



IDIOM UNIT 6

Exercise 1

Complete the sentences with the words in the box.

over | up | together | in | on | under

- 1 I phoned to give you a pat _____ the back for saving the situation.
- 2 Let's put our heads _____ and think of some people who could help.
- 3 As we're both _____ the same boat, it might be sensible to work together.
- 4 Most parents bend _____ backwards to treat their children equally.
- 5 Jane took us _____ her wing and showed us around.
- 6 I try to think positively and keep my chin _____.

Exercise 2

Choose the best answer to complete the sentences.

Exercise 3

Answer the questions.

- 1 If you take someone under your wing, do you ignore or help them?
- 2 If you keep your chin up, are you being cheerful or miserable?
- 3 If you give someone a pat on the back, should they be pleased or offended?
- 4 If you bend over backwards, are you ignoring someone or trying to help them?
- 5 If someone lends you a hand, are you being helpful, or are they being helpful to you?
- 6 If you hold someone's hand in a difficult situation, do you need help or do you give help?

Exercise 4

Re-order the phrases to make sentences. Add punctuation where necessary.

- 1 women candidates / bends over backwards / to attract / the party
- 2 learn that / girls and boys / give and take / there must be / in all relationships
- 3 lend a hand with / the whole family / the harvest / has to
- 4 they must / sensible decision / in order to reach a / put their heads together
- 5 for you / you know / be there / I'll always
- 6 choose to / what should we / look the other way / do if our elected representatives



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Exercise 5

Match idioms 1–8 with definitions A–H.

1 Keep your chin up. I'm sure everything will be alright in the end.	A do everything possible to help
2 If we put our heads together, we'll come up with a solution.	B in an identical situation
3 You must have made a good impression on the manager – he was singing your praises!	C stay optimistic
4 The trouble is, so many of us look the other way when we realize there's a problem.	D support him
5 I know how you feel. I'm in the same boat as you.	E being complimentary about you
6 His parents bend over backwards for him but they get no thanks.	F deliberately ignore the situation
7 I'll do what I can for him just now but I can't hold his hand forever.	G someone who is helpful and supportive
8 My husband has been a tower of strength throughout this ordeal.	H work as a team

Exercise 6

Use sentences A–H to answer questions 1–8.

- 1 Who was a kind and supportive mother?
- 2 Who likes to find a compromise?
- 3 Who was given a generous welcome?
- 4 Who found someone to help him?
- 5 Who is rather pleased with what he has done?
- 6 Who was a kind and supportive father?
- 7 Who is managing to remain cheerful?
- 8 Who thinks that other people have similar problems?

- A Rakesh gave himself a pat on the back for finishing early.
- B Smith and Burnet's policy with customers who complain is to try to meet them halfway.
- C Mr Chang took Ewen under his wing and treated him like a son.
- D Lisa told herself there were plenty of girls in the same boat as her.
- E Sven returned from New York singing the praises of American hospitality.
- F Sasha hasn't found a job yet, but she's keeping her chin up.
- G Maria was a pillar of strength when her children had so many problems.
- H Manuelle held his son's hand throughout his marriage break-up.

Your turn!

Use the idioms in this unit to describe how someone has helped or encouraged you, or how you have helped someone else. For example:

I'm finding the grammar classes really difficult but it helps to know we're all in the same boat.

My colleagues and I put our heads together and submitted the winning proposal.

