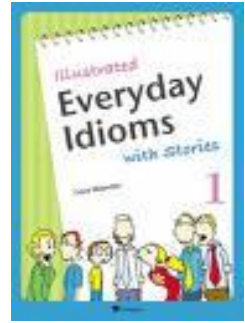
The logo for 'Eye on Idioms' features the text 'Eye on Idioms' in a purple, serif font on a light orange rectangular background. This background is framed by a decorative border of small, colorful icons representing various idioms.

Eye on Idioms

Oh My Idioms!!



Description:

Idioms bring color to the language. Learning idioms will help you understand more the American English conversation. This module contains today's most common idioms used in the dialogs as well as their meanings. Short activities are also provided for the students to practice the learned idioms.

Goal:

The module aims to familiarize students in using casual expressions and idioms for daily conversation. It's objective is to make the student's speech sound less foreign and more like a native. It will encourage students to have fun and enjoy speaking English more.



Lesson 1

A bad day at work

- Bill :** Homer, I hate to **break the news** but the project that you worked on didn't go well.
- Homer:** Is that for real?
- Bill :** Oh yeah! Our client decided to transfer to our competitor.
- Homer:** But they charge **top dollar** for their consultation. Their accountants also act very strange. They **give me the creeps!**
- Bill:** Anyway, they are still the number one accounting firm in town. Meanwhile, we're about to go bankrupt.
- Homer:** It's really a bad news. I thought my new financial scheme would be of help.
- Bill:** Let's face it. Your formulated financial scheme is a **real flop**.
- Homer:** Well, if that's the case, I'm willing to start all over again.
- Bill:** It's too late for that! I'm **giving you the ax!**

MEANINGS

- Break the news** – to make something known
The married couple hadn't broken the news until their wedding day.
- Give me the creeps**-give the feeling of disgust
His piercing really gives me the creeps.
- Giving you the ax**- to fire someone
The boss gave me the ax because of the down sales.
- Real flop**- a complete failure
Nobody watched the movie - it's a real flop!
- Top dollar**– a lot of money
Traveling in Europe requires top dollar.

Thoughts to Ponder

1. What is the most surprising news that you have received?
2. Do you know a culture or tradition in any countries that seems to be odd?
3. What movie do you think is a real flop?



Lesson 2

Bringing Home A Bad News

Maggie: What's wrong, dear?

Homer: Honey, I got axed at work today.

Maggie: Did Bill **stab you on the back**?

Homer: Oh yeah, he did. It was difficult for me to leave that company. I've worked there for more than 10 years.

Maggie: Just **look on the bright side**. At least, you don't need to set eyes and endure a bossy manager.

Homer: **Thank goodness** for that!

Maggie: **Hang in there**. I'm sure you won't be out of work for long.

Homer: I'm glad to hear that. But for now, we'll **make both ends meet**.

MEANINGS

Hang in there – not to give up; to persevere
We were left behind in the soccer game but I told my team mates to hang in there.

Look on the bright side – to be optimistic
In times of trial, I always look on the bright side.

Make both ends meet – to have enough finances to live on
My parents make both ends meet for our family.

Stab someone on the back – to betray someone
I trusted him enough for him to stab me on the back.

Thank goodness – I'm grateful
Thank goodness I passed the bar exam!

Thoughts to Ponder

1. When was the hardest time of your life?
2. Have you ever waited for someone or something for quite a long time?
3. Have you ever been betrayed by a friend?



Lesson 3

Bart's Bad Day at School

Maggie: Hi sweetie! How was your day in the school?

Bart: I had a terrible day. We had a Math test and I **blew it!**

Homer: Oh son! Please stop **slacking off** and **start hitting the books.**

Bart: I'm trying, dad. But this subject is really hard for me.

Maggie: You need to **buckle down.**

Homer: If you really desire to go to Harvard University, then you should change your ways.

Maggie: Besides, having such poor grades don't **stand a chance** of getting in there.

MEANINGS

Blow something – to spoil something

I blew my sister's presentation when I accidentally deleted her files.

Buckle down- to start working seriously

We don't have much time before the start of the business so we have to buckle down.

Slack off – to waste time

Lazy people just slack off in the middle of crisis.

Stand a chance- to have the possibility of success

I stand a chance of being employed in a multinational company.

