

4.2 *Origins of superstitions*

Aim: Create a poster about the origin of a common superstition and give a group presentation

Preparation: You will need to supply poster paper, colored markers, scissors, and tape or glue. Make one copy of Worksheet 4.2 for every S.

Comment: Use after the discussion on page 34.

Think and Plan (10 minutes)

- Ss work in groups of four. Give each group four handouts, poster paper, markers, and access to scissors and tape or glue.
- Have Ss read the project objective, the questions under *Think*, and the example superstition about the origins of breaking mirrors. Discuss the questions as a class.
- Go over the information under *Plan*. Ask groups to choose a theme and brainstorm common superstitions associated with it.
- Each group member chooses a different superstition related to the same theme and answers the questions as completely as possible.
- Ask Ss to research and complete their posters outside of class.

Put together and Present (30 minutes)

- At the next class, Ss bring in their completed posters and share them in groups. Have groups practice giving their presentations. Set an appropriate time limit.
- Have groups show their posters to the class and give their presentations as a panel. Stop for questions after each presentation.
- Finally, ask the class to vote on which groups had the most informative and interesting posters and presentation. Discuss what else students know about the superstitions that were presented. If possible, display the posters around the classroom.

Objective

Create a poster about the origin of a common superstition and give a group presentation

Think

Read about the meaning and origins of this superstition. Is it common where you're from? What other superstitions involving mirrors do you know?

BREAKING A MIRROR

WHAT IT MEANS

Many people say that breaking a mirror will cause seven years of bad luck.

PLACE OF ORIGIN

Ancient Rome

HISTORICAL DETAILS Long ago, a person would look into a lake or stream to see a reflection of his or her "other self," which some believed was the soul. If the reflection was distorted, it could be a sign of disaster. According to some ancient mythology, the hazy reflections in metal mirrors were connected to the future, and breaking one would mean that unpleasant things were predicted for that person's future. The commonly quoted length of that bad luck – seven years – can be traced to Ancient Rome. Romans believed that life renewed itself every seven years.



Plan

1. As a group, brainstorm common superstitions related to one of these themes or one of your own. Then individually choose a superstition on the chosen theme and answer as many of the questions as you can.

good luck and bad luck	holidays
marriage and family	health and illness
animals	sports

- What is the superstition?
- What does it mean?
- Where did it originate?
- What are the historical details?

2. Do research on your superstition. Make copies of any necessary information and images.

Put together

1. Create your poster and share it with your group. Discuss the information you found.
2. Practice giving a group presentation. Each member should present the information he or she researched.

Present

1. Show your posters to the class and give your presentation.
2. Which group had the most informative and interesting posters?
3. What else do you know about the superstitions presented?