



The Write Tribe

Read the stories and do the idioms exercise below.

STORY 1 : On the ball

Vera had been distracted since the beginning of her basketball game. She is a good player. However, today her focus was off. Noticing Vera's distraction, her coach looked her in the eyes and said, "Vera keep your eyes on the ball or we will lose the game!"

Not wanting to let her team down, Vera was on the ball for the rest of the game. Eventually, they won!

The term 'On the ball' originated from ball games. The full saying is, 'Keep your eyes on the ball!'

As long as the player focuses on the ball, it would not go to the opposing team. On the ball also means doing a good job!

STORY 2 : Pull someone's leg

Li Yuan was at it again! It was April Fools Day and he wanted to trick his sister, Cecilia. "Hey Cecilia!" he cooed. Perplexed, Cecilia looked up to him. "I see you have two horns on your head!" Li Yuan laughed. "What!" Cecilia screeched and ran towards the mirror. Nothing was wrong with her head. "I was only pulling your leg!" Li Yuan laughed. Incensed, Cecilia took her light saber, bought from The Write Store and kicked Li Yuan to outer-space. Legend says, Li Yuan is still roaming in space.

This idiom originated in England in the 1800s. Street robbers used to 'pull someone's leg' using a wire which would cause the person to trip up. When they were on the floor, another street robber would steal the victim's money and valuables. Over time, people started to trip each other up as a way of making them stumble, knock into other people and look foolish.

STORY 3 : Pull yourself together

Yong Kit has been working all week to learn how to make a toy aeroplane. Everything was perfect. He stepped back to marvel at his own handiwork. He decided to take a picture of his plane and share with his friends. Just as he took his camera, he tripped and fell on his plane. It smashed into smithereens. Yong Kit became so angry that he started throwing anything he could find. Soon his house looked like it was attacked by a tornado. Just then, Teacher Maha waltzed in, "Yong Kit, pull yourself together! Relax!"

Yong Kit realized that it was important to relax. What has happened has happened!

Pull yourself together means to relax especially after something terrible has happened.

idiom	meaning
Beat around the bush	
It's not rocket science	
So far so good	
Break a leg	
Let someone off the hook	
Better late than never	
Speak of the devil	
Cut somebody some slack	
Easy does it	

avoid telling what you really want to say	things are going well so far	The person we were just talking about shows up
better to go late than not go at all	not a difficult task	good luck
Don't be so critical	slow down	let someone go without punishment

idiom	meaning
Getting out of hand	
A dime a dozen	
Get something out of your system	
Bite the bullet	
Get your act together	
That's the last straw	
Give someone the benefit of the doubt	
Go back to the drawing board	
Hang in there	

getting out of control	To believe or trust what someone tells you even though it may not be true	to not give up
finally telling someone what's bothering you	start planning something again because earlier attempts were unsuccessful	get things in order / buck up
common, worthless, cheap. Easy to find	tolerate the pain for a while so it will be over soon	My patience has run out

idiom	meaning
A blessing in disguise	
Call it a day	
Hit the sack	
No pain, no gain	
Make a long story short	
Miss the boat	
On the ball	
Pull someone's leg	
Pull yourself together	

Don't beat around the bush and come straight to the point	To calm oneself down after something terrible	Lose a chance
play a prank	go to sleep	stop working on something and rest
something bad that turned out to be good	You have to work for what you want	be focused