Start hitting the books- to start studying

I should start hitting the books for the exam next week.

Thoughts to Ponder

1. Have you ever done something that caused trouble to someone?
2. Tell me about a time you were pressured to work hard.
3. What should you do to stand a chance?



Lesson 4

Liza's Happy Day at School

- Maggie:** Oh dear, you're back! How was your day at school?
- Liza:** It was awesome mom! My teacher threw a question about our country's international relationship and I gave the best answer among all my classmates.
- Maggie:** **Way to go** Liza!
- Liza:** My teacher said my answer was **head and shoulders above** the others.
- Bart:** I think your teacher just wants you to be happy.
- Liza:** Stop it!
Perhaps, I could **go into** diplomacy when I grow up.
- Bart:** **Dream on** Liza! With your style, you can't be a diplomat.
- Liza:** Don't push me. You're **on thin ice with me** now.
- Bart:** Oh I'm scared!

MEANINGS

Dream on – What you are expecting or wanting to happen is just a fantasy.

I dream on about kissing my prince charming.

Go into – to enter a profession

I plan to go into business after finishing the graduate school.

Head and shoulders above – far superior than others

My team is head and shoulders above the rookies.

On thin ice with someone – in a dangerous situation

My friend is on thin ice when his girlfriend saw him dating another girl.

Way to go – job well done

Way to go! We reached the highest sales for this month.

Let's Talk About You

1. I am head and shoulders above _____.
2. I dream on _____.
3. When I grow up, I will go into _____.



Lesson 5

Bart's Night Out

- Bart:** I'm going now, mom. See you later!
- Maggie:** Where are you heading to?
- Bart:** I feel **down in the dumps** so I'll get to see my girlfriend, Mars.
- Maggie:** What do you plan to do together?
- Bart:** Hhm.. We'll just spend time and **hang around**.
- Maggie:** Are you really into her? Don't **take this the wrong way**, but she's not exactly my **cup of tea**.
- Bart:** Mom, relax! I'm not getting married. I just enjoy hanging out with her.
- Maggie:** I'm relieved to hear that. I guess, there is really **no accounting for taste**.

MEANINGS

- Cup of tea-** the type of person or thing one generally likes
He looks kind but he's simply not my cup of tea.
- Down in the dumps-** to feel depressed
I'm down in the dumps because I failed in the exam.
- Hang around-** to spend time idly
I love to hang around after working overtime.
- Take something the wrong way-** to take offense
She took it the wrong way when I told her she needs some diet.
- There's no accounting for taste-** it's impossible to explain individual likes and dislikes
I think there's no accounting for taste when she chose that tongue-pierced guy over the decent-looking man.

Let's Talk About You

1. I usually hang around _____ every weekend.
2. People who are _____ are just not my cup of tea.
3. I feel down in the dumps whenever _____.



Lesson 6

Maggie Bakes Some Cookies

Maggie: Hey honey! I baked some cookies for you.

Homer: Oh, thank you dear! You're such a sweet and caring wife.

Maggie: I just want to cheer you up because you've had a hard time these days.

Homer: These days are really challenging. I guess I've been **on edge** after I got axed from work.

Maggie: Oh yeah! I sensed it.

Homer: Mmm... You know what honey, your cookies are awesome. They're **out of this world!**

Maggie: Well, you should **give me a credit** for that.

Homer: And I think we can **go into business** by selling these cookies. We can **make a bundle**.

Maggie: Good thinking!

MEANINGS

Give me a credit-to recognize someone's positive trait
I give credit for her for successfully finishing the project.

Go into business-to start a business
I finally decided to go on a business after retiring from work.

Make a bundle-to make a lot of money
People work hard to make a bundle.

On edge- nervous; irritable
Having a fight with him puts me on edge.

Out of this world-delicious
I've tasted Outback's steak, and it's out of this world.

Let's Talk About You

1. I give credit to _____ for _____.
2. The reason why I want to make a bundle is _____.
3. The last time I was on the edge was _____.



Lesson 7

Maggie's Cookie Business

MEANINGS

Crash course – short and intensive instruction

We had a crash course on culinary arts last summer vacation.

Give it a shot – to try something

The problem was hard to solve but we still gave it a shot.

Needless to say – obviously

Needless to say, English is such a global language.

Not sleep a wink - to stay awake the whole night

I have an exam later so I didn't sleep a wink last night.

