

Idiom Lesson Plan 2: Learning Color, Nature, Food, and Animal related Idioms

Goal:

The goal of this lesson is to learn the meaning and usage of some common English language idioms while appreciating multicultural illustrations and stories.

Books used:

[Icing on the Cake: Food Idioms](#)

[The Lion's Share: Animal Idioms](#)

[With Flying Colors: Color Idioms](#)

[Fresh as a Daisy: Nature Idioms](#)

Snapshot:

- Introduce the new vocabulary that will be used in the books
- Read the book(s) of idioms
- Complete worksheets related to the individual idioms

Background Information for Facilitator:

It might be helpful to provide the students with some background information about the various illustrations in the books. See the appendix at the end of this lesson plan for detailed information about some of the illustrations, many of which include multicultural references.

Lesson Plan:

Grade Level: 3-5

Time Frame: 45 minutes

Objectives:

To become acquainted with certain common English language idioms.

Knowledge:

- Identify and understand the idioms used in the books

Skills:

- Identify, define, and use the new vocabulary in the books
- Discuss how idioms are often drawn from everyday life: food, nature, animals, and colors.

Attitudes:

- Understand and appreciate that the English language has its own unique idioms, and these idioms are often drawn on aspects of everyday life.

Essential Question:

- What are some examples of common idioms and what do they mean?

Vocabulary to be Developed in Lesson:***Icing on the Cake: Food Idioms***

Confess

Reveal

Howled

Skeptical

Suited

Ambitious

The Lion's Share: Animal Idioms

Hasty

Direct

With Flying Colors: Color Idioms

Delighted

Talent

Unexpectedly

Positive

Idealistic

Opportunity

Rarely

Hospitality

Accomplish

Fresh as a Daisy: Nature Idioms

Settle

Refreshing

Overreact

Realistic

Achieve

Enthusiasm

Procedure:

Introduction:

1. Introduce the books by reviewing the concept of an idiom.
2. Show the students the cover of the book and ask them whether they have any predictions about what idioms they might find in the book. Do they know any idioms related to nature/color/animals/food?

Vocabulary Development:

3. Engage in vocabulary development with the students using the list of words above or any additional vocabulary words as you see fit. Using flashcards, pictures, or interactive white-board slides, invite the students to identify, say, use, count syllables, and define the new terms in their own words. You may wish to pre-teach the vocabulary first.

Reading:

4. Read the book(s) with the children, ideally sitting together so that you can show them the pictures while reading. This can be done by conducting a read-aloud, getting the children to read the section after the facilitator (echo reading), all reading it together (choral reading), or a reading a sentence each between facilitator and child (see-saw reading). Read with appropriate tone, pace, inflection, and enthusiasm to engage the children as much as possible.
5. After reading the idiom and the sample sentence, you might want to pause and discuss the illustration with the children as well. You can call on a student to explain what is going on in the illustration and to relate it back to the idiom. This is a great opportunity for the facilitator to point out the multicultural references in the illustrations. If a child comes from or has visited a country represented in the illustrations, allow them to share relevant information about the country if they feel comfortable.
6. Depending on the age of the students, you might want the students to write down each idiom and its definition on an index card as you read through the book.

Discussion to Encourage Reflection and Response:

7. Invite the students to share which particular idiom they either enjoyed the most, found the most useful, found the most comical, or found the most strange.

Literal Questions:

- I. *Which idiom means something like (insert definition of idiom here)?*

Inferential Questions:

- I. *Turn to one of the pages referred to in the appendix and show the students the image. Ask them to try to “guess” what is taking place in the image. For example, ask questions like: “what do you think a koto is?” “what do people do at a color festival?” “what is distinctive about Spanish fiesta clothing?”*

Independent Work/ Group Work Activity

8. For each idiom book, there is a corresponding fill-in-the-blank worksheet* that will teach them about another custom or part of the world. Pass out these worksheets and have students fill them out independently.
**Idiom worksheets are available on the Language Lizard website and can be accessed using the QR code on the last page of each idiom book.*
9. Once the students are finished with the worksheets, it is time to review them. This can be done as group work, or by the whole class together. The facilitator may want to read the sentences out loud, with the correct answers filled in, or may want to call on students to do so.

Conclusion

10. After reviewing the answers, ask the students about what the idioms contributed to the overall story. Encourage them to think about why and when to use idioms in their own writing.

Extension Activities

There are additional worksheets/ activities for the color and food idioms book. There is also a word search for each idiom book that children can work on at home or in class to reinforce the idioms and definitions.

All idiom activities and worksheets are available on the Language Lizard website and can be accessed using the QR code on the last page of each idiom book.

Appendix

For *With Flying Colors: Color Idioms*

- “Golden opportunity.” pg 12-13

A koto is the national instrument of Japan. It generally has 13 or 17 strings which are plucked using three finger-picks that are worn on the first three fingers of the hand. The koto has a long history in Japan that starts as far back as the 7th century! It was traditionally much smaller--with only five strings--and was popular among the wealthy. It was thought to be a romantic instrument. In this image, a Japanese lady in a kimono plays a koto, with her older teacher standing beside her. In the background, you can see the beautifully blossoming cherry trees for which Japan is also well-known.

- “Once in a blue moon.” pg 22-23

Lotus cookies are a traditional Thai dessert--a crispy cookie formed in the shape of a lotus flower. Usually, a mold is used to create this intricate shape. The lotus flower is meaningful in Thai and Buddhist traditions as a symbol of purity and faithfulness. In this image, you can see a Thai grandmother mixing ingredients for the cookies. Behind her, you can see plates of brightly colored lotus blossom cookies.

For *The Lion's Share: Animal Idioms*

- “Take the bull by the horns” pg. 16-17

In this image is an African Watusi bull with characteristically large sweeping horns and a mottled coat. The African herdsman is attempting to control the bull by holding it by its horns. Since the bull is so large and powerful, the herdsman needs the assistance of the children who form a line behind him. The children lean against the herdsman and against each other, to help him restrain the bull.

For *Fresh as a daisy: Nature Idioms*

- “A breath of fresh air” pg. 8-9

In this image, you can see a girl and boy riding a horse at a Spanish fiesta, a traditional Spanish festival, dressed in fiesta clothing. The boy wears *traje corto*, a short jacket with a high waistband, and a white shirt underneath. He also wears a *sombrero*, a wide brimmed hat. The girl is wearing a brightly colored pink dress, with a full skirt and lots of ruffles.

- “Under the weather” pg. 10-11

The Festival of Colors, or Holi Festival, is a two day spring festival that is celebrated in India. The festival has become so popular, however, that it is now celebrated in many other countries around the world! The festival begins with a bonfire at night that includes dancing and food, followed by a festival of colors the next day. At the festival of colors, hundreds of people gather in the streets and throw brightly colored powder at one another. In the Hindu religion, each color has its own religious meaning and significance. In this image, you can see an Indian teenager looking out of her second floor window at the colorful festival down below. You can see the festival goers dancing amidst the huge clouds of colored powder that they are throwing around.

For Icing on the Cake: Food Idioms

- “Wake up and smell the coffee” pg. 10-11

In this image, a cowboy is resting together with his horse, his hat tipped against his face. “Cowboy” is a term used to describe a North American cattle herder; someone who works on a ranch raising cattle, and typically rides around on horseback. Traditional cowboy attire includes thick protective pants known as chaps, tall leather riding boots, and a wide-brimmed ‘cowboy’ hat meant to protect the cowboy’s face from the sun while on horseback.

For additional information about the illustrations in each book, please see the documents included on the Language Lizard site via the QR code on the last page of each idiom book.