

84 Idioms (2)

A Commenting on a situation

Some idioms are commonly used to express an opinion about a situation.

I can borrow money if necessary, but that would be a **last resort**.

If I could get a job in TV, it would be a **dream come true**.

We enjoyed Cyprus and, **as a matter of fact**, we think we'll go back next year.

I haven't got a chance of getting that job, but never mind – **that's life**.

Don't worry about your keys. **As it happens**, I have a spare set in my office.

It's a lovely flat. **If only** I had £1m to spend on a place to live.

You can eat what you like and drinks are free. **Sounds too good to be true**, doesn't it?

The place is full now. It's a **good thing** we got here early.

I would've gone to the match **but for** the weather.

Carla wouldn't admit her mistake because she didn't want to **lose face**.

GLOSSARY

(as) a last/final resort an action you will take if there is no other option **SYN if all else fails**

a dream come true a wish or hope that becomes a reality
as a matter of fact used to add a comment on sth that you have just said, often sth you think will be interesting and possibly surprising

that's life inf used when you are disappointed about sth but know you must accept it

as it happens used when you say sth surprising, or sth connected with what sb else has just said

if only

used to say that you wish sth was true or that sth had happened

(sound) too good to be true

used to say that you cannot believe that sth is as good as it seems

be a good thing (that) ...

be lucky that ... **SYN be a good job that ...**

but for sth/sb
lose face

if it were not for sth/sb be less respected or look stupid because of sth you have done

1 Write the last word in each of these idioms.

- | | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|----------------|
| 1 if all else | 3 it's a dream come | 5 too good to be | 7 if |
| 2 as a matter of | 4 lose | 6 as it | 8 a last |

2 Replace the underlined words with an idiom that keeps the same meaning.

- I wish I had more time.
- It's very fortunate we booked the tickets last week.
- If I get to the final, it will be everything I've always wanted.
- I may not be selected for the team, but I just have to accept that.
- Toby knows he's wrong but he won't admit it because he doesn't want to look stupid.
- I can always sell my flat if there are no other options.
- He would've played last week if it had not been for his injury.
- He was born yesterday. And it will surprise you that, they've named him after you.

3 Complete the idioms / set phrases in these dialogues.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 I'm afraid they gave you the wrong price. | ~ Right. I thought it sounded |
| 2 Can you raise the money for the trip? | ~ Not sure. I may have to use my savings as |
| 3 Are you disappointed you couldn't buy the flat? | ~ Yes I am, but |
| 4 We're going to be stuck here for hours! | ~ Oh, I'd brought a book to read. |
| 5 The shop will have to close. | ~ Yes, it would have survived the high rent. |
| 6 You haven't got a small screwdriver, have you? | ~ Well, I have. |
| 7 It looks as if it's going to rain. | ~ Yes, it's I brought my umbrella. |
| 8 Do you think you can win? | ~ I'd love to. It would be a |



TEST YOURSELF

B Adding tone and emphasis

Some idioms are used to add extra politeness or emphasis, and to prepare the listener for what you are going to say.

<i>Do you know if they're married, by any chance?</i>	used especially in questions to ask if sth is true or possible
<i>I wouldn't mind a cup of tea, if it's no trouble.</i>	used to say politely that you would very much like sth / to do sth
<i>I'd love to go. The (only) thing is, I promised to help my dad in the garden.</i>	used to introduce an explanation, and often one that suggests there is a problem
<i>I didn't like it at all. / I'm not at all keen on it.</i>	used to emphasize a negative statement (used after a verb but before or after an adjective)
<i>You should read it. It's by far his best book.</i>	used to emphasize what you are saying
<i>Smoking is very bad for your health, not to mention the cost.</i>	used to introduce extra information and emphasize what you are saying
<i>Guess what! Ed and Sal are moving to Kenya.</i>	used before giving sb surprising or exciting news
<i>Believe it or not, he asked if he could live with us.</i>	inf used to introduce information which is true but surprising
<i>He's been working since 7 o'clock this morning, so no wonder he's tired.</i>	inf used to emphasize the fact that sth is not surprising
<i>Where on earth did you get those boots?</i>	used after <i>wh-</i> questions to indicate surprise, and sometimes annoyance, about sth
<i>I'd like to ask you a few questions, if you don't mind.</i>	used to check that sb does not object to sth that you want to do, or ask sb politely to do sth SYN if you wouldn't mind
<i>The room is empty but, for some reason, we're not allowed to use it.</i>	used to say, often with slight annoyance, you don't know the reason for sth or don't understand it

4 Cross out one wrong word in each sentence.

- That's by very far the worst article.
- Believe it or believe not, he's a politician.
- The only bad thing is, I can't afford to go.
- Guess you what – I'm getting married.
- Who on the earth gave you that tie?
- I'd like to borrow this if that you don't mind.
- He's bad at the job, not to be mention lazy.
- I wouldn't really mind a lift, if that's OK.

5 Complete the idiom or set phrase in each sentence.

- what! I've got a new job.
- I'd love to go to Brazil in December, but the is, my exams are in January.
- What on are you doing here this morning? It's Saturday!
- I made a special trip to the post office, but for reason, they closed early.
- I'm not hungry, but I mind a glass of water if that's OK.
- He won all his matches, so no he's delighted.
- Have you got any string I could use by any?
- The book was great, but I wasn't at impressed with the film; it was far too long.

6 Add a suitable idiom or set phrase to these sentences.

- It didn't work.
- Do you know if it's open?
- Melinda's going to marry a famous pop star.
- Why are you wearing gloves in the summer?
- Jacob looks about 20, but he's only 13.
- He's been very ill, so he looks thin.
- They have a large apartment here, a farm in Wales and a house on the coast.
- We said we were members, but they wouldn't let us in.
- It is his most violent film.
- I'd like to know more about your background.



TEST YOURSELF