

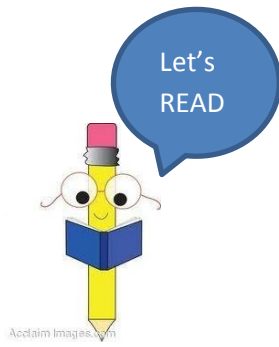


Eyes on

Idioms

Prepared by:

Janet A. Mananay



LIFE IN THE 1500'S

The next time you are washing your hands and complain because the water temperature isn't just how you like it, think about how things use to be. Here are some facts about the 1500's:

Most people got married in June (**June brides**) because they took their yearly bath in May, and still smelled pretty good by June. However, they were starting to smell, so brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odor. Hence, the today of carrying a bouquet when getting married.



Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice water, then all the other sons and men, then the women and finally the children. Last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it. Hence the saying: **Don't throw the baby out with the bath water.**



Houses had thatched roofs-thick straw-piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the cats and other animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof. Hence, the saying: **It's raining cats and dogs.**

There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posted a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could mess up your nice clean bed. Hence, a

bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection. That's how canopy beds came into existence.



The floor was dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt. Hence the saying, **dirt poor**. The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh (straw) on floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on, they added more thresh until, when you opened the door, it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entranceway, Hence, the saying a thresh hold.

In those old days, they cooked in the kitchen with a big kettle that always hung over the fire. Every day they lit the fire and added things to the pot. They ate mostly vegetables and did not get much meat. They would eat the stew for dinner, leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight and then start over the next day. Sometimes stew had food in it that had been there for quite a while. Hence the rhyme, **Peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold, peas porridge in the pot nine days old**.



Sometimes they could obtain pork, which made them feel quite special. When visitors came over, they would hang up their bacon to show off. It was a sign of wealth that a man could, **bring home the bacon**. They would cut off a little to share with guests and would sit around and **chew the fat**.

Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom of the loaf, the family got the middle, the guests got the top, or the **upper crust**.



Lead cups were used to drink ale or whiskey. The combination would sometimes knock the imbibers out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait and see if they would wake up. Hence the custom of holding a wake.



England is old and small and the local folks started running out of places to bury people. So they would dig up coffins and would take the bones to a bone-house, and reuse the grave. When reopening these coffins, 1 out

of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realized they had been burying people alive. So they would tie a string on the wrist of the corpse, lead it through the coffin and up through the ground and tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night (**the graveyard shift**) to listen for the bell; thus, someone could be, **saved by the bell** or was considered **a dead ringer**.



Are these words/expressions familiar?

How do you call them?

upper crust

saved by the bell

dirt poor

bring home the bacon

dead ringer

chew the fat

raining cats and dogs



Idioms defined....

Idioms

Idioms are phrases which people use in everyday language which do not make sense literally, but we understand what they mean.

A cartoon character with a yellow body, a question mark on its head, and one hand pointing up.

Idioms

An idiom is an expression whose meaning has little, often nothing, to do with the meanings of the words in the expression itself. You have to know its "hidden" meaning.

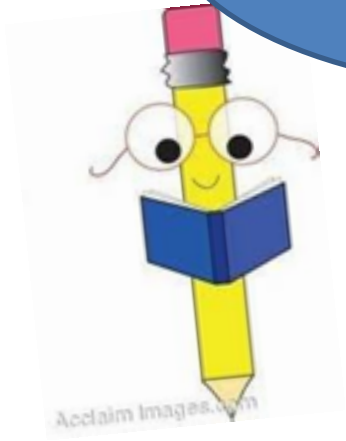
OXFORD POD9

idiom
/id-i-uhm/
n.

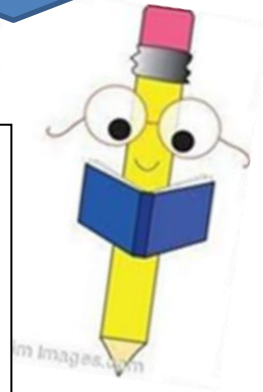
1. a group of words whose meaning is different from the meanings of the individual words (e.g. over the moon).
2. a form of language and grammar used by particular people at a particular time or place.

idiom |

An idiom is an expression that has developed NATURALLY in a language. It is the language for conversation and for colloquial or informal writing.



