

## 18 Animals: idioms, p.40

### A. CATS AND DOGS

A: Trevor and Sue are so arrogant.

B: Yes, they think they're **the cat's whiskers**. [better than everyone else]

A: Do you think he'll get the job?

B: With no qualifications or experience? He **hasn't got a cat in hell's chance!** [no chance at all]

A: It's not fair that we have exams immediately after the school holidays!

B: I know, **it's a dog's life!** [life is hard and unpleasant]

A: I know I don't need the car over the weekend, but I don't want you to use it either.

B: Don't be such a **dog in the manger!** [you're keeping it only so that I can't have it, not because you really want it yourself]

### B. FARM ANIMALS

| idiom                                       | example                                                                                                | meaning                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| flog a dead horse                           | You're <b>flogging a dead horse</b> trying to persuade Kim to move house again.                        | wasting time trying to do something that won't succeed (usually used in continuous tenses) |
| (straight) from the horse's mouth           | Guess what? Juan is going to work in Moscow! I got it <b>straight from the horse's mouth!</b>          | from the person concerned                                                                  |
| until the cows come home                    | You can argue <b>until the cows come home</b> but I'll never agree.                                    | for a very long time                                                                       |
| sort (out) the sheep from the goats         | Setting the class such a difficult exercise will certainly <b>sort the sheep from the goats</b> .      | find the people or things of high quality from a group of mixed quality                    |
| might as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb | You're already late, so just take all day off. You <b>might as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb!</b> | might as well do something more serious as you are going to be punished anyway             |

### C. WILD ANIMALS

*In these conversations, the second speaker uses an idiom to repeat and sum up what the first speaker says.*

A: The president's just pretending to be upset about the situation, don't you think?

B: Yes, he's **shedding crocodile tears** to get popular support.

A: Thomas was really upset when his team let in an own goal.

B: Yes, he was **sick as a parrot**, wasn't he?

A: Ana's hoping that Carlos will stop gambling once they're married, but I doubt he will.

B: No, **a leopard can't change its spots**.

A: He complained his business was about to fail so often that no one believed him when it finally did.

B: Yes, he **cried wolf** once too often.

A: He looks kind and gentle but he's not like that at all.

B: You're right. He really is **a wolf in sheep's clothing**.

A: I'm sure everyone is thinking about the divorce, but no one ever mentions it.

B: That's right. It's certainly **the elephant in the room**.

## Exercises, p.41

### 18.1 Complete each dialogue with an idiom. Don't forget to write articles where necessary!

- A. She obviously thinks she looks really good in that new dress, doesn't she?  
B. Yes, she thinks she's \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. Things are pretty hard for you at the moment, I guess.  
B. Yes, it's \_\_\_\_\_!
- A. Do you think you'll pass your driving test?  
C. No, I haven't got \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. Her husband is so selfish, he never shares anything, even if he doesn't want it.  
B. Yes, he has a real \_\_\_\_\_ attitude.

### 18.2 Which idioms do these pictures make you think of? Write the idioms in the boxes provided below the pictures.

1




3




5




2




4




6




### 18.3 Complete each idiom. Write ONE word in each gap.

- He's \_\_\_\_\_ a dead \_\_\_\_\_ trying to revive that old idea.
- He'll never stop causing trouble – a \_\_\_\_\_ can't change its \_\_\_\_\_.
- Luc will argue with you about that until the \_\_\_\_\_ come \_\_\_\_\_.
- He was \_\_\_\_\_ as a \_\_\_\_\_ not to make the finals.
- Let's stay out a bit longer. We might as well be hung for a \_\_\_\_\_ as a \_\_\_\_\_.

### 18.4 Replace the underlined part of each sentence with an idiom and write it in the gap left.

- Don't pretend there is an emergency \_\_\_\_\_ or no one will help when you really need it.
- The minister pretends to be upset \_\_\_\_\_ about homelessness, but does nothing about it.
- I hate our neighbours' selfish \_\_\_\_\_ attitude – they don't want the parking space but they won't let us have it.
- We can discuss it for a very long time \_\_\_\_\_, but I won't change my mind.