Work like a dog – to work very hard

I always work like a dog to make this project materialize.

Let's Talk About You

1. Last summer I took a crash course in _____.
2. These days, I often don't sleep a wink because _____.
3. I admire _____ because she works like a dog.

Homer: Good morning sweetie! You're early today.

Maggie: I **didn't sleep a wink** last night. I kept on thinking about the business so I stayed awake.

Homer: Are you really serious in running your own business?

Maggie: Of course! What's wrong with running my own business? It's my chance to make a bundle.

Homer: Well, **needless to say**, running your own business will require you to **work like a dog**.

Maggie: I'm ready for that. And besides, you're there to help me out. I can give you a **crash course** on how to work on it.

Homer: Sounds great! Let's **give it a shot**!



Lesson 8

Bart Forms a Rock Band

MEANINGS

Made of money – to be very rich

I used to think that my family is made of money until we got broke.

Pay someone back – to repay a loan or debt

My mom got her pension so she can already pay you back.

Shell out – to give out some amount of money

Everybody has to shell out for the fund raising campaign.

Take something by storm – to win popularity quickly

2ne1 is taking Korea by storm with their new album.

Those are the breaks! – when something bad happens and you can't control it

It rained during the concert. That's the break!

Let's Talk About You

1. The first time I had to shell out some money was _____.
2. My idol _____ is taking my country by storm.
3. I have to pay my friend back for _____.

Bart: Mom, I've got a good news for you! Mars and I are planning to put up our own rock band.

Maggie: That's a great news!

Bart : Indeed, a great news. But mom, I need you to give me a hand. We need \$1000 for some equipment.

Maggie: Oh son! Your father and I are not **made of money**. We can't easily **shell out** such amount.

Bart: C'mon mom! I promise to **pay you back** once we **take the music world by storm**. I'm sure to make a lot of money.

Maggie: Well, that sounds a pipe dream. What if your band became a real flop>

Bart: Oh well, **Those are the breaks!**



Lesson 9

Liza for President!

- Liza:** I have decided to run for presidency in the school's student body. Since, I want to be a diplomat in the future, I should **get an experience under my belt** now.
- Bart:** Why suddenly you want to be the school's president? When in fact, you always give a **cold shoulder** to most of the students.
- Liza:** Anyway, whether they support me or not. I'm positive that I'm going to win this election.
- Bart:** Don't be so **full of yourself!** You and your **goody-goody** friends are not well known in the school.
- Liza:** Stop **kidding around!** You're only jealous of me.

MEANINGS

- Cold shoulder-** to treat someone coldly
I couldn't understand why she gave me a cold shoulder.
- Full of yourself-**to think too much of oneself
She is full of herself that she will ace the examination.
- Get under one's belt** -to get an experience
She needs to get management training under her belt.
- Goody-goody-** self-righteous or good
She used to be a goody-goody and teacher's pet in kindergarten.
- Kidding around-** to joke around
He loves to kid around so people misunderstood him.

Fill-in the correct answer.

1. The player is _____ of herself that she will beat her opponents.
2. The newbie in the company needs to get a training _____ his belt.
3. The clown _____ around and makes the children laugh out loud.



Lesson 10

Homer Visited the Market

- Homer:** I'm glad that you were able to **make some time** for me.
- Kate:** Sure, no problem. What do you have for me?
- Homer:** My wife baked some cookies. Please have some.
- Kate:** Mmm.. Tasty. These cookies are **out of this world**. I guess I can sell these cookies at the Village market.
- Homer:** How much do you plan to pay for the cookies?
- Kate:** I don't have any idea yet. I need to **roll up my sleeves** first and check the market.
- Homer:** Can you give me a **ballpark figure**?
- Kate:** Just **sit tight** for now. We'll talk about it next time.

MEANINGS

- Ballpark figure**-an approximate number
She gave me a ballpark figure of how much her tuition costs.
- Make time**- to reserve a time for something
I always make time for my family.
- Out of this world**- delicious
The steak that we ate was really out of this world.
- Roll up one's sleeve**-to prepare to work
Rain rolls up her sleeve early in the morning to avoid being late.
- Sit tight**- to wait patiently
She sits tight until her mother came back to pick her up.

