7 Vocabulary | learning: idioms and phrasal verbs

1 **a** Which subjects do you associate with the sentences below?

1 I read five novels a week. I'm a complete **bookworm**. *Literature*
2 I **haven't got a clue** about Algebra.
3 The question about bacteria was so difficult. I just **made a wild guess.**
4 I **know** Puccini's operas **inside out**.
5 Simon always gets good grades for his paintings. He's **the teacher's pet.**
6 My teacher **gave me a hand** with my essay about African deserts.
7 I **passed** the vocabulary test **with flying colours.**
8 Learning the table of elements was **a piece of cake!**

b Match the words and phrases in **bold** in the sentences (1–8) in exercise 1a with the definitions (a–h).

a helped someone
b very easy
c don't know anything about something
d the teacher's favourite student
e know a subject or topic very well
f a person who reads a lot of books
g gave an answer without thinking about it (the answer may be completely wrong)
h did very well indeed in an exam

2 Which idioms from exercise 1 do the pictures illustrate?

3 Look at the Lifelong learning box and follow the instructions.

The history of words

! Knowing the origin of an idiom can often help you remember it.

Work in pairs.

Student A: look at page 149.

Student B: look at page 150.

Read about the origin of some idioms. Then tell your partner about them.

Lifelong learning

4 **a** Match the phrasal verbs in **bold** in the sentences (1–5) with their definitions (a–e).

1 I **picked up** a lot of new words when I visited Poland last summer.
2 I need to **brush up on** the theories of Nietzsche and Sartre.
3 I always used to **mess around** in lessons. The teacher got really cross.
4 The exam is in a couple of weeks. I must **get down to** some work.
5 I found the course really difficult. Luckily I **got through** the exam.

a passed
b learned something without trying
c start doing something which needs time or energy
d do things which are silly or not useful
e practise something so you are as good at it as you used to be

b Complete the phrasal verbs with the correct particle(s).

1 I always find it hard to get _____ revising.
2 Stop messing _____ and get ready!
3 Joe watched how they did it to see if he could pick _____ any tips.
4 I must brush _____ my Polish before I go to Warsaw next month.
5 You'll never get _____ the exam if you don't work harder.

5 **a** Choose five of the sentences below and complete them so that they are true for you.

1 I know _____ inside out.
2 I haven't got a clue about _____ .
3 I picked up some _____ .
4 I sometimes make a wild guess if _____ .
5 I've learned _____ by heart.
6 _____ is a piece of cake!
7 I need to brush up on _____ .
8 The teacher's pet in my _____ class was _____ .
9 The last time I gave someone a hand was _____ .

b Work in pairs and discuss your sentences.