

REPORTING CLAUSES & PASSIVE STRUCTURE

Superstitions Around the World: Do They Really Influence Our Lives?

Even in today's highly scientific society, many people continue to believe in lucky charms and superstitions. Although technology and education have transformed the way people understand the world, traditional beliefs remain surprisingly influential. Some people carry lucky objects before important exams, athletes wear the same socks during competitions, and others avoid walking under ladders or opening umbrellas indoors. **Psychologists argue that** these habits give people a greater sense of control during uncertain situations, even when there is no scientific evidence to support them.



Different cultures have developed unique superstitions over hundreds of years. In Japan, many people avoid the number four because its pronunciation sounds similar to the word for "death." In Italy, **it is believed that** placing a hat on a bed brings bad luck. In Turkey, **many people believe that** pouring water behind someone who is leaving on a journey will ensure a safe return. Meanwhile, in several Latin American countries, **some people say that** sweeping a broom over another person's feet means they will never get married.

Although these beliefs are fascinating cultural traditions, **experts suggest that** people should not allow superstitions to control their decisions. Instead, **they recommend** relying on critical thinking, scientific evidence, and careful planning. **Many psychologists explain that** confidence comes from preparation rather than from lucky objects. **It is also argued that** understanding the historical origins of superstitions helps people appreciate them as cultural traditions instead of unquestionable truths. In this way, people can respect their cultural heritage while making rational decisions based on facts.

1. Reporting Clauses

Reporting clauses are used to introduce what people say, believe, think, argue, claim, or feel. The conjunction, **That** is optional in most cases.

Structure: Reporting Verb + (that) + Clause

- Many people believe (that) lucky charms bring good fortune.

Common Reporting Verbs

Formal	Neutral / Conversational
argue, assert, claim	say, believe, think
report, maintain, suggest	explain, admit, assume
state, observe, conclude	agree, doubt, feel, mention, predict

2. Reporting Clauses in the Passive

When the speaker is unknown, unimportant, or represents a general opinion, passive reporting structures are commonly used.

Structure 1: It + passive reporting verb + (that) + clause

- It is believed (that) black cats bring bad luck.

Common Passive Reporting Verbs: *is believed, is thought, is considered, is expected, is reported, is known, is assumed, is claimed, is said, is understood.*

Structure 2 Subject + passive reporting verb + infinitive

- Lucky charms are believed to reduce anxiety.

Exercise 1: Choose the correct answer.

1. Many historians _____ that superstitions originated centuries ago.
a) explain b) explains c) explaining d) explained
2. It _____ that lucky charms increase people's confidence.
a) believe b) is believed c) believing d) believed
3. Scientists _____ there is little evidence supporting these beliefs.
a) argue b) argues c) arguing d) argued
4. Black cats _____ to bring bad luck in several countries.
a) are believed b) believe c) believed d) believing

Exercise 2: Complete the sentences using a suitable reporting verb.

(agree – argue – believe – explain – claim – report – suggest)

1. Researchers _____ that fear often strengthens superstitious beliefs.
2. Many people _____ that carrying lucky objects improves performance.
3. Experts _____ that education helps reduce irrational beliefs.
4. Historians _____ that these traditions have ancient origins.

Exercise 3: Rewrite using a reporting clause.

Example: People say that black cats bring bad luck. → many people say (that) black cats bring bad luck.

1. People believe that dreams predict the future.
2. Experts think that superstitions reduce anxiety.
3. Many scientists say that evidence is essential.
4. Historians claim that these beliefs began centuries ago.

Exercise 4 – Rewrite using the passive reporting structure.

Example: People believe that lucky charms improve confidence. → It is believed that lucky charms improve confidence. / Lucky charms are believed to improve confidence.

1. People say that breaking a mirror causes bad luck.
2. Experts think that superstitions influence decision-making.
3. Researchers claim that rituals reduce stress.
4. Many people believe that Friday the 13th is unlucky.