



Figurative Language: Idioms

By: Janelle Cox
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Language Arts
Grades 3-5



Introduction

Students will partake in whole-group, small-group, and independent practice on idioms.

Read aloud the book *More Parts* by Tedd Arnold. Ask students what they thought about all the sayings (idioms) that the main character talked about. For example, “Like when my dad asked me if I would please give him a hand,” or “I bet that broke your heart.” Then tell students that these sayings are called “idioms.” An idiom is not meant to be taken literally; it is just a figure of speech. Then give them an example like “it’s raining cats and dogs outside.” Discuss how this figure of speech does not mean that it is really raining cats and dogs, it just means that it’s raining hard outside.

Learning Objectives

- Students will develop a deeper understanding of figurative language by identifying the literal representations of idioms through class discussions, making connections between idioms and their personal experiences, as well as able to determine the meaning of an idiom using context clues.

Materials Needed

- The book, [More Parts](#), by Tedd Arnold
- The book [Amelia Bedelia’s First Field Trip](#) by Herman Parish.

Procedure

Activity 1: Personal Idioms

1. Ask students if they have ever heard of any sayings like the ones in the story, and if so, please share them with the class. For each personal experience/example students offer, ask them how they were able to decipher what it really meant.
2. As students share their personal stories, write them on chart paper or the board. Discuss how these saying get passed down through generations. Next, ask students to choose their favorite idiom from the list and draw a literal representation of it. Hang them in the classroom.

Activity 2: Literal and Non-literal Meanings

1. Read the book *Amelia Bedelia’s First Field Trip* by Herman Parish. This short book contains a lot of idioms. After you have read the book to the class, have students separate into pairs and come up with one more idiom from the story.

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2. Next, call upon the groups and have them share their examples. Ask students to share their phrase, as well as what context clues they used to help them figure out what the author was trying to say. Ask students to discuss the literal and non-literal meaning of the phrase they chose.

Activity 3: Literal Representations

1. For this whole-group activity, ask students to choose their favorite idiom. This can be from personal experience or any of the books that you've just read in class.
2. Next, have students take turns sharing the literal representation of their idiom and have their classmates try to guess what it is. Students can either act it out or draw it on the board.

Activity 4: Find Your Match

1. For this activity you must have pre-written idioms and their meanings on separate index cards. Hand out an index card to each student. Then, have students walk around the classroom looking for a partner that has their match. For example, one person would have the idiom, the other would have the meaning of the idiom.
2. Once students have found their match, they must sit down with their partner.
3. Call upon each group to determine if they are a correct match.

Evaluation

Write down several idioms on the front board and ask students to choose one and use it in a sentence.

- Use pictures of personal idiom from activity one.
- Use observations from group work in activity two, three, and four.