

Talk a Lot

Problems

20 Common English Idioms

1. to have nothing to do with sby / sth	to avoid sby / sth completely	2. to play the property market	to invest in property
3. to struggle to make [both] ends meet	to have trouble earning enough to pay daily bills	4. share and share alike	divide sth equally; allow equal access
5. to pay through the nose	to pay too high a price	6. to pile on the pounds	to become fatter quickly
7. neither a borrower nor a lender be	don't take out or make loans	8. to give sby the boot	to end a romantic relationship with sby; to fire sby
9. to get / be up the duff	to become or be pregnant	10. to be up to your eyes in debt	to owe a lot of money
11. to spend money like it's going out of fashion	to spend a lot of money quickly	12. to follow the crowd	to do what everybody else is doing
13. to give sby a second chance	to forgive sby and be friends with them again	14. to be worth your while [to do sth]	to profit more by doing sth than by not doing it
15. to bore sby to tears	to make sby very uninterested in sth	16. to pin your hopes on sby / sth	to hope that sby or sth will be successful for your benefit
17. to have too much time on your hands	to have too much spare time	18. against all [the] odds	despite all obstacles and difficulties
19. on your own	alone; without anybody's help	20. "It's your own time you're wasting, not mine!"	"I get paid to teach, so if you misbehave, only you suffer."

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English Idioms – Matching Game

Match each sentence below with one of the idioms from this unit. Change forms where necessary:



Our love has survived – _____!
I'm afraid that when it comes to music and fashion I've always _____.
Back in the '80s, when I was a poor student, I _____.
"Can you lend me a tenner?" "I'm sorry. Remember the saying: _____."
I told the careers adviser that I'd only get a job if it _____ to do so.
Since Jon swore at me I _____.
Please take me back, Lionel! Please! Can't you _____?
Since I lost my job things have been really dull. I've got _____.
Brenda _____ recently, hasn't she? She used to be so slim.
Lizzie is a total shopaholic! She _____.
We _____ for about ten years now. Ever since we bought our first house.
You <i>will</i> get the tickets, <i>won't</i> you, Jack? I _____!
"Did you know that Joe ____ Kim ____?" "Wow! She doesn't look it!"
The opera went on for over four hours! It nearly _____!
Tracey ____ Daniel ____, and she's got another guy already!
You can mess about as much as you want, McCaskill. _____!
Come along, Toby; let your little sister play with it too. _____.
My parents _____. It looks like they might have to go bankrupt.
We _____ for that sculpture; but it was worth it.
"Did anybody help you paint that fence?" "No, I did it _____."

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Problems – English Idioms Activities

Meaning and Context

1. Check for new vocabulary. Are there any idioms that you know already? Explain each meaning and give an example sentence or situation in which you could use it. Find the meaning of the rest by using a dictionary, then match the definition cards with the idiom cards.
2. Do any of the idioms exist in your first language? Translate each idiom.
3. Divide the idioms into four categories: **Children**, **Teenagers**, **Adults**, and **Elderly People**.
4. Take some cards. Describe the idiom on a card without saying it.
5. How many idioms can you remember when they are all turned over?

Practice Activities

Choose a random idiom (or one that particularly interests you) and...

1. think of a time or situation in your life when you... a) could have said this idiom (past), and b) might say this idiom (future).
2. say the name of a person you know who would be the *most likely* to say this. In what kind of situation?
3. others guess while you act it out without speaking, although you can make sounds!
4. others guess while you draw a picture to represent both forms – idiomatic and literal.
5. analyse the words. Is it at all possible to guess the meaning from the words – or completely impossible? Research the origin and background of this idiom.
6. replace the idiom in a sentence with the literal (boring) meaning. Compare the two sentences. Which sounds better? Why?
7. think of another idiom or saying that has the same or a similar meaning.
8. tell a story or devise a dialogue/role play by linking one idiom to the next.

Topic Questions

1. Choose the correct idiom. 2. Make a sentence about... a) yourself, b) a friend.

1. I might use this when talking to somebody about a car they've just bought, which was, in my opinion, far too expensive.
2. A parent or teacher could use this idiom to rebuke two kids who are fighting over a computer.
3. This rather crude idiom might be used to say that somebody has got his partner pregnant.
4. This is a moralistic saying that warns against the dangers of getting into debt.
5. This is perhaps a problem for people who are unemployed or retired, and lack motivation.
6. I would use this idiom to show that I can do something without anybody else's help.
7. This idiom describes what people do when they are "sheep" and don't think for themselves.
8. This phrase shows a rather cavalier or casual approach towards investing in property.
9. Somebody who has put on weight recently might use this idiom to moan about the fact.
10. You could use this idiom to advise somebody to leave their current partner...
11. Or, if they don't like that advice, use *this* idiom to advise them to *stay* with their partner.
12. This is an expressive way to describe feelings provoked by long, tedious lessons about idioms!