

Idioms in the Limelight

Subject: Language Arts

Grade(s): 4-6

Overview

Challenge students to “collect their wits,” “put on their thinking cap,” and keep their “nose to the grindstone,” as you introduce this entertaining lesson plan on idioms. Students draw a literal interpretation of a selected idiom and have classmates try to guess what that idiom is.

Objectives

Students will:

- Recognize idioms in a sentence.
- Use idioms in context in writing and speaking.

IRA/NCTE Standards for the English Language Arts

Standard 4: Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.

Standard 6: Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and nonprint texts.

Materials Needed

- WordTeasers: Idioms
- Drawing paper and crayons

Getting Started

Ask students if they have ever heard the expression: “take the bull by the horns.” What do they think that means? Do they think that it means to literally grab a bull by its horns? Why or why not? What do they think the saying really means? (Take charge; confront a problem head on.) Where do they think that saying came from?

Development

Explain to students that there are many phrases in English that don't mean exactly what the individual words mean. These phrases are called idioms. Write this sentence on the board: "I'll eat my hat if I don't get an A on the spelling test." Call on a volunteer to identify the idiomatic expression in that sentence. What does the phrase mean literally? What does the idiomatic phrase mean? (To bet with confidence on the outcome of something.)

WordTeasers: Idioms Activity

Divide the class into pairs. Pass the WordTeasers: Idioms box around the room. Let each pair of students select a WordTeaser: Idioms Challenge Card from the box. Tell students to work together in pairs to draw a literal interpretation of their idiom (e.g., "egg on your face"). Then let each pair of students show their drawing to the class. Can the class guess what the idiom is? Have students write a sentence using that idiom. Finally, ask volunteers to answer some of the WordTeasers: Idioms Challenge questions (e.g., "Tell about a time you had egg on your face.")

For more Teacher Lesson Plans and Resources go to www.wordteasers.com.