

PRACTICE 11

You are going to read an article about Chinese superstitions. Six sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences (A – H) to fit each gap (1 – 6). There are two extra sentences which you do not need to use.

Chinese Superstitions

The Chinese community in Malaysia usually follows some superstitions be it in their daily lives or on Chinese New Year. Before Chinese New Year, we see people thronging the shopping malls to buy oranges and red decorative items. Oranges and the colour red signify good fortune. (1) _____ One shouldn't wear black because it symbolises the onset of bad luck.

Before Chinese New Year, every nook and corner of the house must be cleaned. A clean house brings good luck and fortune. Never ever clean the house on Chinese New Year Day as it signifies sweeping out all the good luck. In addition, no one is allowed to use any sharp objects like knives (2) _____

What about the giving of gifts? Superstitious Chinese consider gifting a clock to someone as a curse. To them, a clock symbolises death or a funeral. (3) _____ Well, a handkerchief is a sign of 'saying goodbye forever' so maybe it's not the best gift. Next, remember not to give cut flowers on Chinese New Year. This is because cut flowers are generally used during funerals. This is especially so for the yellow chrysanthemum and any white flowers. (4) _____ So, avoid giving white flowers.

Umbrellas and mirrors are taboos too. Giving someone an umbrella as a gift signifies the end of a relationship. (5) _____ The Chinese and in fact, most Asians believe that mirrors attract ghosts. It is also believed that if one breaks a mirror, he or she will encounter seven years of bad luck.

There're lots of superstitions for pregnant women. Pregnant women are advised to place a knife under their bed to protect the unborn baby from evil spirits. For a smooth, easy delivery, a pregnant woman should not use glue in any way. (6) _____

- A People tend to cut themselves when they use knives carelessly.
- B Black during Chinese New Year is a taboo.
- C Mirrors are also considered unlucky gifts.
- D White is symbolic of funerals and death.
- E A knife symbolises the cutting of good fortune.
- F Mirrors are to be avoided at all cost.
- G Gluing signifies a difficult labour.
- H What about giving someone a handkerchief?