Fill-in the correct answer

1. Due to her work, she usually can't make _____ for her children.
2. I usually _____ up my sleeve early in the morning.
3. Just sit _____ and wait for your prince charming to come to you.



Lesson 11

Homer Drives a Hard Bargain

- Homer:** Have you finally decided how much you will pay for the cookies?
- Kate:** Well, after coming up with some numbers. I decided to offer you 55¢ per cookie.
- Homer:** That's out of the question. At that price, it's not **worth our while**. The ingredients already costs 35 ¢.
- Kate:** If that's the case, let me **sweeten the deal**. What about 65¢?
- Homer:** You know, my wife and I are making a living from this business.
- Kate:** Ok, you're driving me nuts. I'll pay you 75 ¢ per cookie. **Take it or leave it**.
- Homer:** **Now you're talking!** Deal!
- Kate:** Homer, you **drive a hard bargain**.

MEANINGS

- Drive a hard bargain**-to be tough in negotiating
The seller drives a hard bargain even for a piece of meat.
- Now you're talking**-you're saying the right thing
The president said he will improve our economy. Now he's talking.
- Sweeten the deal**-to make an offer attractive
The salesman sweetened the deal to increase the sales.
- Take it or leave it**-to accept or reject an offer
He forced me to decide on the price whether I would take. it or leave it.
- Worth one's while** – worthy of one's effort or time
The concert is worth my while. It's fantastic!

Fill-in the correct answer

1. Doing this business is _____ my time and effort.
2. I always drive a hard _____ when buying fruits and vegetables in the market.
3. She gave me a big discount to _____ the deal.



Lesson 12

Homer Got a Big Cookie Order

Homer: For the past few days, I've been down because of my dismissal from work. However, **things are looking up now**. Somebody wants to sell our cookies.

Liza: Good to hear dad!

Homer: We have to bake **like crazy** over the weekend. Kate wants a thousand of cookies freshly baked on Monday.

Bart: In two days? We're going to be **running around like chicken with it's head cut off**.

Homer: There are four of us here. Every one will **pitch in** to finish the job.

Bart: Mars will **help out** too.

MEANINGS

Help out- to give assistance

The members help out to build the foundation.

Like chicken with it's head cut off – in a nervous way

We work like chicken with it's head cut off when the president arrives.

Like crazy- with great speed or enthusiasm

The students study like crazy for the exams.

Pitch in- to help

Every family member pitch in to achieve a good result.

Things are looking up now- things are improving

Things are looking up now when I started to work again.

Fill-in the correct answer

1. During crunch time, all employees work like _____ in the office.
2. Every member _____ in to make the project available on time.
3. Things are _____ up now for their company after the world economic crisis.



Lesson 13

Mars Helped Out to Bake Cookies

MEANINGS

All the rage- the latest fashion

Tight jeans and stiletto are all the rage this season.

Call it a night- to end one's activity for the night

Let's call it a night and go to bed.

Know one's stuff-to be expert in a field

The chef know his stuff well even if he's already old.

Lost one's touch- to lose the ability to do something

I lost my touch for painting when I stopped doing some works.

Work one's tail off – to work very hard

My friend works his tail off for his business.

Fill-in the correct answer

1. The retired agent still knows his _____ that he mastered for a number of years.
2. My dad works his _____ off to provide for our family.
3. Perm hair is all the _____ nowadays for women.

Bart: Mom, Mars came over to help us bake the cookies.

Maggie: Hi, Mars! It's good to see you again. Your hair looks interesting.

Mars: Thanks! Pink hair is **all the rage** nowadays.

Bart: Mom, you can take a rest first. You've been **working your tail off** the whole day. Mars **knows her stuff**. She'll take care of everything.

Mars: I'm sure I haven't **lost my touch**. Though I might be a bit out of practice.

Bart: Let's **call it a night**, mom! See you tomorrow!



Lesson 14

Bart and Mars Heat the Kitchen Up

Mars: Honey, do you still remember the first time we met? I was really **head over heels in love** with you.

Bart: Can you please stop that nonsense talk? We need to **crank out** these cookies.

Mars: You don't really love me, do you?

Bart: Of course I do. But it's **crunch time** with the cookies. We have a deadline, remember?

Mars: Don't explain. You've got a **one-track mind**. You only think of those cookies. God ahead! **Treat me like a dirt**.

