# 18 Animals: idioms, p.40

## A. CATS AND DOGS

A: Trevor and Sue are so arrogant.
B: Yes, they think they‘re **the cat‘s whiskers.** [better than everyone else]

A: Do you think he‘ll get the job?
B: With no qualifications or experience? He **hasn‘t got a cat in hell‘s chance**! [no chance at all]

A:It‘s not fair that we have exams immediately after the school holidays!
B: I know, **it‘s a dog‘s life!** [life is hard and unpleasant]

A: I know I don‘t need the car over the weekend, but I don‘t want you to use it either.
B: Don‘t be such **a dog in the manger!** [you‘re keeping it only so that I can‘t have it, not because you really want it yourself]

## B. FARM ANIMALS

| *idiom* | *example* | *meaning* |
|---|---|---|
| flog a dead horse | You're **flogging a dead horse** trying to persuade Kim to move house again. | wasting time trying to do something that won't succeed (usually used in continuous tenses) |
| (straight) from the horse's mouth | Guess what? Juan is going to work in Moscow! I got it **straight from the horse's mouth**! | from the person concerned |
| until the cows come home | You can argue **until the cows come home** but I'll never agree. | for a very long time |
| sort (out) the sheep from the goats | Setting the class such a difficult exercise will certainly **sort the sheep from the goats**. | find the people or things of high quality from a group of mixed quality |
| might as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb | You're already late, so just take all day off. You **might as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb**! | might as well do something more serious as you are going to be punished anyway |

## C. WILD ANIMALS

*In these conversations, the second speaker uses an idiom to repeat and sum up what the first speaker says.*

A: The president‘s just pretending to be upset about the situation, don‘t you think?
B: Yes, he‘s **shedding crocodile tears** to get popular support.
A: Thomas was really upset when his team let in an own goal.
B: Yes, he was **sick as a parrot**, wasn‘t he?
A: Ana‘s hoping that Carlos will stop gambling once they‘re married, but I doubt he will.
B: No, **a leopard can‘t change its spots.**
A: He complained his business was about to fail so often that no one believed him when it finally did.
B: Yes, he **cried wolf** once too often.
A: He looks kind and gentle but he‘s not like that at all.
B: You‘re right. He really is **a wolf in sheep‘s clothing**.
A: I‘m sure everyone is thinking about the divorce, but no one ever mentions it.
B: That‘s right. It‘s certainly **the elephant in the room.**

LIVEWORKSHEETS

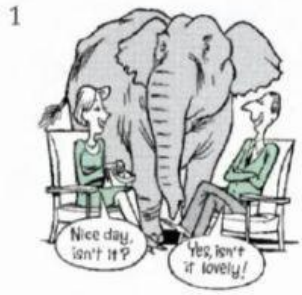
## Exercises, p.41

***18.1 Complete each dialogue with an idiom. Don't forget to write articles were necessary!***

1. A. She obviously thinks she looks really good in that new dress, doesn't she?
   B. Yes, she thinks she's _____.
2. A. Things are pretty hard for you at the moment, I guess.
   B. Yes, it's _____!
3. A. Do you think you'll pass your driving test?
   C. No, I haven't got _____.
4. A. Her husband is so selfish, he never shares anything, even if he doesn't want it.
   B. Yes, he has a real _____ attitude.

***18.2 Which idioms do these pictures make you think of? Write the idioms in the boxes provided below the pictures.***

1

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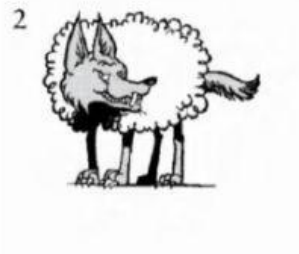

4

6

***18.3 Complete each idiom. Write ONE word in each gap.***

1. He's _____ a dead _____ trying to revive that old idea.
2. He'll never stop causing trouble – a _____ can't change its _____.
3. Luc will argue with you about that until the _____ come _____.
4. He was _____ as a _____ not to make the finals.
5. Let's stay out a bit longer. We might as well be hung for a _____ as a _____.

***18.4 Replace the underlined part of each sentence with an idiom and write it in the gap left.***

1. Don't <u>pretend there is an emergency</u> _____ or no one will help when you really need it.
2. The minister <u>pretends to be upset</u> _____ about homelessness, but does nothing about it.
3. I hate our neighbours' <u>selfish</u> _____ attitude – they don't want the parking space but they won't let us have it.
4. We can discuss it <u>for a very long time</u> _____, but I won't change my mind.

LIVEWORKSHEETS