

ADVANCED – READING – CHRISTMAS SUPERSTITIONS

Do you know your Christmas Superstitions?

Answer the questions to the best of your knowledge using conditional tenses and then read the text to see if you were right.

Mistletoe

1. If you had not refused to kiss someone under the mistletoe _____
2. If your mistletoe doesn't have any white berries _____

Holly

3. Witches will not enter your house if _____
4. If the holly was smooth _____

Yule log

5. If the Yule log had been big enough _____
6. If you want to celebrate Christmas Eve in a traditional way _____

Animals

7. If you hear bees humming on Christmas Eve _____
8. Your dog will go crazy during the year _____

Christmas carols

9. You wouldn't suffer bad luck if _____
10. If you had sung Christmas carols and it's not Christmas _____

Mince pies

11. If you eat as many mince pies as you can over Christmas _____
12. If you bite not cut into a meat pie _____

mistletoe

In the original superstition, the one who avoids a kiss under the mistletoe will have bad luck but the man is meant to present the kissee with a mistletoe berry. Once the berries are gone, the kissing stops

holly

Holly is protective magic against witches and lightning and is brought in during the holiday season for that purpose. Another superstition is that if the holly is smooth, the wife will be the master, while if the holly is prickly, the husband will be, so cautious couples bring in both!

Yule log

The Yule log should be big enough to keep burning all night otherwise there it means bad luck for the year ahead. Tradition has it that you then sit around telling ghost stories and drinking mulled wine on Christmas eve in front of the Yule fire.

Animals

At midnight on Christmas Eve horses kneel and blow as if to warm the manger, animals can speak but it is bad luck for a human to hear them, and the bees hum the Hundredth Psalm. Dogs that howl on Christmas Eve will go mad before the end of the year.

Christmas carols

Carolling is the old tradition of going to people's houses and singing Christmas songs for them. Never turn them away without some food, some money or a drink or you will suffer bad luck for the rest of the year. Singing Christmas carols at any time other than during the festive season is unlucky.

Mince pies

Eat as many mince pies as you can on Christmas eve and afterward, because the amount will determine how much luck you will have in the next year. Don't cut them with a knife but rather bite into them or you will ruin your luck.

ANSWERS

1. You would not be unlucky / you would not have had bad luck
2. The kissing stops
3. There is Holly inside
4. The wife would be in charge. / the husband would not have been in charge.
5. Bad luck would not have been a problem for the whole year.
6. You sit and tell ghost stories and drink mulled wine on Christmas Eve.
7. They will be humming the 100th Psalm
8. If it howls on Christmas Eve
9. You had given the Carolers some food, money or drink.
10. You would have had luck for the rest of the year.
11. You will be as lucky as the number of mince pies you have eaten
12. You will have good luck,