Scientifically Sound Weather Superstitions

Fill in the gaps with the words from the box:

brewing	respite	wreaked havoc	frigid	rumination	have a leg to stand on	proverbial	murky

1. **Clear moon, frost soon.**



Anyone who lives in the north-central part of the country can tell that clear days in winter provide a mixed blessing. On the one hand, you enjoy a 1)_____ from the long march of dim, dreary days. On the other hand, clear days – and clear nights – often mean 2)_____ weather, brought to you by a dry, continental high-pressure zone. During the day, the sun's shortwave radiation is absorbed by Earth and converted into heat. When the sun sets, the planet begins radiating this heat. Lacking clouds to capture that heat, the surface and atmosphere grow increasingly colder through radiative heat loss.

2. **Cows lying down means wet weather is on the way.**

Cows have a long history as weather predictors. One superstition claims that a cow lies down when rain is coming. Given that cows lie down for a variety of reasons, it's tempting to dismiss this claim as utterly ridiculous, but further 3)_____ suggests that it might 4)_____ after all. The reason? There is one study that showed that cows tend to stand longer when the weather is hot as they try to spread the heat all over their bodies, while a seated cow implies cooling weather or a storm 5)_____.



3. Snakes slither away from earthquakes.



The legend dates back to the first account of such behaviour in 373 B.C.E., when snakes and a number of other creatures are said to have hit the 6)_____ highway several days before a major earthquake that 7)_____ on the city of Helice in Greece. But do snakes really have earthquake-predictive powers? Scientists do acknowledge that serpents and other animals can sense earthquakes a few seconds before people do because they are better able to feel the initial wave. The area that remains 8)_____, however, is whether animals can detect a quake days in advance of eruption. As of now, scientists don't know.

The Elegant English Club
C1 & C2
LIVEWORKSHEETS