

Exercises

8.1 Match the beginning of each idiom on the left with its ending on the right.

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| 1 left holding the | ☐ | a wall |
| 2 brick | ☐ | b block |
| 3 stumbling | ☐ | c music |
| 4 dire | ☐ | d baby |
| 5 draw a | ☐ | e barrel |
| 6 have you over a | ☐ | f straits |
| 7 face the | ☐ | g blank |

8.2 Put the words in the right order and make sentences.

- done / said / Easier / than
- too / to / Try / spread / thin / not / yourself
- I / I / foot / it / wish / my / put / hadn't / in
- a / life / older / of / Getting / fact / is
- straits / The / is / company / dire / in
- life / primary / facts / of / the / Children / taught / in / school / are

8.3 Which idioms do these pictures make you think of?



8.4 Complete each of these idioms with one word.

- You'd better stop talking or you'll dig yourself into a deeper
- I hoped I'd find the address I needed in the library, but I drew a
- If you take on any more work, you'll be spreading yourself far too
- Stranded on the island with no money and no luggage, we were well aware that we were in dire
- The police explored a number of leads, but each time they came up against a brick
- Not having enough savings to set up a business was a major stumbling
- I wish I could leave my job, but they've got me over a

Over to you

Magazines often have articles about people's problems or question and answer pages dealing with problems of different kinds. Find an article or a question and answer page like this and make a note of any idioms that you find there.

Exercises

9.1 Match each idiom on the left with its definition on the right.

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 1 tie up loose ends | ☐ | a understand and deal with something |
| 2 come to light | ☐ | b try something |
| 3 give something a shot | ☐ | c find an easy solution |
| 4 get to grips with something | ☐ | d just in case |
| 5 make do | ☐ | e finish off final little tasks |
| 6 to be on the safe side | ☐ | f uncover the truth |
| 7 wave a magic wand | ☐ | g manage with something of worse quality |
| 8 get to the bottom of something | ☐ | h be discovered |

9.2 Complete each of these idioms with one word.

- I've been busy at work, but I can see the light at the end of the now.
- Sarah wanted to a magic wand and make her son happy again.
- Just wait while I tie up these ends, then I'll go to the match with you.
- When her parents gave her some money, it was like the answer to her
- I've never tried yoga before, but I'd be happy to give a shot.
- The job isn't in the till you've had an offer in writing.
- This research may shed fresh on the causes of asthma in children.
- As I listened to the evidence, everything began to into place.

9.3 Complete each sentence with an idiom from the box. Make any other necessary changes.

bring to light	come to light	fall into place	get to grips with	get to the bottom of
give it a whirl	pick up the pieces	shed light on		

- I'd like to try that new bowling alley. Let's this evening.
- I'm finding it quite hard my new role at work.
- When the business failed, Paul vanished, leaving his partner
- Some important new evidence in the last few days.
- I hope that we'll be able what's been going on.
- New medical research the causes of heart attacks.
- As soon as I met Joshua's family, everything
- In the investigation into their accounts, a number of errors

9.4 Match each statement on the left with the most likely response on the right.

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| 1 I'll wash your car for you! | ☐ | a OK, just to be on the safe side. |
| 2 Let's go home now. | ☐ | b If only I could wave a magic wand! |
| 3 The job's in the bag! | ☐ | c You're the answer to my prayers! |
| 4 We'd better take umbrellas. | ☐ | d Soon. I've still got some loose ends to tie up. |
| 5 Can you make do with a pencil? | ☐ | e I hope you're right! |
| 6 We just don't know what to do! | ☐ | f Sure, that'll do fine. |

9.5 Which idioms do these pictures make you think of?



7.1 Complete these idioms with prepositions.

- 1 His company has gone strength strength in the last six months. He's making a lot of money now.
- 2 The flood ruined our old kitchen, but it was a blessing disguise, because the insurance company paid for a completely new one.
- 3 This new model is not the be-all-and-end-all digital cameras, but it certainly has many technical features that others do not have.
- 4 Your offer to drive us to the airport makes all the difference our travel plans.
- 5 Your plan to persuade Lela to join the committee worked magic.

7.2 Use the idioms from exercise 7.1 to rewrite the underlined parts of the sentences.

- 1 At first we thought the new road would spoil our village, but in fact it was a positive development and the village shops are doing more business.
- 2 I sprayed the stain remover onto my jacket and it had an immediate positive result. (Give two answers.)
- 3 This is not the absolute best and most complete cookery book, but it does have recipes from 100 different countries.
- 4 The school has got better and better since the new head teacher took over.
- 5 Getting new curtains has changed my flat in a positive way. It feels like a new one.

7.3 Who would be most likely to say these remarks? Choose the correct answer.

- 1 It left its mark on me.
 - a) someone who had just spilt red wine over themselves
 - b) someone who taught in a very bad school for ten years
 - c) someone who had a wonderful birthday party
- 2 I'm a victim of my own success.
 - a) someone who won a lot of money then spent it all
 - b) a student who always passes every exam they take
 - c) a popular teacher whose class everyone wants to be in
- 3 I don't think I'll ever hit the big time.
 - a) a rock musician who is popular in local clubs
 - b) an athlete who has just got a place in an Olympic team
 - c) a dentist with a very heavy schedule of appointments
- 4 Work isn't the be-all-and-end-all in my life.
 - a) someone who is unemployed
 - b) someone who has a lot of interesting hobbies
 - c) someone who never finishes a job they start

7.4 Complete each of these idioms.

- 1 The photocopier has completely the ghost. We need a new one.
- 2 I didn't think I ghost of a of passing the exam, but I did.
- 3 My new motorbike a dream; it's fast, but so smooth and quiet.

7.5 Answer these questions.

- 1 If you make a go of something, do you succeed or fail?
- 2 What should you remember about the grammar of the idiom *go places*?
- 3 What could you write in your vocabulary notebook about the use of *be-all-and-end-all*?