Idioms are frequently found in newspapers and many popular magazines because they are usually short and forceful.



What idioms can you recall? List these on the spaces below.

Let's STUDY!



Acclaim Images.com

IDIOMS

Based on CLOTHES

IDIOM	MEANING	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
<i>tighten one's belt</i>	to go hungry	If you are in a strange place and don't have money, you may have to tighten your belt .
<i>boot out</i>	to dismiss.	Because of his laziness, he was booted out of his job.
<i>wear the pants</i>	to be the controlling force in the house.	He may be the president of the company, but it is his wife who wears the pants .
<i>a turncoat</i>	a person who changes his opinions and his loyalties.	Some politicians become turncoats for purely selfish reasons.
<i>to collar</i>	to take hold of; to seize.	As the pickpocket jumped off the bus, a policeman collared him .
<i>to dress up</i>	to wear the gay and fashionable clothes.	The girls are all dressed up for the party.
<i>to take off one's hat to</i>	to respect.	Dr. Velasquez is one of our foremost biologist. We take off our hats to him.
<i>strait-laced</i>	prudish; old fashioned	My aunt is very strait-laced and doesn't approve of unchaperoned parties.
<i>wash dirty linen in public</i>	to broadcast family quarrels	Don't wash your dirty linen in public .
<i>patch up a quarrel</i>	To settle a quarrel	Josefino and Saulo have patched up their quarrel, but they are still not very friendly.
<i>to pocket</i>	to put into one's pocket	He pocketed the knife that I gave him and went away whistling.
<i>to pocket one's pride</i>	to disregard one's feeling of pride or dignity; to ask a favor which one would rather not ask.	When one is out of a job, one must pocket his pride and ask for help.
<i>hold the purse strings</i>	to control the money	Mother holds the purse strings on our house. The Budget Commission keeps a tight hold on the purse strings of the country.

<i>to be in another person's shoes</i>	to take another person's place, to be in his position	She leads an unhappy life; I'm glad I am not in her shoes .
<i>wear one's heart on one's sleeve</i>	to show one's intimate feelings	He wears his heart on his sleeves for anybody to see.
<i>pull oneself up by his own shoestrings</i>	to strengthen one's position without any help from others	Ernie is now a rich man. He pulled himself up by his own shoestrings .

Let's answer

ACTIVITY 1



Replace a phrase or word in the sentences below with an appropriate idiom based on clothes. Write your answer on the space before the number.

- _____ 1. He is always changing political loyalties, depending on what party is in power.
- _____ 2. Even if he is rich, I wouldn't want to be in his place.
- _____ 3. Why do you broadcast your family quarrels? You won't be praised for your action.
- _____ 4. The girls put on their most fashionable clothes for the junior-senior prom.
- _____ 5. Their quarrel took place five years ago, but until now they haven't settled it yet.
- _____ 6. Everybody knows that Mrs. Gomez makes all the decisions in the family.
- _____ 7. When one is in need, he must disregard his feeling of pride and ask for a loan.
- _____ 8. In most Filipino families, the mother controls the money.

- _____9. Toribio is proud of the fact that he strengthened his position without help from others.
- _____10. A boy took money from the box, put it in his pocket and quickly went out.
- _____11. As the boy turned into an alley, a policeman seized him.
- _____12. Soon after the destructive flood in 1972 many people went hungry.
- _____13. Delia's mother is very old-fashioned and won't let her wear short dresses.
- _____14. Eliseo was dismissed from his job for no apparent reason at all.
- _____15. Everyone knows of his love for Zenaida because he shows his intimate feelings.



