Exercises

8.1 **Match the beginning of each idiom on the left with its ending on the right.**

1	left holding the	☐	a wall
2	brick	☐	b block
3	stumbling	☐	c music
4	dire	☐	d baby
5	draw a	☐	e barrel
6	have you over a	☐	f straits
7	face the	☐	g blank

8.2 **Put the words in the right order and make sentences.**

1 done / said / Easier / than
2 too / to / Try / spread / thin / not / yourself
3 I / I / foot / it / wish / my / put / hadn't / in
4 a / life / older / of / Getting / fact / is
5 straits / The / is / company / dire / in
6 life / primary / facts / of / the / Children / taught / in / school / are

8.3 **Which idioms do these pictures make you think of?**

1 

3 

5 

2 

4 

6 

8.4 **Complete each of these idioms with one word.**

1 You'd better stop talking or you'll dig yourself into a deeper _____.
2 I hoped I'd find the address I needed in the library, but I drew a _____.
3 If you take on any more work, you'll be spreading yourself far too _____.
4 Stranded on the island with no money and no luggage, we were well aware that we were in dire _____.
5 The police explored a number of leads, but each time they came up against a brick _____.
6 Not having enough savings to set up a business was a major stumbling _____.
7 I wish I could leave my job, but they've got me over a _____.

Over to you

Magazines often have articles about people's problems or question and answer pages dealing with problems of different kinds. Find an article or a question and answer page like this and make a note of any idioms that you find there.

ESLPRINTABLES.COM WORKSHEETS

Exercises

9.1 **Match each idiom on the left with its definition on the right.**

1	tie up loose ends	☐	a understand and deal with something
2	come to light	☐	b try something
3	give something a shot	☐	c find an easy solution
4	get to grips with something	☐	d just in case
5	make do	☐	e finish off final little tasks
6	to be on the safe side	☐	f uncover the truth
7	wave a magic wand	☐	g manage with something of worse quality
8	get to the bottom of something	☐	h be discovered

9.2 **Complete each of these idioms with one word.**

1 I've been busy at work, but I can see the light at the end of the _____ now.
2 Sarah wanted to _____ a magic wand and make her son happy again.
3 Just wait while I tie up these _____ ends, then I'll go to the match with you.
4 When her parents gave her some money, it was like the answer to her _____ .
5 I've never tried yoga before, but I'd be happy to give _____ a shot.
6 The job isn't in the _____ till you've had an offer in writing.
7 This research may shed fresh _____ on the causes of asthma in children.
8 As I listened to the evidence, everything began to _____ into place.

9.3 **Complete each sentence with an idiom from the box. Make any other necessary changes.**

bring to light	come to light	fall into place	get to grips with	get to the bottom of
give it a whirl	pick up the pieces	shed light on		

1 I'd like to try that new bowling alley. Let's _____ this evening.
2 I'm finding it quite hard _____ my new role at work.
3 When the business failed, Paul vanished, leaving his partner _____ .
4 Some important new evidence _____ in the last few days.
5 I hope that we'll be able _____ what's been going on.
6 New medical research _____ the causes of heart attacks.
7 As soon as I met Joshua's family, everything _____ .
8 In the investigation into their accounts, a number of errors _____ .

9.4 **Match each statement on the left with the most likely response on the right.**

1	I'll wash your car for you!	☐	a OK, just to be on the safe side.
2	Let's go home now.	☐	b If only I could wave a magic wand!
3	The job's in the bag!	☐	c You're the answer to my prayers!
4	We'd better take umbrellas.	☐	d Soon. I've still got some loose ends to tie up.
5	Can you make do with a pencil?	☐	e I hope you're right!
6	We just don't know what to do!	☐	f Sure, that'll do fine.

9.5 **Which idioms do these pictures make you think of?**

1 

2 

3 

LIVE WORKSHEETS

Exercises

7.1 Complete these idioms with prepositions.

1 His company has gone _____ strength _____ strength in the last six months. He's making a lot of money now.
2 The flood ruined our old kitchen, but it was a blessing _____ disguise, because the insurance company paid for a completely new one.
3 This new model is not the be-all-and-end-all _____ digital cameras, but it certainly has many technical features that others do not have.
4 Your offer to drive us to the airport makes all the difference _____ our travel plans.
5 Your plan to persuade Lela to join the committee worked _____ magic.

7.2 Use the idioms from exercise 7.1 to rewrite the underlined parts of the sentences.

1 At first we thought the new road would spoil our village, but in fact it <u>was a positive development</u> and the village shops are doing more business.
2 I sprayed the stain remover onto my jacket and it <u>had an immediate positive result</u>. (Give two answers.)
3 This is not <u>the absolute best and most complete</u> cookery book, but it does have recipes from 100 different countries.
4 The school <u>has got better and better</u> since the new head teacher took over.
5 Getting new curtains has <u>changed</u> my flat <u>in a positive way</u>. It feels like a new one.

7.3 Who would be most likely to say these remarks? Choose the correct answer.

1 It left its mark on me.
a) someone who had just spilt red wine over themselves
b) someone who taught in a very bad school for ten years
c) someone who had a wonderful birthday party

2 I'm a victim of my own success.
a) someone who won a lot of money then spent it all
b) a student who always passes every exam they take
c) a popular teacher whose class everyone wants to be in

3 I don't think I'll ever hit the big time.
a) a rock musician who is popular in local clubs
b) an athlete who has just got a place in an Olympic team
c) a dentist with a very heavy schedule of appointments

4 Work isn't the be-all-and-end-all in my life.
a) someone who is unemployed
b) someone who has a lot of interesting hobbies
c) someone who never finishes a job they start

7.4 Complete each of these idioms.

1 The photocopier has completely _____ _____ the ghost. We need a new one.
2 I didn't think I _____ _____ ghost of a _____ of passing the exam, but I did.
3 My new motorbike _____ _____ a dream; it's fast, but so smooth and quiet.

7.5 Answer these questions.

1 If you make a go of something, do you succeed or fail?
2 What should you remember about the grammar of the idiom *go places*?
3 What could you write in your vocabulary notebook about the use of *be-all-and-end-all*?

LIVEWORKSHEETS