

Idioms for Oral ESL Classes

Summary

Students will use an app to develop their oral skills. Students will view a free app "[English Idioms Illustrated](#)" that has illustrations of common English idioms.

Main Core Tie

World Languages

[NL.IL](#)

Time Frame

1 class periods of 90 minutes each

Group Size

Small Groups

Life Skills

Communication

Materials

- [English Idioms Illustrated](#)
iPhone, iTouch and iPad App
Materials for illustrating their own idioms: paper, markers, pencils, etc.

Background for Teachers

Teachers should have a list of common English idioms that students can illustrate.

Student Prior Knowledge

Students would benefit from knowledge of idioms used in their primary language.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to understand the meaning of commonly used English idioms. Understanding idioms will enable students to communicate more effectively in English, which will benefit them in all aspects of communicating in English.

Instructional Procedures

Teacher will prepare a pretest of commonly used English idioms.

The teacher will prepare a list of idioms illustrated in the app "English Idioms Illustrated."

Teacher and students will open the app and read the descriptions of the origins of the chosen idioms as well as look at the illustrations in the app.

Students will be placed in small groups with other students who speak the same primary language. In their groups, students will generate a list of idioms from their primary language.

Student groups will then illustrate common English idioms. Some possibilities include the following:

a. *as easy as pie*

means "very easy" (same as "a piece of cake")

Example: He said it is a difficult problem, but I don't agree. It seems as easy as pie to me!

- b. *be sick and tired of*
means "I hate" (also "can't stand")
Example: I'm sick and tired of doing nothing but work. Let's go out tonight and have fun.
- c. *bend over backwards*
means "try very hard" (maybe too much!)
Example: He bent over backwards to please his new wife, but she never seemed satisfied.
- d. *bite off more than one can chew*
means "take responsibility for more than one can manage"
Example: John is so far behind in his studies. Besides classes, he plays sports and works at a part-time job. It seems he has bitten off more than he can chew.
- e. *broke*
means "to have no money"
Example: I have to borrow some money from my Dad. Right now, I'm broke.
- f. *change one's mind*
means "decide to do something different from what had been decided earlier"
Example: I was planning to work late tonight, but I changed my mind. I'll do extra work on the weekend instead.
- g. *Cut it out!*
means "stop doing something bad"
Example: That noise is really annoying. Cut it out!
- h. *drop someone a line*
means "send a letter or email to someone"
Example: It was good to meet you and I hope we can see each other again. Drop me a line when you have time.
- i. *figure something out*
means "come to understand a problem"
Example: I don't understand how to do this problem. Take a look at it. Maybe you can figure it out.
- j. *fill in for someone*
means "do their work while they are away"
Example: While I was away from the store, my brother filled in for me.
- k. *in ages*
means "for a very long time"
Example: Have you seen Joe recently? I haven't seen him in ages.
- l. *give someone a hand*
means "help"
Example: I want to move this desk to the next room. Can you give me a hand?
- m. *hit the hay*
means "go to bed" (also "hit the sack")
Example: It's after 12 o'clock. I think it's time to hit the hay.
- n. *in the black*
means "the business is making money, it is profitable"

Students will present their illustrated idioms to other members of the class.

Illustrated idioms will be displayed in the classroom.

The teacher will provide a post assessment in which students write the meaning of selected idioms.

This is a lesson specifically designed for diverse learners. Students with different languages and cultures will all be able to contribute.

Extensions

This is a lesson that can be extended throughout the year. The teacher and students can create an ongoing list or a bulletin board to which they add additional idioms.

Rubrics

[Illustrated Idioms](#)

Bibliography

app "English Idioms Illustrated"

Authors

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