

Superstition and Faith

Hr. _____

Directions: The chapters "Stockings" and "Church" deal with two kinds of belief: superstition and faith. Many people will deny that their superstitions are as strong as their beliefs, yet if one were to examine their behaviors, one would be inclined to wonder if their denials are valid. Examine your feelings about these two forms of belief. Read and respond to the following questions.

1. Read the first paragraph of "Stockings." In this paragraph the author compares Henry Dobbins to the United States. Give examples that show this to be at least a somewhat accurate picture of our nation and its involvement with nations around the world.
2. Quickly list superstitions held by people you know, even if they joke about them.
3. Why do many hotels not have a thirteenth floor? Why won't many people walk under a ladder?
4. What other behaviors have you noticed about which people joke yet seem a bit nervous? Why are they cautious even though they don't really believe in the superstition?
5. Dobbins believes in the protection of the stockings, and experience seems to reinforce that idea. How do you explain his safety? What evidence do you have that your explanation has validity?
6. The sequence of the two chapters "Stockings" and "Church" is curious, yet the two are connected because the monks relate best to Dobbins. What do those three have in common?
7. Why does Kiowa think that it is wrong to dig their foxholes there? How do you feel about it?