Bart: I'm sorry. That's not what I meant.

MEANINGS

Crank out-to produce something rapidly

He cranked out the whole night just to beat the deadline.

Crunch time- a short period when there's a high pressure to achieve a result

It's the crunch time for the companies to increase their sales.

Head over heels in love- very much in love

My friend doesn't know that I'm head over heels in love with him.

One-track mind-focused on just one thing

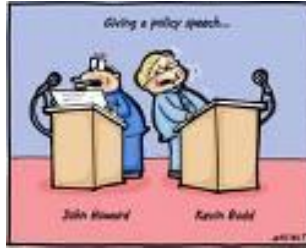
She has a one-track mind-nothing but money.

Treat me like a dirt-to treat someone poorly

No wonder she broke up with him. He treats her like a dirt.

Replace the expressions with the appropriate idioms in the sentences.

1. Romeo loves Juliet very much that he ignored his family for her.
2. Her step mother takes her for granted.
3. Examination week is a pressuring time for all students.



Lesson 15

Liza Prepared for Her Speech

- Nikki:** What's up Liza?
- Liza:** I stayed up all night long just to finish this speech. Thank God I'm done with it.
- Nikki:** That must be a **load off your mind!**
- Liza:** Not really. I have to deliver the speech in front of a thousand people tomorrow. I'm a **nervous wreck**.
- Nikki:** That's easy. Just remember the **rule of thumb**: Imagine your audience naked. According to **conventional wisdom**, it will make you less nervous.
- Liza:** I don't think so. Only practice will **do the trick**.

MEANINGS

- Conventional wisdom**-a widely held belief
Men are stronger than women is one of the most common conventional wisdom.
- Do the trick**- to achieve the desired results
To be famous, learning to speak English well will do the trick.
- Load off one's mind**- a relief
It's a load off the family's mind when the case was solved,
- Nervous wreck**-a person feeling very worried
He was a nervous wreck after hearing about the accident.
- Rule of thumb**- a useful principle
Following seniority is the rule of thumb in any fraternities.

Replace the expressions with the appropriate idioms in the sentences.

1. It's a common sense to pay respect to an elder person all the time.
2. The victims find a relief after the disaster had gone.
3. The main rule is to follow the boss no matter what.



Lesson 16

Homer Delivered the Cookies

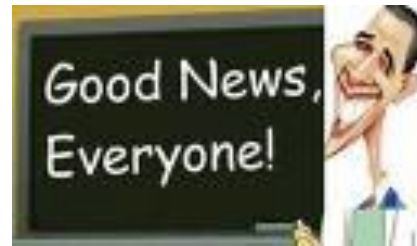
- Kate:** How did the baking go?
- Homer:** It was hard at first but we finally **got the hang of it**.
- Kate:** Good! Once you know the basic, it becomes **second nature**.
- Homer:** Well, at first I thought baking a thousand cookies is a **pain in the neck**. But we managed to get some help and it was a **piece of cake**.
- Kate:** I'm glad to hear that.
- Homer:** How many cookies can you sell today?
- Kate:** Maybe 500? I'm not sure. I'll **keep you posted**.

MEANINGS

- Get the hang of something-** to learn how to do something
I'm not used to his style but I think I will get the hang of it in no time.
- Keep posted-** to provide updated information
The teacher kept the students posted about the result of the exams.
- Pain in the neck-** an annoyance
Calculus is a pain in my neck.
- Piece of cake-** very easy task
Playing the violin is just a piece of cake for her.
- Second nature-** behavior that has been practiced for so long
With practice, speaking English becomes my second nature.

Replace the expressions with the appropriate idioms in the sentences.

1. I can't figure out how to solve this problem so it really annoys me.
2. I'll update you on what will happen on the next episode.
3. This job is as easy as pie.



Lesson 17

Kate Brings the Good News

- Kate:** Homer, I've got a good news for you. Your wife's cookies are **selling like hotcakes**.
- Homer:** How many did you sell?
- Kate:** We sold out. I need more right away. Perhaps, your wife's cookies could really **take off**.
- Homer:** I'm afraid we don't have much time and enough ingredients to prepare your orders.
- Kate:** Pull an all-nighter if you have to. Work hard now, for who knows, you'll be **sitting pretty** in a few years.
- Homer:** **Rest assured** that I'll deliver the goods on your door post tomorrow.
- Kate:** Ok now, let's stop the **chitchat** and get down to the business.

