



# IDIOM

## UNIT 2

### Exercise 1

Complete the sentences with the words in the box. Some of the sentences have more than one answer.

head | mind | brain | thought | brains

- 1 Do you have the memory of an elephant or a \_\_\_\_\_ like a sieve?
- 2 You are mad. Totally, completely and utterly off your \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3 He was behaving as if he was out of his \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 The previous chapters will already have given you plenty of food for \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5 Off the top of your \_\_\_\_\_, what do you know about Vitamin C?
- 6 Rack your \_\_\_\_\_ and tell me everything you now about him.

### Exercise 2

Decide if the following sentences are true (T) or false (F).

- 1 If something crosses your mind, you forget about it. ☐
- 2 If something rings a bell, it reminds you of something. ☐
- 3 If you have a gut reaction to something, you have spent a long time thinking about it. ☐
- 4 If you say something off the top of your head, you are very strange and dangerous. ☐
- 5 If something is food for thought, it makes you think. ☐
- 6 If you are racking your brain, you aren't thinking very hard. ☐

### Exercise 3

Choose the best answer to complete the sentences.

- 1 'Do you know anyone called Frascati?' – 'Well the name \_\_\_\_\_.'  
a racks my brains      b rings a bell      c is miles away
- 2 'Dr Barth, what is the greatest single thought that ever \_\_\_\_\_?'  
a rang a bell      b racked your brains      c crossed your mind
- 3 'You don't know anyone else who might be free?' – 'Not \_\_\_\_\_, no.'  
a on the tip of my tongue      b crossing my mind      c off the top of my head
- 4 I'm just trying to remember his name; it's \_\_\_\_\_.  
a racking my brains      b on the tip of my tongue      c crossing my mind
- 5 'Did you ask me a question? I'm sorry, I was \_\_\_\_\_.'  
a miles away      b out of my mind      c ringing a bell
- 6 Someone mentioned this point recently and I'm \_\_\_\_\_ to think who it was.  
a out of my mind      b racking my brains      c bearing it in mind

### Exercise 4

Correct the idioms in these sentences.

- 1 Business has been very bad and the management seem to have racked the plot.
- 2 You can withdraw money at other banks but bear in thought that they might charge a handling fee.
- 3 You are off your mind if you think I'll help you commit a crime!
- 4 Off the top of his mind, he couldn't think of an excuse she would believe.
- 5 The after-dinner speaker provided us with plenty of thought food.
- 6 Her name was on the top of my tongue, but I just couldn't get it.
- 7 Personally, I trust my gut action to tell me when I'm right.
- 8 It crossed my head that I hadn't heard the children for a while.

#### Exercise 5

Choose the most appropriate thing A–H to say in each situation 1–8.

- |                                                                                                                                           |                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 1 Someone gives you a useful tip for your next trip abroad.                                                                               | A It has crossed my mind.                   |
| 2 You're telling someone about a thought-provoking talk you've just heard.                                                                | B You're out of your mind!                  |
| 3 A friend has just told you about an extreme sport he wants to try and you think it's too dangerous.                                     | C It's on the tip of my tongue.             |
| 4 You're trying hard to remember the answer to a quiz question.                                                                           | D The name rings a bell.                    |
| 5 A friend has mentioned someone's name and asked you if you know that person. You aren't sure but the name sounds familiar.              | E Sorry, I was miles away.                  |
| 6 You realize that you haven't been listening to something a friend has been telling you, because you were thinking about something else. | F It's certainly given me food for thought. |
| 7 You have to explain why you burst out laughing when you saw your photo in the paper.                                                    | G Thanks, I'll keep it in mind.             |
| 8 Someone asks you if you have ever thought about working abroad.                                                                         | H It was just a gut reaction.               |

#### Exercise 6

Complete the table with idioms from this unit.

|                            |         |
|----------------------------|---------|
| remembering and forgetting | 1 _____ |
|                            | 2 _____ |
|                            | 3 _____ |
|                            | 4 _____ |
|                            | 5 _____ |
| thinking                   | 1 _____ |
|                            | 2 _____ |
|                            | 3 _____ |
|                            | 4 _____ |
| not thinking logically     | 1 _____ |
|                            | 2 _____ |
|                            | 3 _____ |
|                            | 4 _____ |

#### Your turn!

Have you had trouble remembering something in the last few days? Use the idioms from this unit to describe your experience. For example:

*I couldn't remember the Italian word for butterfly yesterday although it was on the tip of my tongue.*

*Sometimes I have a mind like a sieve and by the afternoon, I can't recall anything from my morning lessons.*



Fortunately, she knew he had **a mind like a sieve**.