



READING PRACTICE



A. _____ They were sacred to the goddess, Isis in Egyptian mythology. Bast or Pasht, the daughter of Isis, was represented with the face of it. Anyone who killed one of these was put to death. In East Anglia, England, they used to mummify them and place them in the walls of their homes to ward off evil spirits. Keep them away from babies because they “suck the breath” of the child. Having one onboard a ship is considered to bring luck.

B. _____ If somebody throws away a dead one, the wind will soon start to blow from that direction.



C. _____ If the first you see in the year is white, you will have good luck all year.

D. _____ Christians believed that these animals originally had unmarked hides, and that it was only after Christ’s entry into Jerusalem on the back of one of these that they received the dark cross on their backs. One old saying says that no-one ever sees a dead one, however, there is also a tradition that to see such means great good fortune.



E. _____ The ancient Greeks revered them and believed them sacred to Athena. Affiliated with the goddess of wisdom and learning, they were considered wise and kind. Later on somewhere in time, their reputation plummeted and hearing the hoot of it is now associated with bad luck. To counter evil ones people put irons in their fires. Or threw salt, hot peppers or vinegar into the fire, in doing so it will get a sore tongue, hoot no more, and no one close to you will be in trouble. When you hear it, take off your clothes, turn them inside out and put them back on. You might not want to do this if you are in public. Another superstition is that any man who eats its roasted meat will be obedient and a slave to his wife.

F. _____ In Siam, white species were rare and not made to work for their upkeep.

G. _____ Throw back the first one you catch then you’ll be lucky the whole day fishing. A superstition held by some that it is bad luck to get married when they aren’t biting. It should always be eaten from the head toward the tail. To dream of it was meant to mean that someone you know is pregnant. If you count the number of them you caught, you will catch no more that day.



H. _____ It means long life and happiness, a good omen, to the Chinese and Poles. If it lands on your head, you should hope the Cricket sees rain coming because it won’t get off until it hears thunder. When you see one, you might also be seeing the *Devil*, a *witch*, a *ghost*, or *Dracula*. They have always had a connection with witches, and can have good or bad connotations, depending on the tradition. One particular tradition is that if one of these flies three times around a house, it is a death omen. Also, when it comes out early and flies about playfully, it is a sign of good weather to come.



I. _____ Superstitious people probably don't kill them because it has been unlucky since one of these spun a web over baby Jesus to hide him from Herod. One with syrup cures fever. Seeing it run down a web in the afternoon means you'll take a trip. You'll meet a new friend if you run into a web. It is a repellent against plague when worn around the neck in a walnut shell.

J. _____ A white one could warn of danger, and lived longer than a dark one. Spotted ones are considered magical. Grey ones with four white socks are considered to be unlucky. In some places it is lucky to meet a white one in others it might be the opposite either way, tradition states that upon meeting such one should spit and make a wish, or cross one's fingers until a dog is seen. In many places it is lucky to lead it through the house as it was believed this may stem from the association of them with fertility and crops.



K. _____ They have long been connected with the sun, as they crow to herald its arrival at dawn, and are considered watchful protectors of humankind. When it crows at midnight a spirit is passing; in England it is a death omen if one crows three times between sunset and midnight. Crowing at other times is often a warning against misfortune. If it crows while perched on a gate, or at nightfall, the next day will be rainy. A white one is considered very lucky, and should not be killed as it protects the farm on which it lives; black ones, however, were more ill-omened, being often associated with sacrifice.



L. _____ An Icelandic folk tale is that if you see nine of these animals in a shed with a gray bull next to the door, and all of them lie on the same side, you are in luck, because you will be granted one wish.



- 1) **Bat**
- 2) **Butterfly**
- 3) **Cat**
- 4) **Cow**
- 5) **Donkey**
- 6) **Elephant**
- 7) **Fish**
- 8) **Horse**
- 9) **Mouse**
- 10) **Owl**
- 11) **Rooster**
- 12) **Spider**

