

36 Vocabulary

36.1 TRADITION, LUCK, AND SUPERSTITION

I **told a white lie** and said the dress looked good on her.

tell a white lie

[say something that is not true to avoid upsetting someone]



She always **drops hints** about the presents she wants.

drop a hint

[say something indirectly]



Varinder **started a rumor** that Sonia stole some money.

start / spread a rumor

[to start / continue saying things that may or may not be true]



Paulo loves to **gossip**. He's always talking behind people's backs.

gossip

[talk about other people, often in a negative way]



I **have a sneaking suspicion** that he won't come to the party tonight.

have a sneaking suspicion

[have a persistent idea about something with little evidence]



I don't **believe in** ghosts.

believe in something

[think that something exists or is true]



I haven't ever broken a bone.
Knock on wood!

knock on wood (US)

touch wood (UK)

[wish for good luck, or avert bad luck]



Close your eyes and **make a wish**.

make a wish

[hope for something to happen]



I **have serious misgivings** about this new policy.

have serious misgivings / doubts

[have a strong feeling that something is not right]



She was such a **tattletale** at school.

tattletale (US) / telltale (UK)

[somebody who tells an authority figure when another person has done something wrong]



The best type of publicity is **word of mouth**.

word of mouth

[information or news transmitted by people telling other people]



I want you to tell me the truth, not another **fairy tale**.

fairy tale

[a traditional story with magic, or a story designed to mislead others]



That story about the haunted hotel is just an **urban myth**.

urban myth

[a modern story which is untrue but believed by many]



A black cat is seen as both a **good and bad omen**.

good / bad omen

[a positive / negative sign about something that will happen]



Winning that car was a real **stroke of luck**.

a stroke of luck

[a single piece of good fortune]



Winning that game was just **beginner's luck**.

beginner's luck

[have good fortune the first time you do something]



This is a game of **pure luck**.

pure luck

[good fortune with no skill involved]



I've just read a book about Chinese **folklore**.

folklore

[stories, sayings, and traditions from a certain area or culture]



That generation has a different **set of beliefs** to ours.

set of beliefs

[a group of values]



She has an **unshakable belief** in the goodness of people.

unshakable belief

[a firm and unchangeable conviction]

