

# SAMPLE INFORMATIVE OUTLINE

Name: Zengelbert Bumbledack  
Type: Informative  
Topic: History behind the Superstition of the Black Cat  
Pattern: Topical  
Purpose: I want my audience to understand the history and meaning behind black cat superstitions.  
Audience: High school speech class—teenagers

- I. Today we will be discussing the origin and history behind the superstition of a black cat crossing your path and what type of luck it may bring.
- II. Before completely understanding the history of the black cat superstitions, we must first focus on the origin of the superstition.
  - A. Cats have been around people for a long time (fact)
  - B. Ancient Egypt did not like black cat (fact)
    1. Goddess Bast was a black cat (fact)
    2. Christians believed cats were demons in disguise (example)
    3. Map of Egypt, goddess and mummified cats (visual aid)
  - C. Other parts of Egypt worshipped cat (contrast)
    1. Mummified cats when they died (example)
    2. Went into mourning when cat died (example)
    3. Description of mummified tombs (description)
    4. Like an eternal pet (simile)
- III. Secondly, not only does the origin of the superstition in Egypt play a key role in its meaning, but it also reflects what type of luck a black cat brings to someone.
  - A. Crossing their path in America
    1. Associated bad luck misfortune (fact)
    2. While driving turn hat backwards (description)
    3. Jen drove 10 miles out of her way (anecdote)
    4. Competition story of black cat bad luck (incident, personal ref)
    5. If you cross cat's path it is the worst of luck (hyperbole)
  - B. Seeing a black cat behind you
    1. Cat is behind you bad luck (fact)
    2. Example of bad luck (example)
  - C. In Germany cats are bad luck
    1. Cat crosses you left to right = bad omen (fact, description)
    2. Cat crossed you right to left = opposite (contrast, description)
- IV. Previously, we focused on the origin and the bad luck associated with black cats, and now in contrast we will examine the good luck a black cat can bring.
  - A. Black cat entering home is lucky (fact)
    1. Story of Cass the cat (incident with description)
    2. Belief that Cass is lucky (opinion)
  - B. Latvian farmers believe cat is good luck (fact)
    1. Cat is sign of Rungis, god of harvest (fact)
    2. Farmers found cat in grain silo (anecdote)
    3. Description of luck (description, simile)
- V. In conclusion, crossing a black cat's path can have multiple meanings.