

New Year Superstitions

Name: _____ Date: _____

New Year's Day is supposed to be a time to start over. The last thing you want to do is mess up your chance at a new beginning. It's this way of thinking that has led to many superstitions about ringing in the new year.

Deep down, we know that these superstitions aren't true, but that doesn't mean that we still won't have fun with it. Whether you're a believer or just looking to have a good time, these popular superstitions won't disappoint.

No Cleaning on New Year's Day

The idea behind this superstition is that nothing should go out of the house on New Year's Day. If this happens, you'll be more likely to lose things during the upcoming year. If you carry out the trash, you might carry out good fortune. Even sweeping is bad luck because you may sweep away your luck.

Eat 12 Grapes Before Midnight

A Spanish tradition will tell you to eat twelve grapes before midnight on New Year's Day, one for each month of the year. If your grape is sweet, that month will be a sweet and pleasant one. If a grape turns out to be sour, that month will not be great.

Horseshoes Bring Good Luck

Want to have a year of good luck? Try sleeping with a horseshoe under your pillow on New Year's Eve. Many believe that it will bring you good luck the entire year. If you find your house a little unlucky, you might consider placing a horseshoe above your door.

It has also been said that if a guest comes to a home where a horseshoe is placed above the door, that guest must leave by the same door. If the guest doesn't, he or she will take the luck from the horseshoe away from you.

New Year Superstitions Cont.

Eat Lucky Foods

All around the world, people believe that eating certain foods on New Year's Day will bring them a year of good luck. People in Greece and Eastern Europe enjoy vasilopita. Vasilopita is a special type of bread or cake. It contains a hidden trinket. Whoever receives the trinket will have good luck all year long.

In Italy, they feast on a new year's dish of pork sausage over lentils. The sausage represents abundance. The lentils symbolize money. Eating both on New Year's Day promises a great year and is believed to pack a double punch of good fortune.

In the United States, there is a long list of foods that are considered lucky, especially in the South. Cornbread, black-eyed peas, collard greens, smoked sausage, and cabbage are the most popular. The Pennsylvania Dutch believe that eating sauerkraut on New Year's Day will lead to riches.

What You Do on New Year's Day, You'll Do All Year Long

Some believe that if you spend New Year's Day with friends and family, happy and content, your year will be just as joyful. If you start the new year crying, you will experience much sadness throughout the upcoming year.

Superstitions are meant to be fun and encourage you to start the new year off on a positive note, but remember, they are just superstitions after all. If your day doesn't go quite as planned, remember that every day is a brand new day and a fresh start.

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Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What is the main idea of the passage?

2. According to the text, what do the 12 grapes represent?

3. What is the connection between horseshoes and luck?

4. What is the relationship between foods and the new year?

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Name: **Answer Key** _____ Date: _____

1. What is the main idea of the passage?

Many people enjoy believing and acting upon different superstitions to bring them luck or good fortune in the upcoming year.

2. According to the text, what do the 12 grapes represent?

The 12 grapes represent the 12 months of the year.

3. What is the connection between horseshoes and luck?

Superstition says that sleeping with a horseshoe under your pillow or placing one above your door will bring you good luck.

4. What is the relationship between foods and the new year?

Many people believe that eating certain foods on New Year's Day will bring them luck or fortune for the year.

What Will Happen If...

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: According to the superstitions in the text, determine what would happen if the events in the first column were to occur.

If	Then
One of your 12 grapes is sour...	
You sweep out the dirt and trash from your kitchen...	
You do not clean or take out the trash on New Year's Day...	
You find the trinket in the vasilopita...	
Someone enters your house through a door with a horseshoe above it and leaves through a different door...	
You eat lentils for your New Year's Day feast...	
You spend New Year's Day laughing with friends...	
You spend New Year's Day bored and lonely...	

What Will Happen If...

Name: Answer Key Date: _____

Directions: According to the superstitions in the text, determine what would happen if the events in the first column were to occur.

If	Then
One of your 12 grapes is sour...	The month that the sour grape represents will be a bad one.
You sweep out the dirt and trash from your kitchen...	You are removing luck from your home.
You do not clean or take out the trash on New Year's Day...	You will not lose things in the upcoming year.
You find the trinket in the vasilopita...	You will have good luck all year long.
Someone enters your house through a door with a horseshoe above it and leaves through a different door...	He or she will take the horseshoe's luck from you.
You eat lentils for your New Year's Day feast...	You will have good fortune or receive money.
You spend New Year's Day laughing with friends...	You will spend your year happy and with friends.
You spend New Year's Day bored and lonely...	You will spend your year lonely and bored.

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