

IFL IDIOMS PRACTICE TEST 1

Choose the correct meaning of the following idioms.

1. The sky grew darker and darker, and of a sudden, it started to rain cats and dogs. We ran quickly to the petrol station nearby to take shelter.
A. rain heavily B. rain slightly C. rain steadily D. rain incessantly
2. A college student's life is not a bed of roses, you know. You have to do a lot of reading and complete a lot of homework and assignments in order to pass all the courses.
A. stepping stone
B. challenge
C. myth
D. a pleasant situation
3. I don't know about you. You may believe what he has just said, but to me, it's nonsense. It's a cock and bull story.
A. a plausible story
B. an amusing story
C. an inspiring story
D. a silly and incredible story
4. I can see that you always listen to and do everything he says. If I were you, I would be very careful. Everyone says he is a snake in the grass.
A. a mysterious person
B. an aggressive person
C. an untrustworthy person
D. a good-for-nothing person
5. Childhood education costs an arm and a leg these days. Parents pay more for their children's preschool education than for their college education.
A. is extremely expensive
B. is fairly expensive
C. is compulsory
D. is affordable
6. You know what. Your son looks very much like you. He even behaves like you do. He's really a chip off the old block, isn't he?
A. His appearance and personality are like his parent's
B. His values are more or less the same as his parent's
C. His view is the same as his parent's
D. He is an obedient child
7. Investigators have been on a wild goose chase, looking for a woman who may already be dead.
A. hunting a wild goose
B. working hard on the murder case
C. searching for something in vain
D. searching for and following the clues

8. Many of the gangs **are armed to the teeth**. It's dangerous for police to go against them. Cracking crime is a life-threatening job for police forces.
- A. are hired by illegal businessmen
 - B. are carrying a lot of weapons
 - C. have financial backing from terrorists
 - D. are brutal and ruthless
9. Some people think that the government's **eye-for-an-eye** justice could lead to further human rights abuses.
- A. retaliation
 - B. criminal
 - C. non-racist
 - D. indiscriminate
10. If I put my prices up, it's like **biting the hand that feeds me** - it's economic suicide. My customers will take their business elsewhere.
- A. attracting my customers
 - B. overcharging my customers
 - C. being grateful to my customers
 - D. being ungrateful to my customers
11. He should have disowned his ungrateful daughter, who brought the family nothing but shame and scandals. On the contrary, he still forgave her for her wrongdoing. You know what they say, **blood is thicker than water**.
- A. family reputation is more important than family relationships
 - B. family relationships are more important than any other kind
 - C. family honor is more important than family relationships
 - D. family reputation is tarnished by parents' indulgence
12. Judging from her nervous look, I knew that she was new at the party. I tried to **break the ice** by offering her a drink, but she said no.
- A. take my courage in both hands
 - B. put some ice in a glass
 - C. hide my nervousness
 - D. talk to her first
13. She wants to become a famous pop singer like her idol, but her ambition is just a dream. She will never become one, for she doesn't have a beautiful singing voice. It's like **building castles in the air**.
- A. daydreaming
 - B. a nightmare
 - C. foolish pride
 - D. going to heaven
14. The police are going to get these bad guys, **by hook or by crook**. These criminals are not going to escape from the law enforcement officers.
- A. by fair or foul means
 - B. by luring them into a trap
 - C. by planting a mole in their gang
 - D. by getting information from an informant

15. There is no need for such a prestigious higher education institution like your school to advertise. Many students have learned about your school by word of mouth.
- A. by hearing about it from other people
 - B. by listening to the radio advertisement
 - C. by watching the TV commercial
 - D. by reading the school's leaflet
16. My grandmother is 86, but she is fit as a fiddle. Many people are curious to find out about her healthy lifestyle.
- A. physically frail
 - B. mentally senile
 - C. completely healthy
 - D. getting more forgetful
17. Well, there's another fifty dollars down the drain. It's high time you stopped playing this card game; otherwise, you will lose all of your money.
- A. saved
 - B. wasted
 - C. earned
 - D. won
18. After lunch, the farmer lied down under a shady sugar palm tree and, in the twinkling of an eye, he dozed off.
- A. very quickly
 - B. very slowly
 - C. feeling sleepy
 - D. closing his eyes
19. He got stuck in the traffic for half an hour. Finally, he arrived at the airport, checked in, and managed to board the plane just in the nick of time. The airport staff was about to close the departure gate.
- A. behind schedule
 - B. only just in time
 - C. safe and sound
 - D. running out of time
20. Everyone in the village was in the same boat during the severe, prolonged drought. They all went hungry and waited desperately for emergency famine relief.
- A. in protest
 - B. in trouble
 - C. in need
 - D. in the same situation