

## PDF Worksheet: 'Superstitions'

How to use this worksheet: [\(Click here to watch video\)](#)

- The **'Listening Comprehension'** questions are designed to help you *actively* listen to the conversation. Try listening to the video once, without paying attention to the questions in the PDF. Just listen to get used to how the people in the video speak, adjust to their way of speaking, and get an idea of the topic and the views and information expressed in the video. Watch and relax!
- After you have listened to the video once to get an idea of what it is about, read through the **'Listening Comprehension'** questions and see if you can answer any immediately without watching the video again.
- Finally, watch the video a second time and listen for the answers to the **'Listening Comprehension'** questions. Answer any you couldn't answer, and check your answers to the ones you have already answered. Watch the video more than once if you need to, and remember that you can always stop, rewind, and slow the speed *as much as you need to!*
- Print this worksheet and use it to write your answers if you want to, or use a notebook.
  
- The **'Use Of English'** section is designed to get you thinking more about the language used in the video. In this section you can expect to find questions about synonyms, collocations, and useful expressions. Use a dictionary, or an internet search engine to help you find the answers you need.
- It's helpful to invent your own examples with any new language you learn, so use the space below the questions to practise. This will help you to remember new words.
  
- The **'Did You Know?'** section is there to give you useful information about the language or topic of the video. Spend some time thinking about any new information you learn here. How does it compare to where you live? Does it make sense to you?
- In order to practise, feel free to use the space below this section to write in English about the information in this section, or your views about it, or your reactions to it.
  
- The **'Writing'** section is for you to practise your writing skills! Think about the question(s) and write a response in one or two paragraphs. Try to use any new vocabulary you've learnt during this video lesson.
- If you need to, make a draft in your first language in order to organise your thoughts before re-writing (not translating!) into English.
- If you have a teacher, tutor, or someone who usually checks your work, show them all of your answers to each section for their feedback.

You can re-use a listening resource like this one many times over. After you have completed the whole worksheet, try revisiting the video again, a day or two later, to refresh your memory about what you've learnt. Maybe you'll even pick up more from the video next time you watch it! Don't forget to share these resources with any friends or colleagues you have who are also learning English, sign up for our newsletter at [www.upskillingforchange.com](http://www.upskillingforchange.com) and follow us on Instagram [@upskillingforchange](https://www.instagram.com/upskillingforchange). We hope you enjoy studying with us!

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### Listening Comprehension

- What does Rocio say about the popularity of Halloween now, compared to when she was a little girl?
- What does Manar say is the best part of both Eids?
- What do all three speakers say about how cultural events such as Halloween spread to different countries?
- What does Manar say about superstitions in Algeria, and what is 'shirk'?
- Rocio talks about a New Years' Eve tradition brought to Latin America by Spain when Spain colonised the region. What is this?

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### Use Of English

- Manar replies to a question of Fiona's with "**Frankly, not...**" What does '**frankly**' mean here?
  
- Which is correct: '**Trickle Treat!**' Or '**Trick Or Treat?!**'
  
- Fiona says "What do you think **the appeal** of these things **are**?" Is this grammatically correct? Why/why not?
  
- Fiona says "If you want to **cover all your bases...**" What does she mean by this? Can you use this expression in a sentence of your own?
  
- Fiona says "Here in the uk we are **coming up on** Halloween" Does this mean:
  - **A.** It is currently Halloween
  - **B.** It will soon be Halloween
  - **C.** Halloween occurred in the very recent past

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### Culture Spot

Manar talks about a symbol called '**Khamsa**'. This can be written in English as **Hamsa**, or **Khamsa**, or **5amsa**. Sometimes Arabic letters whose sounds don't exist in English can be written by combining letters of the English alphabet such as **KH** or using numbers, such as **5**, which represents the Arabic letter **ح** (*khaa*).

Do you have this sound in your language?

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'**Shirk**' in Islam is the sin of idolatry or polytheism. Islam teaches that God does not share His divine attributes with anyone. Associating partners with God is not allowed. It may be understood that seeking protection from a symbol such as an eye or a hand is crediting those symbols with powers that only God possesses, and could therefore be considered **shirk**.

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Halloween has its roots in the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain (a Gaelic word pronounced "SAH-win"), a pagan religious celebration held in Ireland to welcome the harvest at the end of summer, when people would light bonfires and wear costumes to ward off ghosts. It was believed that at that time, the souls of the dead returned to their homes, so people dressed in costumes and lit bonfires to ward off spirits.

Halloween was brought to North America by Irish and Scottish immigrants in the 19th century, and quickly became a popular holiday. By the early 20th century, it had evolved into the secular celebration that it is in the US today.

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### Writing

- Would you describe yourself as superstitious? Do you hold any superstitious beliefs and do they ever affect your behaviour? Do you think it's ever possible for superstitions to take over someone's life, and make them unhappy? Write 2-3 paragraphs about your opinions and experiences in relation to the above questions.

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**Bonus content: The Black Witch!**



*(Photo By Charles J. Sharp - Own work, from Sharp Photography)*

**The Black Witch** is the largest moth in the continental United States and bears some resemblance to a small bat.

"Its wings are dark brown with wavy brown or black lines and a spot near the leading edge of the forewing that is shaped like a comma or numeral nine. Under certain circumstances, iridescent tinges of colour may be seen around the spots and lines. Males are smaller than females and darker in colour. The Black Witch is nocturnal and **has an aura of darkness and misfortune associated with it**. It is considered to be a **harbinger of death or bad luck** in many countries."

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