



IDIOM

UNIT 7

Exercise 1

Choose the best answer to complete the sentences.

- 1 Come to our arts and crafts evening and try your _____ at something different.
a nose b heart c hand
- 2 Don't stick your _____ into matters that don't concern you.
a ears b nose c hand
- 3 Everyone stayed late yesterday – we're up to our _____ in work at the office.
a hearts b ears c noses
- 4 The rebuilding of the church organ was a real labour of _____.
a love b heart c business
- 5 The new committee at the sports club are making lots of changes and they really mean _____.
a heart b labour c business
- 6 We believe that the judge is fair and has no _____ to grind.
a axe b bandwagon c appetite

Exercise 2

Match sentence halves 1–6 with A–F to make complete sentences.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 It looks as though more and more companies | A wasn't in the picture at all. |
| 2 I knew karate and had | B my heart wasn't in it. |
| 3 I congratulated the winners but | C the ability to steer clear of danger. |
| 4 I never wanted to be famous and I like | D will soon be leaping on the bandwagon. |
| 5 He has decided that art history | E to keep a low profile. |
| 6 He spoke as if I had nothing to do with it, as though I | F is not his cup of tea. |

Exercise 3

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

- 1 If you have an axe to grind, you have certain attitudes that are based on personal experience. ☐
- 2 If you jump on the bandwagon, you don't want to follow others in becoming involved in an activity. ☐
- 3 If you steer clear of something, you want to get involved. ☐
- 4 If you are up to your ears in something, you are very busy or involved. ☐
- 5 If someone is a nosey parker, they want to know more information than they need. ☐
- 6 If you keep a low profile, you want to become visibly involved in something. ☐

Exercise 4

Read the sentences and choose the best explanation.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 His heart isn't really in it.
a He hates it. | b He isn't completely happy with it. |
| 2 I'm going to try my hand at pottery.
a I'm going to see what it's like. | b I'm not going to continue doing it. |
| 3 It really sounds as if he means business.
a I think he's serious about it. | b I don't think he's serious about it. |
| 4 I made this card myself. It was a real labour of love.
a It didn't take long | b I worked very hard at it. |
| 5 I don't want to poke my nose into your business.
a I respect your privacy. | b I want to be involved. |
| 6 I'd steer clear of that issue, if I were you.
a I'd get involved. | b I would avoid it. |



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Exercise 5

Replace the underlined words with the correct idioms in the box.

really my cup of tea | up to my ears | jump on the bandwagon | steer clear of | mean business
have an axe to grind

Pat: Hi, George. How are you?

George: Hi, Pat. I've been ¹very busy for the last few months. We've taken on a lot of new clients. One of our main competitors, has been expanding rapidly. It's clear that they ²are really serious about succeeding. So my boss has decided to ³follow the trend and start expanding too. I don't ⁴have a problem about the extra work, but we just don't have enough staff to deal with it all.

Pat: You should ask for a promotion.

George: I would, but then they'd expect me to work even longer hours! So I'm going to ⁵avoid that. Anyway, I've been thinking about a career change. I'm beginning to think that software development is ⁶not something I enjoy.

Exercise 6

Correct the idioms in these sentences.

- 1 I'm going to steer a low profile and hope nobody asks me to volunteer for anything at the committee meeting.
- 2 You certainly look like you mean to do business with your rubber gloves and apron on!
- 3 I wish people wouldn't poke their sticks into my business.
- 4 I think I'll just jump on the picture and start my diet with the rest of you.
- 5 It's probably best to jump clear of the city centre during the rush hour.
- 6 I've decided I'm going to try my heart at DIY and redecorate my room.
- 7 My trip to America the previous year had whetted my nose for foreign travel.
- 8 It's amazing how much information a serious nosy profile can find out.

Exercise 7

Complete the sentences with idioms from this unit, changing the verb and pronoun forms if necessary.

- 1 Writing this book has been a great pleasure, a true _____.
- 2 He arrived at precisely nine o'clock, wearing workmen's boots and carrying his tool kit, so we knew he _____.
- 3 She did nothing to draw attention to herself, trying to _____.
- 4 I always try to write the same amount about each of the political parties – I don't _____.
- 5 If you want people to respect you, don't _____ their private affairs.
- 6 In the interview with Sir Allan, I _____ any questions relating to the court case.
- 7 After advertising six vacancies, they are now _____ in applications forms.
- 8 _____ at deep sea fishing or take a course in scuba diving. Beginners welcome!

Your turn!

Use the idioms in this unit to describe your involvement or interest in things in your life. For example:

I'm keeping a low profile at college because I haven't completed my assignment.

There's a concert tonight but rock music isn't really my cup of tea.



He decided that dog walking was just not his cup of tea.