# EXPLORING IDIOMS



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Expemo code:
1CBU-S3M9-QILJ

## 1 Warm up

**Read the questions and discuss the meaning of the underlined phrases.**

1. What time do you usually hit the sack?
2. What is something you only do once in a blue moon?
3. Do you have a sweet tooth? What is your favorite sugary food?
4. Have you felt like you were on top of the world recently? What happened?
5. When was the last time you hit the books? What were you studying for?
6. What was the last thing you bought that cost an arm and a leg? Was it worth it?
7. When was the last time you felt under the weather? What symptoms did you have?
8. Is it hard for you to bite your tongue when you are angry?




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## 2 Idioms 1

**Match each phrase from the warm-up questions with a definition below.**

1. _____ : study in a serious way
2. _____ : go to bed
3. _____ : hardly ever, rarely
4. _____ : feeling sick
5. _____ : keep silent
6. _____ : a love for sweet-tasting foods
7. _____ : extremely happy
8. _____ : extremely expensive

**In pairs, discuss the following questions.**

1. Do you like learning English idioms?
2. Do you find them difficult to learn? Why, why not?
3. Do you have any favorite idioms in your own language?

## 3 Vocabulary

**Part A: Match a word with the correct definition.**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | expressive (adj.) | a. | likely to change suddenly and without reason |
| 2. | imaginative (adj.) | b. | where something begins or comes from |
| 3. | origin (n) | c. | a small, metal object that is fired from a gun |
| 4. | unpredictable (adj.) | d. | showing feelings |
| 5. | toxic (adj.) | e. | clever and often unusual |
| 6. | bullet (n) | f. | poisonous |

**Part B: Fill in the gaps with the correct word.**

1. There is _____ waste being put into the ocean every day.
2. Children's books are creative and _____. They take you to a different world.
3. Nowadays the weather is so _____. You never know what to wear.
4. He was shot in the arm by a stray _____.
5. The _____ of the outbreak is still unknown.
6. It is incredible how _____ she makes every note sound.


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## 4 Pronunciation

**Compare the pronunciation of the underlined letters and decide if the sound is the same or different.**

1. expressive / imaginative
2. toxic / origin
3. unpredictable / bullet



## 5 Listening for gist

**Listen to the lecture and choose the most appropriate title from the list below.**

1. ☐ Idioms through the years
2. ☐ Idioms and origins
3. ☐ How to learn idioms

## 6 Listening for detail

**Are the sentences true or false according to the information in the lecture?**

1. Idioms are used in all languages. _____
2. Translating each individual word is a useful way to understand the meaning of an idiom. _____
3. The idiom 'it's raining cats and dogs' is used to express dying animals. _____
4. The idiom 'to bite the bullet' means to do something pleasant you have always wanted to do. _____
5. The idiom 'mad as a hatter' is new. _____
6. The hatmakers went crazy because of the material they used to make hats. _____
7. The idiom 'surf the net' came from a written guide about using the Internet. _____
8. The origin and history of idioms can be found easily. _____



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## 7 Discussion

**In pairs, discuss the following questions.**

1. Do you think it is interesting to find out the origin of phrases?
2. Do you know anyone who is mad as a hatter?
3. Do you like it when it is raining cats and dogs?
4. Have you ever had to bite the bullet and do something you really didn't want to do?
5. Do you know any online tools to learn about idioms?

## 8 Optional extension: idioms 2

**Part A: Read the idioms below about learning and choose the correct meaning.**

1. **figure something out**
   a. understand something or to find a solution
   b. remember something
2. **with flying colors**
   a. do something very successfully such as pass an exam
   b. do something creative
3. **draw a blank**
   a. lose something
   b. not be able to remember something
4. **learn (something) by heart**
   a. learn something you love
   b. memorize something so you can recall it easily
5. **brush up on something**
   a. improve your knowledge of something you have partly forgotten
   b. learn something new you have always wanted to study


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**Part B: Complete the sentences with the correct phrase.**

1. I need to _____ my Italian before I go on vacation to Rome.
2. He tried to remember the answer but _____.
3. My teacher told me I had to _____ my speech _____. It took me a long time.
4. I thought I did badly on my exam but surprisingly I passed _____.
5. I spent hours reading the explanation and finally _____.



**In pairs, discuss the following questions.**

1. Are you good at **learning** telephone numbers **by heart**?
2. Have you ever passed an exam or test **with flying colors**?
3. Which skills would you like to **brush up on**?
4. Are you good at **figuring out** instructions?
5. Do you **draw a blank** when it comes to remembering names?


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