

ENGLISH IDIOMS • PRACTICE SET

Idioms in Action

40 Solved MCQs with Answers & Explanations

Every question fully solved

Correct answers highlighted & ticked ✓

Clear explanation below every question



IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

"call it a day"

To "call it a day" means:

A to quit ✓

B it becomes evening

C to say good morning

D none of these

EXPLANATION

"To call it a day" means to stop doing something (usually work) because you decide enough has been done, e.g. "Let's call it a day and finish the rest tomorrow."

2

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“call the tune”

To “call the tune” means:

A to sing a song

B to give orders ✓

C to give advice

D none of these

EXPLANATION

“To call the tune” means to be the person in control of a situation, giving orders or making the important decisions, e.g. “The manager calls the tune around here.”

3

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“carry off”

To “carry off” means:

A to move

B to kill ✓

C to drop

D none of these

EXPLANATION

“To carry (someone) off” is an older, formal way of saying a disease or disaster killed them, e.g. “The plague carried off thousands.” It can also mean to succeed at something difficult, but among the given options ‘to kill’ is correct.

4

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“cart before the horse”

To “cart before the horse” means:

A to plan ahead

B that you can't do something

C to do things in the wrong order ✓

D none of these

EXPLANATION

“Putting the cart before the horse” means reversing the logical or natural order of doing things — doing the second step before the first.

5

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“catch on”

To “catch on” means:

A to understand ✓

B to be punished

C to grab something

D none of these

EXPLANATION

“To catch on” means to understand or grasp an idea, e.g. “It took him a while to catch on to the joke.” It can also mean to become popular, but ‘to understand’ matches here.

6

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

"be caught short"

To "be caught short" means:

A to be in an embarrassing situation

B to take a short sleep

C not have enough of something when needed ✓

D none of these

EXPLANATION

"To be caught short" means to suddenly not have enough of something (money, time, supplies) exactly when you need it, e.g. "I was caught short for cash at the till."



IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“cheap skate”

To “cheap skate” means:

A

a winter sports activity

B

someone who doesn't spend much money ✓

C

something that isn't expensive

D

none of these

EXPLANATION

A “cheapskate” is a person who is unwilling to spend money — a miser — e.g. “Don't be such a cheapskate, buy the coffee!”

8

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“check up”

To “check up” means:

A to search

B to investigate ✓

C to make a
mark to show
something has
been counted

D none of these

EXPLANATION

“To check up (on)” means to investigate or verify that something/someone is correct or all right, e.g. “The doctor checked up on the patient.”

9

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“cheer up”

To “cheer up” means:

A

**to become
happy** ✓

B

to become sad

C

to become lost

D

none of these

EXPLANATION

“To cheer up” means to become (or make someone become) happier or more cheerful, e.g. “She cheered up as soon as her friends arrived.”

10

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“chicken feed”

To “chicken feed” means:

A a lot of food

B a small
amount of
money ✓

C a group of
people
gathering

D none of these

EXPLANATION

“Chicken feed” refers to a very small, insignificant amount of money, e.g. “Compared to his salary, that bonus is chicken feed.”

11

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

"dare say"

To "dare say" means:

A I don't know at all

B I definitely know

C I suppose ✓

D none of these

EXPLANATION

"I dare say" is used to mean "I suppose" or "I think it's probably true," e.g. "I dare say it will rain later."

12

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“dash off”

To “dash off” means:

A

**to do, make,
or draw
something
quickly** ✓

B

to be deeply
asleep

C

to be precise

D

none of these

EXPLANATION

“To dash something off” means to write, draw, or produce it very quickly, without much care, e.g. “She dashed off a quick reply.”



IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“dead tired”

To “dead tired” means:

A no longer living

B very tired ✓

C someone
doesn't have
long to live

D none of these

EXPLANATION

“Dead tired” is an intensifier meaning extremely tired or exhausted, e.g. “I was dead tired after the long journey.”

14

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“deep water”

To “deep water” means:

A to be lazy

B to be in
serious
trouble ✓

C to not care
about things

D none of these

EXPLANATION

“To be in deep water” means to be in serious trouble or a difficult situation that is hard to get out of.



IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“dies down”

To “dies down” means:

A falls over

B dies quickly

C fades away ✓

D none of these

EXPLANATION

When something (noise, excitement, a fire) “dies down,” it gradually becomes weaker until it almost disappears, e.g. “The applause slowly died down.”

16

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“die out”

To “die out” means:

A to fail

B to die quickly

C to disappear slowly ✓

D none of these

EXPLANATION

“To die out” means to gradually become less common until it disappears completely, e.g. “That custom has almost died out.”

17

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“dime a dozen”

To “dime a dozen” means:

A it is expensive

B something is unusual

C something is easy to get ✓

D none of these

EXPLANATION

“A dime a dozen” describes something so common and plentiful that it's easy to get and has little value, e.g. “Smartphones like that are a dime a dozen now.”

18

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“dish out”

To “dish out” means:

A to serve ✓

B to gossip

C to make

D none of these

EXPLANATION

“To dish out” means to serve or hand out something, often food, advice, or criticism, e.g. “She dished out the soup to everyone.”

19

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“do away with”

To “do away with” means:

A

to treat something

B

to stop something ✓

C

to hide something

D

none of these

EXPLANATION

“To do away with” something means to stop, abolish, or get rid of it, e.g. “The new law did away with the old tax.”

20

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“down to earth”

To “down to earth” means:

A strange

B practical ✓

C shy

D none of these

EXPLANATION

A “down-to-earth” person is practical, sensible, and unpretentious, e.g. “Despite her fame, she remained down to earth.”

21

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

"easy does it"

To "easy does it" means:

A let's do it later

B let's do it
carefully ✓

C let's do it quickly

D none of these

EXPLANATION

"Easy does it" is said to encourage someone to act slowly and carefully, especially when moving something delicate.

22

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“eat your words”

To “eat your words” means:

A to apologise ✓

B to shout loudly

C to be quiet

D none of these

EXPLANATION

“To eat your words” means to admit that something you said earlier was wrong — essentially to retract it and apologise.

23

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“eat out”

To “eat out” means:

A to rot away

B to eat in a restaurant ✓

C to eat everything

D none of these

EXPLANATION

“To eat out” simply means to have a meal at a restaurant rather than at home, e.g. “Let's eat out tonight.”

24

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“edge out”

To “edge out” means:

A to move in slowly

B with the narrow side outwards

C to force out ✓

D none of these

EXPLANATION

“To edge someone out” means to narrowly defeat or force them out of a position, e.g. “She edged out her rival to win the seat.”

25

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“eke out”

To “eke out” means:

A to rush out

B to do with difficulty ✓

C to make easily

D none of these

EXPLANATION

“To eke out” a living or supply means to make it last, or manage to achieve it, only with great difficulty and effort.

26

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

"En masse"

To "En masse" means:

A one by one

B nobody

C as a group ✓

D none of these

EXPLANATION

"En masse" is a French borrowing meaning "all together, as a group," e.g. "The protesters marched en masse."

27

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“keep an eye out”

To “keep an eye out” means:

A

**watch
carefully** ✓

B

you are in
charge

C

you don't pay
attention

D

none of these

EXPLANATION

“To keep an eye out (for)” means to watch carefully and stay alert for something, e.g. “Keep an eye out for road signs.”

28

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“eat like a horse”

To “eat like a horse” means:

A to eat noisily

B to eat a little

C to eat a lot ✓

D none of these

EXPLANATION

“To eat like a horse” means to eat a very large amount of food, e.g. “After the match, the boys ate like horses.”

29

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

"egg on"

To "egg on" means:

A to eat enough

B to encourage ✓

C to annoy

D none of these

EXPLANATION

"To egg someone on" means to encourage or urge them to do something, often something reckless, e.g. "His friends egged him on to jump in."

30

IDIOM SPOTLIGHT

“ease up”

To “ease up” means:

A to make less nervous

B to increase pressure

C to go faster

D none of these ✓

EXPLANATION

“To ease up” actually means to reduce effort, speed, or pressure — to relax or take it easier, e.g. “Ease up, we have plenty of time.” Since none of the listed options describe this correctly, the right choice is ‘none of these.’

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