

Name _____

Idioms

An **idiom** is a group of words that has a different meaning from the literal definition of its parts. Idioms are often colorful expressions used in speech and in informal writing, but they should be used carefully in formal writing.

Examples:

People can *get into hot water* when they speak before they think. (idiom)

People can *make serious mistakes* when they speak before they think.
(better sentence)



Underline the idiom in each sentence. Rewrite the sentence, substituting other words in place of the underlined idioms. Make any changes necessary.

1. For our English assignment, we are to list all the idioms we come across as we read.

2. Because I have spoken English for only three years, understanding idioms is hardly a piece of cake for me. _____

3. Nevertheless, I have come a long way in the past three years.

4. Marta thinks works of modern fiction are the best bet for finding idioms.

5. Because I need to make a good grade, I'm going to take my time finishing the assignment.

6. Marta says I will get the hang of it if I concentrate on the exact meaning of each word.

7. Fortunately, my tutor is willing to bend over backwards to help me improve my English.

8. In the long run, studying idioms will help me to better understand my new language.

9. It is little consolation to know that all the Vietnamese students are in the same boat.

10. We are working diligently to make the most of our new lives in Ontario.

Idioms

Answer Key

Sentences may vary.

1. Come across; For our English assignment, we are to list all the idioms we notice as we read.
2. a piece of cake; Because I have spoken English for only three years, understanding idioms is hardly a simple task for me.
3. come a long way; Nevertheless, I have improved in the past three years.
4. best best; Marta thinks works of modern fiction are the most likely place to find idioms.
5. take my time; Because I need to make a good grade, I'm going to work carefully on the assignment.
6. get the hang of it; Marta says I will do well if I concentrate on the exact meaning of each word.
7. bend over backwards; Fortunately, my tutor is willing to make every effort to help me improve my English.
8. In the long run; Eventually, studying idioms will help me to better understand my new language.
9. in the same boat; It is little consolation to know that all the Vietnamese students have the same problem.
10. make the most; We are working diligently to succeed in our new lives in Ontario.