IDIOMS

Based on COLORS

IDIOM	MEANING	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
<i>blackmail</i>	the crime of extorting money by threat of revealing a secret of the person who is threatened	They tried to blackmail him about his past life.
<i>black-hearted</i>	evil, bad	He is a black-hearted man , a disgrace to his family.
<i>black market</i>	illegal transaction of officially controlled goods or currency	The black market exists whenever there is government control of importation.
<i>a black look</i>	a look of anger	I don't know why she gave me such a black look as I passed her.

<i>to feel blue</i>	gloomy, miserable	Everybody feels blue every now and then.
<i>once in a blue moon</i>	rarely or never	A person wins first prize in the sweepstakes only once in a blue moon .
<i>blue blood</i>	a person of noble or aristocratic origin	Do you have blue blood in your veins?
<i>blue book</i>	a blueo-covered booklet used in writing college examination	I am disappointed when I received my checked blue booked .
<i>brownout</i>	a partial blackout	Because of power failure, we experienced several brownouts last month.
<i>green</i>	inexperienced, untrained, gullible	He needs someone to keep an eye on him because he's green .
<i>to look green</i>	to look sick	Something must be wrong with him because he's looking green .
<i>the green-eyed monster</i>	jealousy	Many women are bitten by the green-eyed monster .
<i>green light</i>	official permission	His chief gave him the green light to continue his research.
<i>gray</i>	dull	It is a very gray day today.
<i>gray-haired</i>	elderly, mature	She is a gray-haired mother of five.
<i>gray matter</i>	brains, intellect	Behind that pretty face is plenty of gray matter .
<i>purple with rage</i>	very very angry	When he was asked to pay his debts, he became purple with rage .
<i>to see red</i>	to lose control of one's temper	He sees red every time his son stays out late at night.
<i>in the red</i>	incurring losses, not making profits	That company is in the red because e of poor management.
<i>to become red</i>	to blush	When I mentioned his sweetheart's name, he became red .
<i>a red light</i>	a danger signal	Don't try to pass the red light at a street crossing.
<i>red tape</i>	excessive official formality	Red tape in government bureaus should be minimized.
<i>a red letter day</i>	a fortunate day, a lucky day	Saturday is a red letter day for me.
<i>white lie</i>	a harmless lie, without evil intention	We tell white lies to save our face.
<i>white elephant</i>	an embarrassing gift, an item of very little practical	Some wedding gifts are white elephants .

	value	
<i>as white as a ghost/sheet</i>	pale with fear or fright	When he heard the news, he turned as white as a ghost .
<i>whitewash</i>	to cover up	The investigation on vices in the city was whitewashed .
<i>yellow with age</i>	changed to a yellow hue through age	The parchment that was found is already yellow with age .
<i>to be yellow</i>	to be cowardly	He ran away from a fair fight because he was yellow .
<i>yellow journalism</i>	sensational newspaper	Yellow journalism survives on crimes of all sort.



Replace a phrase or word in the sentences below with an appropriate idiom based on colors. Write your answer on the space before the number.

- _____ 1. One doesn't feel cheerful on a dull day.
- _____ 2. When his opponent started to insult him and his family, Alfredo lost control of his temper.
- _____ 3. After Martial Law, the illegal transaction of American dollars was minimized.
- _____ 4. Winning a free trip around the world seldom happens to a person.
- _____ 5. This is the first time that Jose came to "Manila, and being very inexperienced, he's easily fooled.
- _____ 6. Sometimes we tell a harmless lie to avoid embarrassment.

- _____ 7. Marta has been feeling miserable lately because she has no one to talk to.
- _____ 8. Our chemistry teacher gave us official permission to go on with our experiment.
- _____ 9. When Mr. Reyes learned that his son was not enrolled but was running around with girls instead, he became very very angry.
- _____ 10. Violeta is very shy and blushes when spoken to.
- _____ 11. Don't give a gift that will be of no use to the receiver.
- _____ 12. My aunt showed me a letter, changed to a yellow color after many years.
- _____ 13. It will take you months to get your promotion because of too much formality in the office.
- _____ 14. What intellect you are talking about? Pablo doesn't have any.
- _____ 15. Threatening to reveal a person's secrets unless he gives money is a serious crime.
- _____ 16. The government promised not to cover up the charges against the smugglers.
- _____ 17. Last year our corporation incurred big losses because of the flood.
- _____ 18. My lucky day was last Tuesday because Father increased my allowance.
- _____ 19. He must be angry with me because he gave me a scowl.
- _____ 20. Why do you look pale and frightened?

