

Language review
Idioms



A Complete these idioms with the missing words from the box.

point bush grapevine stick wavelength wires
nutshell picture tail purposes

- a) to put it in a
- b) to get straight to the
- c) to hear it on the
- d) to put you in the
- e) to get the wrong end of the
- f) to be on the same
- g) can't make head or of it
- h) to talk at cross
- i) to beat about the
- j) to get our crossed

B Which of the idioms in Exercise A mean the following?

- 1 to fail to understand anything
- 2 to share similar opinions and ideas
- 3 to summarise briefly
- 4 to misunderstand
- 5 to delay talking about something
- 6 to give the latest information
- 7 to talk about the most important thing
- 8 to hear about something passed from one person to another

- 1. To put it in a nutshell
- 2. To get straight to the point
- 3. To hear it on the grapevine
- 4. To put you in the picture
- 5. To get the wrong end of the stick
- 6. To be on the same wavelength
- 7. Can't make head or tail of it
- 8. To talk at cross purposes
- 9. To beat about the bush
- 10. To get our wires crossed

C Complete the sentences with the idioms from Exercise A.

- 1 OK, I'll I'm afraid we're going to have to let you go.
- 2 'You and your boss seem to agree on most things.' 'Yes, we are
- 3 Some important decisions were taken at yesterday's meeting. Let me
- 4 I think we are I mean next month, not this month.
- 5 He never gives you a straight answer. He's always
- 6 I that he's been fired. Is it true?
- 7 It's a very complicated system, but to it works exactly like a big kettle.
- 8 If you think our biggest problem is market share then you have
- 9 This report makes no sense at all. I
- 10 Everyone arrived for the meeting at different times. We must have

D Ask your partner the following questions.

- 1 What have you heard on the grapevine recently?
- 2 When was the last time you got the wrong end of the stick?
- 3 When is it necessary to put someone in the picture?
- 4 In what situations is it good to beat about the bush?
- 5 In what situations is it good to get straight to the point?
- 6 Can you give an example of when you were talking at cross purposes?
- 7 Is there anything you can't make head or tail of?