APPENDIX C: **Idioms**

DIRECTIONS: Each of the following sentences contains an idiom in italics. Read the sentence and try to understand the idiom. Then find the meaning of the idiom in the list that follows, and write the letter of the answer on the line.

EXERCISE C1

_____ 1. He's holding down two jobs and attending school. He's really ***burning the candle at both ends.***

_____ 2. She's buying a lot of new furniture before she even has a job. She's ***putting the cart before the horse.***

_____ 3. Every time he opens his mouth, he immediately regrets what he said. He's always ***putting his foot in his mouth.***

_____ 4. He's not telling me exactly what happened. He's ***beating around the bush.***

_____ 5. She wanted to get that man's phone number, but she wasn't sure of his last name or where he lived. It was like ***looking for a needle in a haystack.***

_____ 6. He's always too fast and out of control on his motorcycle. He's ***playing with fire.***

_____ 7. She keeps asking if I was the one who was spreading rumors about her, but I wasn't. She's ***barking up the wrong tree.***

_____ 8. He took the best portions for himself and didn't leave enough for the others. He's just ***looking out for number one.***

_____ 9. She's been working on that assignment for over two months, and I don't think she's ever going to finish it. She's ***taking forever and a day.***

_____ 10. She has to go to the bank, and while she's out she'll stop and visit her friend. She's ***killing two birds with one stone.***

_____ 11. He was admitted to Harvard, and he would have gone there but he forgot to send in the appropriate form in time. He has really ***missed the boat.***

_____ 12. I know that you thought that this part of the program was difficult, but wait until you see the next part. You're ***jumping out of the frying pan and into the fire.***

DEFINITIONS—Exercise C1	
A. making a mistake	**G.** missed an opportunity
B. accomplishing two things at once	**H.** saying embarrassing things
C. doing something dangerous	**I.** speaking indirectly
D. doing things in the wrong order	**J.** doing something difficult
E. going from bad to worse	**K.** taking a really long time
F. doing too much	**L.** thinking only about himself

LIVEWORKSHEETS

EXERCISE C2

_____ 1. His only two choices are to give up his free time or to pay a lot of money, and he doesn't like either choice. He's ***between a rock and a hard place.***

_____ 2. She got 100 percent on the exam and the other students were below 70 percent. She's ***head and shoulders above the rest.***

_____ 3. Every day he fixes meals, cleans the apartment, and goes to the market. It's ***all in a day's work.***

_____ 4. She's a well-known lawyer, a good skier, a great cook, and a painter. She's a ***jack-of-all-trades.***

_____ 5. Every time he puts the toys away, the children just take them out again. Keeping the house clean when the children are there is ***like trying to swim upstream.***

_____ 6. Anytime I need help I go to her because I know she'll help me any way she can. She's ***one in a million.***

_____ 7. He thought he was going to have to come into the office and work on both Saturday and Sunday, but now he doesn't have to. He's ***off the hook.***

_____ 8. She and her classmates all have to read five chapters, write a paper, and prepare for an exam this week. They're ***all in the same boat.***

_____ 9. He and his brother have the same hair, the same eyes, the same smile, and the same expressions. They're ***like two peas in a pod.***

_____ 10. When I saw him with an older man, I just knew that the man had to be his father. He's ***a chip off the old block.***

_____ 11. She's had so much to do to get ready for the trip that she's been running around all day. Now she's ***on her last legs.***

_____ 12. I can't think of the answer, but it will come to me in just a minute. It's ***on the tip of my tongue.***

DEFINITIONS—Exercise C2	
A. very tired	**G.** in the same situation
B. the best	**H.** nothing out of the ordinary
C. exactly alike	**I.** accomplished at many things
D. really wonderful	**J.** an idea that is not in words
E. really difficult or frustrating	**K.** not responsible any longer
F. just like his father	**L.** without any good options

LIVEWORKSHEETS

EXERCISE C3

_____ 1. Do you think you could help me out with the math homework? ***Two heads are better than one.***

_____ 2. What was it like when the announcement of the disaster came over the radio? ***You could have heard a pin drop.***

_____ 3. We could either go out to dinner tonight or stay home and cook. ***Six of one, half dozen of the other.***

_____ 4. I know you like the food at this restaurant, but I just don't care for it. ***To each his own.***

_____ 5. I got to the bank just one minute after closing time. ***Just my luck.***

_____ 6. My boss has asked me to respond immediately to this fax. ***No sooner said than done.***

_____ 7. Don't worry about what the boss just said to you. ***His bark is worse than his bite.***

_____ 8. It seems impossible for me to go to graduate school because I just can't afford it. But I'm going to try. ***Where there's a will, there's a way!***

_____ 9. Everything seems to be going the way that it should. ***So far, so good!***

_____ 10. Just think that because you locked your keys in the car, you got to meet that nice, handsome, young locksmith. ***Every cloud has a silver lining!***

_____ 11. I've got to accept the fact that it's going to take more than seven years of school if I want to become a doctor. After all, ***Rome wasn't built in a day.***

_____ 12. She loves my wardrobe, but I wish I had her clothes. ***The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence.***

DEFINITIONS—Exercise C3	
A. It was really quiet.	**G.** Bad things are accompanied by good.
B. It's good to work together.	**H.** You always want what you don't have.
C. It's been going well up to now.	**I.** Everyone has a different opinion.
D. I'm not so fortunate.	**J.** His words are worse than his actions.
E. It doesn't matter.	**K.** If you want something, you can do it.
F. It will be done immediately.	**L.** Everything takes time.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

EXERCISE C4

_____ 1. He finally got a job; he couldn't continue to sit around doing nothing. He had to ***turn over a new leaf.***

_____ 2. When he told his mother that he didn't need to study for the exam because he knew he would get a good grade, his mother responded, ***"Don't count your chickens before they're hatched."***

_____ 3. When I asked my friend to do some of my work for me, she replied that I would have to ***stand on my own two feet.***

_____ 4. You've been offered this job, and the offer may not remain on the table for too long, so you'd better take this one while you have the chance. You need to ***strike while the iron is hot.***

_____ 5. When you guessed that I would get the promotion, you ***hit the nail right on the head.***

_____ 6. Before you accept the position, you should find out everything you can about the company. You should ***look before you leap.***

_____ 7. She was appointed to the environmental protection committee, and she's really excited because this is something she's been interested in for some time. This is something she can ***sink her teeth into.***

_____ 8. If you want to be the one who gets noticed at work, you need to ***dot all the i's and cross all the t's*** on every task that you do.

_____ 9. You need to learn to relax. Every time there's a lot of work to do, you just ***run around like a chicken with its head cut off.***

_____ 10. I really prepared for that exam. It should ***be a piece of cake.***

_____ 11. She thinks she should confess what she did, but no one really seems interested in knowing. Instead, she decides to ***let sleeping dogs lie.***

_____ 12. He never has to work for anything because his parents will give him anything he asks for. He seems to ***have been born with a silver spoon in his mouth.***

DEFINITIONS—Exercise C4	
A. start over again	**G.** were exactly right
B. be extremely easy	**H.** depend on something you don't have
C. do it myself	**I.** be spoiled
D. pay attention to every detail	**J.** get really involved in
E. think before you act	**K.** take advantage of a good opportunity
F. leave something alone	**L.** act overly nervous and excited

LIVEWORKSHEETS