Let's study!!



IDIOMS

Based on flowers, fruits, vegetables, etc.

IDIOM	MEANING	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
<i>the apple of one's eye</i>	the most precious possession, greatly treasured	Sylvia is the apple of her father's eye .
<i>to crop up</i>	to occur, to appear	Your friend's name cropped up several times during our conversation.
<i>to bear fruit</i>	to gain success or reward because of one's endeavor	His tireless efforts finally bore fruit .
<i>fertile</i>	rich or vivid	Writers have fertile imagination.
<i>to be hedged in (also to be hemmed in)</i>	to be restricted or limited	Because he stays with his in-laws, he feels that he is hedged in on every side.
<i>to rest on one's laurels</i>	to be satisfied with success already achieved and not make further efforts	Some writers who have won international recognition now rest on their laurels .
<i>nuts on</i>	very fond of	He's nuts on detective stories
<i>in a nutshell</i>	in the briefest way	Can you give us the story in a nutshell ?
<i>a hard nut to crack</i>	a very difficult problem	Our mathematics teacher gave us a hard nut to crack .
<i>root out (also root up)</i>	to pull up by the roots, to destroy	It will take a long time to root out racial prejudice.
<i>to go to the root of the matter</i>	to trace the cause of	The committee is not satisfied with the report and the members want to get the root of the matter .
<i>rooted to the spot</i>	unable to move because of strong feeling	Many saw the accident, but they couldn't do anything. They were rooted to the spot .
<i>ripe</i>	mature ready	Grandfather reached a ripe old age. The country was ripe for a change of government.
<i>to look at life through rose-colored spectacles</i>	to be always optimistic.	Let's not always look at life through rose-colored spectacles . Let's face reality.
<i>stony</i>	cold	He gave me a stony stare as I passed

		by.
<i>stone-hearted</i>	cruel	The stone-hearted chief fired an employee who had been with the firm for twenty years.
<i>to sow wild oats</i>	to behave wildly and foolishly when young, to lead a gay life	Many men who sow wild oats in their youth settle down to a quiet life later on.
a thorn in one's flesh	a person or object that causes trouble and pain	Jim finally dropped out of school. He had been a thorn in our flesh ever since he joined our class.
sour grapes	to have a low estimate of or to depreciate something you can't have or get	He says he doesn't want a promotion. It's a case of sour grapes because he knows that he won't be promoted anyway.
to bark up the wrong tree	to waste time and energy by searching in the wrong place, or following the wrong path	Investigators often don't get results because they are barking up the wrong tree .
the family tree	ancestry	It's no easy matter to trace one's family tree .
a branch (commercial)	a subordinate office, a section	The company has its main office in Manila and has branches in the neighboring provinces.
to branch out	to expand, to extend activities	He started as a furniture manufacturer, but later on branched out into real estate and the steel industry.
to leave no stone unturned	to do everything possible to gain one's wish.	Scientists leave no stone unturned in their search for a cure for cancer.

Let's answer

ACTIVITY 3

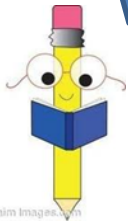


Acclaim Images.com

Replace a phrase or word in the sentences below with an appropriate idiom based on flowers, fruits and vegetables. Write your answer on the space before the number.

