

## Chapter 23. Idiomatic Expressions

**Exercise 1. A.** What do the following idiomatic expressions mean? Tick (✓) the correct choice:

**1. to smell a rat**

- a. to experience bad smell
- b. to misunderstand
- c. to see a hidden meaning
- d. to suspect a trick

**2. to read between the lines**

- a. to misunderstand
- b. to read too much meaning into
- c. to understand the writer's hidden meaning
- d. not to be able to read clearly

**3. to win laurels**

- a. to win a lottery
- b. to win an honour
- c. to win a victory
- d. to fulfil an ambition

**4. to put on airs**

- a. to look important
- b. to be lost in day-dreaming
- c. to act with great imagination
- d. to make plans for the future

**5. to keep one's head**

- a. to be proud
- b. to be self-respecting
- c. to concentrate
- d. to remain cool

**6. to look blank**

- a. to grow pale
- b. to get angry
- c. to look puzzled
- d. to look dejected

**7. to cut a sorry figure**

- a. to look untidy
- b. to make a bad drawing
- c. to behave rudely
- d. to turn out a bad performance

**8. to turn the corner**

- a. to join the opposite party
- b. to pass the critical stage
- c. to die
- d. to go out of sight

B. Tick (✓) the correct alternative:

1. What is a **snake in the grass**?
  - a. a secret or hidden enemy
  - b. a very dangerous snake
  - c. an unreliable person
  - d. a clever person
2. What is a **wet blanket**?
  - a. an unpleasant situation
  - b. a pleasant situation that turns unpleasant
  - c. an unwelcome guest
  - d. a person whose presence discourages
3. What is a **close-fisted man**?
  - a. an expert boxer
  - b. an expert in judo or karate
  - c. a miser
  - d. an unhelpful person
4. What is a **dark horse**?
  - a. a person about whom we know nothing
  - b. a person who attacks when least expected
  - c. a stupid fellow
  - d. a person who unexpectedly turns out to be a genius

**Exercise 2.** A. Some words are underlined in the following sentences. Think of a **phrasal verb** that can replace them. Write it in the space provided. Clues are given below:

1. Could you telephone me again tomorrow please? \_\_\_\_\_
2. The employees have decided to cancel the strike. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Why don't you visit my house on your way back  
from the school? \_\_\_\_\_
4. I am afraid our plans might collapse for want of  
money. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Kindly wait here until I finish the phone call. \_\_\_\_\_
6. You won't disappoint me, will you? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Could you connect this call to Mr Kohli, please? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What time does our flight start? \_\_\_\_\_
9. The milk is likely to turn sour. \_\_\_\_\_
10. We'll soon be left with no fuel and there is no  
petrol pump in sight. \_\_\_\_\_

let down   go off   call back   take off   put through  
call off   hang up   drop in   run out of   fall through

B. Each of the following expressions is followed by four meanings, of which only one is correct. Tick (✓) the correct meaning:

1. **to be taken aback**

- a. to be startled
- b. to be rejected
- c. to be withdrawn
- d. to be hit upon the back

2. **to make away with**

- a. to kill
- b. to run away with
- c. to win
- d. to manage with

3. **to look down upon**

- a. to observe something
- b. to look at something from a height
- c. to despise someone
- d. to search for something

4. **to pass away**

- a. to hand over
- b. to die
- c. to give (a bad coin) to someone
- d. to pass by a person without looking at him