UNIT 57

Belief and superstition

- A Match the words or phrases to make common expressions connected with belief or superstition.
- 1 dabble A account 2 mind B pokery 3 extra-sensory C telling 4 sleight D in the occult 5 jiggery-E magic 6 far-F perception 7 burden G of proof 8 unidentified H illusion 9 fortune I of hand 10 black J over matter 11 optical K fetched 12 eyewitness L flying object
- **B** Decide whether the definitions are true (T) or false (F). Give the correct definition if necessary.
- 1 A *premonition* is an intuition of a future happy event.
- 2 A *charlatan* is someone who pretends to have knowledge he or she does not possess, especially in medicine.
- 3 To levitate means rising or causing to rise and float in the air.
- 4 A *seance* is a meeting where spiritualists try to receive messages from the spirits of the dead.
- 5 Astrology is the study of the planets and stars.
- 6 A poltergeist is a spirit which makes noises and moves objects.
- 7 *Telepathy* means being able to understand, and communicate with, people's thoughts.
- 8 A *clairvoyant* is someone who knows exactly what happened in the past.
- 9 To haunt means to visit a person or a place regularly. (used of ghosts)
- 10 A sceptic is someone who does not believe a person or an idea.
- 11 To *dowse for water* is to hunt for water by holding a forked stick over the ground.
- 12 *Fringe medicine* refers to alternative treatments, many of which are not generally recognised by the traditional medical establishment.
- 13 A *cult* is a sect devoted to the practices of a particular religion or set of theories.
- 14 An atheist is someone who believes in God.
- 15 *The evil eye* is a look or glance superstitiously supposed to have the power of inflicting harm.
- 16 Old wives' tales are superstitious beliefs passed on by word of mouth.
- 17 *Witchcraft* is the art of using magic to make certain, usually evil, things happen.
- 18 A *totem pole* is a carved post set up by certain Native Americans as a tribal symbol.

C	Fill in the missing words, all beginning with m.	1	People sometimes see a
		2	A is a person who claims to carry messages between the dead and the living.
		3	The unicorn is a beast.
		4	Do you believe the Loch Ness exists?
		5	is the art which supposedly influences events by the use of spells.
		6	A is a surprising event attributed to a supernatural cause.
		7	The cult members were by their fascinating but manipulative leader, and agreed to do whatever he wanted.
D	Choose the correct word to complete each	1	His story appeared completely at the time, and we were all taken in.
	sentence.	0	a) gullible b) believable c) credulous d) honest
			When the police found her, she was living under a(n) name. a) assumed b) fraudulent c) bogus d) fake
		3	Adam was only able to pass the entry test by a) duping b) fooling c) cheating d) deceiving
		4	I am afraid I cannot give to Humphrey's account of what happened.
		_	a) truth b) belief c) faith d) credence
		5	The journalists asked the Prime Minister to the date of the next election. a) predict b) foretell c) presage d) prevaricate
E	Answer these questions as	1	What superstitious habits are common in your country?
	fully as you can, in conversation or in writing.	2	Do you need proof before you can believe anything, or do you take some things on trust? Give examples.
	£10	3	Discuss whether you think the following situations are supposed to bring good or bad luck:
			a) a black cat crossing your path
			b) walking under a ladder
			c) arranging something for Friday the 13th
			d) driving a green car
			e) breaking a mirror
			f) taking the last sandwich on a plate
			g) catching the bride's bouquet as she leaves for her honeymoon
			h) treading in a cowpat or dog mess, or being hit by bird droppings.
		4	Astrology, palmistry and reading tea leaves or tarot cards are all ways of trying to predict the future. Do you believe in any of them?