



# Fact or superstition?



If you leave a tooth in cola overnight ...	... it'll dissolve by morning.
If you put a coin in a vase ...	... the flowers will live longer.
If the evening sky is red ...	... it'll be sunny the next day.
If a bee stings you ...	... it'll die soon afterwards.
If you break a mirror ...	... you'll have seven years' bad luck.
If you suck blood from a snakebite ...	... you'll survive.
If you eat garlic every day ...	... you'll never get a cold.
If you sleep with a dictionary under your pillow ...	... you'll never forget new vocabulary.
If you wear lots of clothes in the desert ...	... you'll stay cool.
If you talk behind people's backs ...	... you'll soon have no friends.



Unit 3A



Teacher's Notes

# Fact or superstition?

## Interaction

Group work

## Aims

To practice the first conditional.

## Time

25 minutes

## Skills

Speaking

Listening

## Grammar and functions

First conditional

Discussions

## Vocabulary

Superstitions

## Preparation

Photocopy and cut apart one set of cards for each group of four or five students.

## Answers

Sentences are in the correct order on the activity page.

Most sentences are superstitions. However, sentence 1 is partly factual: although the tooth may not dissolve overnight, Coca-Cola and other fizzy drinks are known to be harmful to the teeth as they contain high quantities of sugar. Sentence 4 is partly factual: some bees, e.g. *the worker honey bee*, do die after they have stung something but this is not the case for all bees. Sentence 6 is partly factual: sucking venom from a snake bite can help prevent the venom from spreading but it doesn't guarantee survival, especially from the more poisonous snakes. Sentence 7 is not a fact as there is no real guarantee against colds. However, garlic is recommended to help reduce cholesterol and blood pressure, as an antibiotic that acts against bacteria and as stimulant of the immune system. Sentence 10 is not a proven fact but talking behind someone's back is usually more likely to make enemies than friends.

## Procedure

- 1 Review the first conditional with the class, if necessary. Write part of a sentence on the board, e.g. *If I pass my English exam* or *If I win the lottery*. Elicit phrases from students to complete the sentences, e.g. *If I pass my English exam, I'll go out and celebrate*.
- 2 Put the class into groups of four or five, sitting around a table or desk.
- 3 Give each group a set of cards and tell them to shuffle them and put them face down in the middle of the table.
- 4 Explain that this is a matching game. Students take turns turning over two cards. If they can make a sentence about a fact or a superstition, they keep the cards and take another turn. If not, they replace the cards and the next student has a turn. The person who has the most cards when all the cards have been used is the winner.
- 5 Set a time limit of ten minutes and ask students to start matching the sentences.
- 6 When the time is up, check the answers with the whole class.
- 7 After the game, have the groups discuss whether the sentences they have made are facts or superstitions.

## Additional ideas

Ask students to add their own facts and superstitions to the list.