MEANINGS

- Chitchat-** casual conversation
I had a long chitchat with my long lost friend.
- Rest assured-** be sure
The clients are rest assured of the quality of the products.
- Selling like hotcakes-** to sell fast
IPOD sells like hotcakes for many teenagers.
- Sitting pretty-** in a good position
After her retirement from work, she's now sitting pretty.
- Take off-** to grow suddenly
The business took off after he came on board.

Replace the expressions with the appropriate idioms in the sentences.

1. Her restaurant business expanded in just a short time.
2. Their products are hitting the market these days.
3. I will definitely bag that job.



Lesson 18

It's Everyone's Business

MEANINGS

Get on one's nerves- to annoy/irritate someone

Her presence always gets into my nerves.

Get the show on the road- to start working

After the long preparation, we finally get the show on the road.

Lend a hand- to help

America lends a hand to its neighboring countries.

Night owl- a person who enjoys being active at night

People who work in call centers are night owls.

Not a chance!- No way!

Not a chance I would like an arrogant guy like him.

Replace the expressions with the appropriate idioms in the sentences.

1. Whenever I see that criminal, my blood is rushing to my head.
2. My trainer always assists me in doing my job accurately.
3. Loving him is an impossible dream.

Homer: Our cookies are selling like hotcakes. I need all of you to **lend a hand**. We need another thousand for the next morning.

Bart: It may sound impossible. But Mars and I won't mind staying up late. We are **night owls**.

Liza: Excuse me. But baking cookies the night before the elections? **Not a chance!**

Bart: Lighten up! Wake up your senses you're only running for high school presidency.

Liza: Bart, you really **get on my nerves** sometimes.

Homer: That's enough. We need to start working and **get the show on the road**.



Lesson 19

Bad News from Liza

MEANINGS

Fair and square- honestly

The boxers fought fair and square for 12 whole rounds.

Give it one's best shot- to try as hard as one can

The athletes gave their best shot during the Olympics.

Live with it- to accept a difficult reality

The refugees have to live with what was left for them after the typhoon.

Set the record straight-to set an inaccurate account

The accountant messed up with the company's expenses so I have to set the record straight.

Sure thing- an assured outcome

Making this business a hit is a sure thing.

Liza: I can't believe I lost that run. I know I was a **sure thing**. If I hadn't stayed up late baking the cookies, I wouldn't have screwed my speech.

Bart: Give me a break, Liza. You lost. **Live with it**.

Liza: But **I gave my best shot**. I will appeal on Monday and demand for a recount to **set the record straight**.

Bart: Drop it off, Liza. Andrea won the election **fair and square**.

Match column A with column B

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Fair and square | a. a sure outcome |
| 2. Live with it | b. honest |
| 3. Sure thing | c. to accept a difficult truth |
| 4. Best shot | d. to correct a mistake |
| 5. Record straight | e. to try hard |



Lesson 20

Homer Got a Complaint

Kate: Homer, one lady came to the market this morning **ranting and raving**. She said she found a hair on the chocolate chips.

Homer: Oh, she must have been **taken aback**.

Kate: I'm sorry to say but I can't sell your cookies anymore.

Homer: Aren't you blowing things out of **proportion**?

Kate: I will be in trouble if the health department will find out about it.

Homer: Couldn't we just **sweep it under the rug**? I don't have any other way of making a living.

Kate: **My heart goes to you**, Homer but you need to get your act together.

MEANINGS

Blowing things out of proportion- to exaggerate
He blew things out of proportion when he called the police just because of a noisy neighbor.

One's heart goes out to (someone)- to feel sorry for someone

The president's heart go out to those victims of child abuse.

Ranting and raving- to talk angrily

The customer was ranting and raving because of the defective TV.

Sweep something under the rug- to hide something
Politicians always sweep their anomalies under the rug.

Taken aback- surprised in a negative way

I was taken aback when I heard the news about Michael Jackson's death.

Match column A with column B

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Blow things out of proportion | a. to be angry |
| 2. Sweep under the rug | b. to be surprised |
| 3. Taken aback | c. to feel sorry |
| 4. One's heart goes to you | d. to exaggerate |
| 5. Ranting and raving | e. to hide something |