IDIOM
UNIT 9

Exercise 1

Complete the sentences with the words in the box.

candle | socks | corners | fingers | socks | halves | finger | feet

1 Don't try to cut _____ as you'll only be making work for yourself later on.
2 He has fallen on his _____ with this new job – he'll earn a fortune.
3 Her boss told her she'd have to pull her _____ up.
4 You are burning the _____ at both ends if you only sleep for five hours a night.
5 As he never did things by _____, he was soon exhausted.
6 I do all the cleaning. She never lifts a _____ to help.
7 I work my _____ off for eleven months of the year. I deserve a month's holiday.
8 My grandmother had to work her _____ to the bone in the kitchen with no electrical appliances.

Exercise 2

Complete the sentences. Choose the best answers.

1 I _____ to answer all their questions.
a did my level best b worked my fingers to the bone c pulled my weight

2 The President is determined to _____ for peace.
a pull his socks up b make a meal c go the extra mile

3 We cannot afford to carry members who are not _____.
a doing things by halves b making a meal of it c pulling their weight

4 If you know what you really want, you should _____ to get it.
a pull your weight b go all out c pull your socks up

5 She _____ in order to send her children to school.
a cut corners b worked her fingers to the bone c made a meal of it

6 When you're _____ trying to start a business, it will take every minute you have.
a breaking your back b raising a finger c pulling your socks up

Exercise 3

Re-order the phrases to make sentences. Add punctuation where necessary.

1 for another win / to go all out / after last week's triumph / the team are ready
2 who have to / there are millions of people / just to stay alive / work their fingers to the bone
3 play our socks off if / we will / we want to beat them / have to
4 it's better not / by cutting corners / things cheaply / to try to do
5 a bit of trouble / but it looks like he'll / he had / land on his feet
6 a story like this / just love to / make a meal of / the newspapers

Exercise 4

Match idioms A–F with situations 1–6.

1 Jim is complaining about how hard it has been to keep his business going.
2 Sara's boss is explaining to her that she shouldn't try to get a job done by leaving out certain parts of the task.
3 Jill is complaining about her flat-mate, who is lazy and does no housework.
4 Edward is congratulating a friend who has just got a promotion and a new flat, in the same week.
5 A teacher is telling a student not to spend too long on a question that doesn't demand more than a few sentences as an answer.
6 The coach is persuading his team to make an enormous effort to win the game.

A Make the essential points but don't make a meal of it.
B You've really landed on your feet this time!
C I've been working my socks off for the past two years.
D We're playing well, but we need to go all out this time.
E It's no good trying to cut corners.
F She doesn't lift a finger.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

IDIOM
UNIT 9

Exercise 5

Use sentences A–H to answer questions 1–8.

1 Who didn't deliver his work on time?
2 Who worked hard to earn more than usual?
3 Who was really unhelpful?
4 Who doesn't get enough sleep?
5 Who spent too much time and energy on his homework?
6 Who didn't want to be late?
7 Who needs to work harder at school?
8 Who is a good hostess?

A Ellana didn't raise a finger when everyone else was tidying up.
B George decided it wasn't worth breaking his back to meet the deadline.
C Kiri's report said she must pull her socks up.
D Jean worked his socks off to save up for a holiday.
E Anton did his level best to arrive early.
F Anna will always go the extra mile to make people feel welcome.
G Kaz made a meal out of writing three sentences in English.
H Helen has been burning the candle at both ends recently.

Exercise 6

Correct the idioms in these sentences.

1 I've been breaking my fingers to get this work done on time.
2 She's really lucky, she seems to have landed on her back again.
3 There's no point in eating a meal of this issue.
4 If you aren't prepared to go the extra corner, you won't get the top grade.
5 He's so lazy. He doesn't lift a bone.
6 I'm exhausted. I've been working my weight off at the office today.
7 If everyone pulls their fingers they'll get a fair reward for what they do.
8 Jimmy admitted that he never did anything by half.

Your turn!

Think about how much effort you put into things. Use the idioms in this unit to describe anything you or any of your friends have done recently. For example:

Mercedes and I fell on our feet when we were upgraded to first class on our journey home.

I went the extra mile and ended up with a really good grade.



Eric's colleagues were not convinced he was pulling his weight.

LIVEWORKSHEETS