- _____ 1. A parable gives a religious lesson in brief.
- _____ 2. She has such a vivid imagination that she often makes up stories.
- _____ 3. I saw the teenager stabbed a man, but I could do nothing; I was unable to move.
- _____ 4. The investigators tried to get to the cause of the trouble; but they faced a blank wall.
- _____ 5. When Uncle Dick was young, he led a gay and wild life.
- _____ 6. I smiled at him, but he merely gave me a cold stare.
- _____ 7. Why are you very proud of your ancestry?
- _____ 8. Mena has always looked at life very optimistically, that's why she doesn't brood over her problems.
- _____ 9. I'm simply very fond of mystery stories. Are you?
- _____ 10. Don't you feel restricted in your movements by staying with your relatives?
- _____ 11. Religious intolerance cannot be destroyed overnight.
- _____ 12. Manuel has brought disgrace to his family. Aside from being a college drop-out, he drinks and gambles heavily.
- _____ 13. The problem in accounting which our professor gave us was really very difficult.

- _____ 14. Oscar was originally a construction engineer, but later on he extended his activities into the importance of electrical appliances.
- _____ 15. Lydia's father gives her everything she asks for because she's dearly loved.
- _____ 16. Mr. Serrano reached the mature age of ninety before he died.
- _____ 17. Very few unpleasant incidents occurred during the student rally.
- _____ 18. Government lawyers will do everything possible so that the guilty persons will pay for their crime.
- _____ 19. We don't know what to do with that cousin of ours. He is the cause of our trouble and misery.
- _____ 20. The long years of study and self-denial finally gave Edwin a reward. He is now a full-fledged physician.



Acclaim Images.com



**Based on animals, insects,
birds, fish**

IDIOM	MEANING	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
as blind as a bat	very blind indeed	She doesn't wear eyeglasses although she's as blind as a bat .
to make a beeline for a beehive	a very busy place	Her house is a regular beehive for weekends.
bird's-eye view	a view seen from above, a general view	We can get a bird's-eye view of the city from the university tower.
to brood over something	to meditate, to think about insults or misfortune, real or imagined	Don't brood over your troubles.

to be catty	to say unkind things about a person	She doesn't get along well with other girls because she is catty .
cat and dog life	always quarreling	Mr. and Mrs. Trinidad lead a cat and dog life and both are unhappy.
chicken-hearted	lacking in courage, cowardly	A chicken-hearted person is contemptible.
to crow over another	to express pleasure at the defeat of an opponent or a rival	Whenever he wins, he crowes over the losers.
crocodile tears	pretended sorrow	She shed crocodile tears when her old and sickly husband died.
a feather in one's cap	a success, an achievement which one may be proud of	Passing the difficult bar examination will be a feather in your cap .
to ferret out	to search out, to bring to light	You can be sure that the police will ferret out the truth about the crime.
to fish	to seek compliments	Some people are always fishing for compliments.
fishy	suspicious	His business transactions sound a bit fishy .
a fish out of water	a person in the wrong place	He doesn't like going to concerts. He feels like a fish out of water .
wouldn't hurt a fly	kind-hearted that he is incapable of harming anyone or anything, not even a fly	Your accusations are untrue. We know Jose; he wouldn't hurt a fly .
to get a person's goat	to make him angry	Hold your temper. Don't let his remarks get your goat .
goose pimples (also goose-flesh)	a feeling induced by something unpleasant	Ghost stories give me goose pimples .
a wild-goose chase	a risky and unprofitable pursuit	Some people go on a wild-goose chase for several years, searching for buried treasure.
a hen-pecked husband	a husband whose wife is always scolding him	A hen-pecked husband leads a miserable life indeed.
hornet's nest	an unpleasant situation, disagreeable comment	His tactless remarks stirred up a hornet's nest .
a dark horse	a person likely to cause surprise	In the last election, Senator de Leon was a dark horse .
to hound	to pursue, to persecute	If you hurt him, he'll hound you the rest of your life.
to lionize	to fuss over socially	Visiting dignitaries are usually lionized

