2. Rob suggests to Danny that it wouldn't be a good idea to go to the airport with a _____.
3. The color of Rob's lucky socks is _____.
4. Danny doesn't believe Rob's socks can _____ how well the Tigers play.
5. Rob asks if Danny would turn _____ on his way to the airport if a black cat crossed his path.
6. Danny imagines Rob sitting in one of the _____ at the Tigers' stadium.
7. Rob seems to think Danny's decision not to fly on Friday the 13th is _____.
8. Rob thinks his own belief is based on _____.
9. Rob hasn't often forgotten to wear his red socks when watching Tigers _____.