

Idioms, Adages, and Proverbs

Name: _____

Date: _____

Score: _____ / 10



Quick Review

An **idiom** is a saying whose words don't literally describe its meaning (*piece of cake = easy*). An **adage** or **proverb** is a short well-known saying that gives advice (*The early bird gets the worm*). Wrong answers often look right — they may match the LITERAL words or be a DIFFERENT idiom that sounds similar.

PRACTICE

Choose the best meaning. Watch for literal traps and look-alike idioms.

1. What does “**the early bird gets the worm**” mean?
 - A. People who wake up early should eat breakfast first.
 - B. It is rude to keep someone waiting too long.
 - C. You can find more food in the morning hours.
 - D. People who start early have the best chance of success.
2. What does the idiom “**piece of cake**” mean?
 - A. A small slice of dessert shared with others
 - B. A task that is very easy to do
 - C. A tiny amount of money or effort (“peanuts”)
 - D. A sweet reward for finishing hard work
3. *Don't count your chickens before they hatch.* This proverb means:
 - A. Don't celebrate or plan on something until it has actually happened.
 - B. Count carefully so you don't lose track of your animals.
 - C. Take good daily care of any animals you own.
 - D. Good things come to those who patiently wait.
4. *It was raining cats and dogs.* What does this idiom mean?
 - A. Pets ran around outside in the rain.
 - B. The weather changed back and forth quickly.
 - C. It was raining very heavily.
 - D. There was thunder along with the rain.



5. What does “**let the cat out of the bag**” mean?
 - A. Release a pet you’ve been hiding from someone.
 - B. Cause a sudden and messy problem for everyone.
 - C. Give up on a plan that just isn’t working.
 - D. Accidentally reveal something that was meant to stay secret.
6. *Actions speak louder than words.* This means:
 - A. What you DO shows your real feelings more than what you SAY.
 - B. It is rude to shout instead of speaking calmly.
 - C. Silence is often the wisest reply.
 - D. People who talk a lot get more attention.
7. What does “**a penny saved is a penny earned**” mean?
 - A. Small coins add up quickly when you collect them.
 - B. You must work hard to earn every coin you have.
 - C. Money grows by itself when put in the bank.
 - D. Money you don’t spend is just as valuable as money you earn.
8. If your sister tells you to “**hit the books,**” what should you do?
 - A. Return the books to the library.
 - B. Study hard and focus on your schoolwork.
 - C. Close all the books and take a long break.
 - D. Read a book just for fun in your free time.
9. *We were finally on the same page about the plan.* The idiom means:
 - A. We were both reading the same chapter of a book.
 - B. We both forgot the plan and had to start over.
 - C. We finally agreed and shared the same understanding.
 - D. We wrote the plan down so we wouldn’t forget it.
10. Which row gives the CORRECT meaning for every saying?
 - A. spill the beans = reveal a secret; piece of cake = very easy; hit the books = study hard; on the same page = in agreement
 - B. spill the beans = make a mess at dinner; piece of cake = a small reward; hit the books = read for fun; on the same page = reading the same chapter
 - C. spill the beans = work too quickly; piece of cake = a hard task; hit the books = take a break; on the same page = forgetting the plan
 - D. spill the beans = start a long argument; piece of cake = a sweet promise; hit the books = leave school early; on the same page = writing the plan down



Answer Keys

- 1 A B C D
- 2 A B C D
- 3 A B C D
- 4 A B C D
- 5 A B C D

- 6 A B C D
- 7 A B C D
- 8 A B C D
- 9 A B C D
- 10 A B C D

Explanations

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|-------|---|
| 1. D | D is the figurative meaning — acting early gives you an advantage. A and C read the bird and worm LITERALLY; B states a different proverb idea (about politeness). |
| 2. B | Piece of cake = very easy. A is the literal meaning; C is a different idiom (<i>for peanuts</i>); D sounds proverb-like but isn't what the idiom means. |
| 3. A | A is the proverb's meaning. B and C take the chickens literally; D is a DIFFERENT proverb (<i>Good things come to those who wait</i>) about patience, not about getting ahead of yourself. |
| 4. C | C is the figurative meaning — a heavy downpour. A is the literal trap; B is a different weather idea (variable weather); D adds a detail (thunder) that isn't part of the idiom. |
| 5. D | D is the meaning. A is the literal trap; B is close to the different idiom <i>open a can of worms</i> ; C is the different idiom <i>throw in the towel</i> . |
| 6. A | A is the proverb. B reads <i>loud</i> literally; C is a different proverb (<i>silence is golden</i>); D is the opposite of the proverb's message. |
| 7. D | D is the proverb — saving = earning. A is half-true but misses the trade-off message; B is a different proverb (about hard work); C is about interest, not the saying. |
| 8. B | Hit the books = study hard. A is a literal action; C is the opposite of studying; D is book-related but isn't the idiom. |
| 9. C | On the same page = in agreement. A is the literal reading; B is a different idiom (<i>back to square one</i>); D is a literal step that doesn't fit the idiom. |
| 10. A | Row A is the figurative meaning of each idiom: <i>spill the beans</i> = reveal a secret, <i>piece of cake</i> = very easy, <i>hit the books</i> = study hard, <i>on the same page</i> = in agreement. The other rows take the words LITERALLY or swap in meanings from look-alike idioms. |



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