		by manila socialites.
lion's share	an unfairly large share	After the property had been divided we found out that he got the lion's share .
as stubborn as a mule	obstinate	It's useless trying to make him see your point. He is as stubborn as a mule .
a pig	an ill-mannered person	His table manners are disgusting. He's a pig .
a loan shark	a usurer	Loan sharks thrive in many establishments where salaries are not paid regularly.
a snake in the grass	a deceitful person, a person who pretends to be a friend but is actually an enemy.	I am quite disappointed with her. She turned out to be a snake in the grass .
a scapegoat	a person who bears the blame for mistakes made by others	The clerk became a convenient scapegoat of the manager.
the black sheep of the family	the member of the family who dishonors it or who brings disgrace to it	Their brother Luis is the black sheep of the family . He has been sent to prison twice.
to draw someone out of his shell	to encourage him to talk or take part in social activities	Perla is so shy that we have difficulty time drawing out of her shell .
to turn turtle	to overturn	The small car turned turtle at the foot of the bridge.
a wolf in a sheep's clothing	a hypocrite	Don't trust him. He is a wolf in sheep's clothing .

Let's answer

ACTIVITY 4



Replace a phrase or word in the sentences below with an appropriate idiom based on animals, insects, birds, fishes. Write your answer on the space before the number.

- _____ 1. Without his glasses he cannot see because he's quite blind.
- _____ 2. During enrollment, the registrar's office is a very busy place.

- _____3. Ferdie is lacking in courage and will run away at the first sign of a fight.
- _____4. Whenever a well-known Hollywood actor visits manila he is made much of socially.
- _____5. The police are trying to search our notorious criminals from their hideouts.
- _____6. Aurelio is the quiet type and doesn't enjoy parties because he feels out of place.
- _____7. Ignacio went on a useless pursuit, searching for the treasure in gold and silver supposedly buried by Japanese troops in the Cordillera mountains.
- _____8. I don't like to read tales of horror because they give me an unpleasant feeling.
- _____9. If you are on top of a tall building, you can get a general view of the city.
- _____10. He is not to be trusted because he's a hypocrite.
- _____11. It's no use arguing with him. He's very stubborn.
- _____12. That conceited friend of yours is always seeking compliments.
- _____13. Don't tell him all your secrets because he pretends to be a friend although he's not.
- _____14. That sister of yours is quite greedy. She wants the largest share of everything.
- _____15. I feel sorry for Roman. He is often blamed for the mistakes of others.
- _____16. Mario's topping the CPA examination is another achievement he may well be proud of.
- _____17. Rosa pretended to be sad when a sister-in-law she couldn't get along with died.

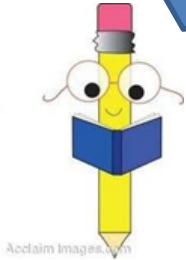
- _____18. Because Mang Juan could not borrow money from anybody else when his wife needed operation, he was forced to a usurer.
- _____19. A student who fails in his subjects should not think about his misfortune, instead, he must try harder.
- _____20. The car overturned because of the slippery road.
- _____21. Don't you think that there's something suspicious about his actions?
- _____22. How can one like Rosita when she says unkind things about her friends?
- _____23. The whole town knows that Adolfo is a disgrace to his family.
- _____24. We don't enjoy playing with him because he expresses pleasure at our defeat.
- _____25. Melanie couldn't leave the office early because it was raining heavily outside.

How did you find activities
1-4?

Write your thoughts
below.



Let's learn MORE IDIOMS!
Let's answer ACTIVITY 5



Guess the idioms behind the picture. Write your guesses on the space provided. Include as well the meaning.









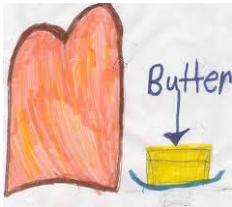




7.



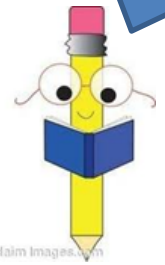
8.



9.



Let's answer
ACTIVITY 6

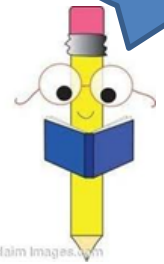


Acclaim Images.com

Use the idioms in activity 5 in writing on your own sentences. Use the space at the side of every picture.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____

How did you
find the
activity?



Acclaim Images.com

