

# **Idiom Exercises**

**Idiom activities that feature  
animals**

## As Rare as Hens' Teeth

Finding a car park in the city centre can be a frustrating and time-consuming thing. The problem is that car parks in the city are **as rare as hens' teeth**.

- i. As rare as hens' teeth means... (Circle the correct answer)
  - a. Something that is few and far between or difficult to locate.
  - b. Something that is abundant.
  - c. To collect beaks and teeth of birds.
- ii. Would something be as rare as hens' teeth if... (Circle either yes or no)
  - a. you found it in a chicken coop. Yes/No
  - b. there were not many of them. Yes/No
  - c. you had many items which were the same. Yes/No
- iii. Word Knowledge (Define a key word and find 2-3 synonyms for the word)

Define Word: *rare* \_\_\_\_\_

Synonyms of *rare* \_\_\_\_\_

- iv. Reword this passage and include the idiom as rare as hens' teeth.

My sister said to me, 'I get disappointed when I go to the cinema, because there aren't many good movies around.'

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## Big Fish in a Small Pond

The mayor of Coleville is well known to the town's population, and his achievements are celebrated in the local paper. Yet he is unknown outside the town. The mayor is a **big fish in a small pond**.

- i. Big Fish in a Small Pond means... (Circle the correct answer)
  - a. Someone who is well known for catching fish.
  - b. Someone who is well known and respected in a small community.
  - c. Someone who is world famous.
- ii. Would someone be a **big fish in a small pond** if... (Circle either yes or no)
  - a. he/she was unknown in a small town. Yes/No
  - b. he/she was the president of a big country. Yes/No
  - c. he/she is the school and football captain of a local school. Yes/No
- iii. Word Knowledge (Define a key word and find 2-3 synonyms for the word)

Define Word: *celebrated* \_\_\_\_\_

Synonyms of *celebrated* \_\_\_\_\_

- iv. Reword this passage and include the idiom **big fish in a small pond**.

Marcus is the only doctor in the small community of Rowland.  
Marcus is a very important person in the town.

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## Knee High to a Grasshopper

Sally said, 'Yesterday I saw a former prep student of mine who has grown up to become a successful basketball player. When he was in my class he was **knee high to a grasshopper**.'

- i. Knee high to a grasshopper means... (Circle the correct answer)
  - a. Someone who collects grasshoppers.
  - b. A person who is young and small.
  - c. Someone who is very tall.
- ii. Would someone be a knee high to a grasshopper if... (Circle either yes or no)
  - a. he/she was a short pre-school child.      Yes/No
  - b. he/she was a good sports person.      Yes/No
  - c. he/she had very long legs with strong knees.      Yes/No

- iii. Word Knowledge (Define a key word and find 2-3 synonyms for the word)

Define Word: *former* \_\_\_\_\_

Synonyms of *former* \_\_\_\_\_

- iv. Reword this passage and include the idiom knee high to a grasshopper.

Kerry has just started school and is the smallest person in her class

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## At a Snail's Pace

My dad was not very happy with the builder who is renovating our kitchen. He said, 'If the builder doesn't hurry up with the kitchen it won't be finished by Christmas. He's going **at a snail's pace**.'

- i. At a snail's pace means... (Circle the correct answer)
  - a. Someone who moves or works too slowly.
  - b. A person who builds kitchens.
  - c. Someone who moves quickly and efficiently.
- ii. Would someone be going **at a snail's pace** if... (Circle either yes or no)
  - a. he/she was riding a bike down a steep hill. Yes/No
  - b. he/she was performing a task very slowly. Yes/No
  - c. he/she was to collect snails and race them. Yes/No
- iii. Word Knowledge (Define a key word and find 2-3 synonyms for the word)

Define Word: *renovate* \_\_\_\_\_

Synonyms of *renovate* \_\_\_\_\_

- iv. Reword this passage and include the idiom **at a snail's pace**.

The coach was frustrated and annoyed with his players because they were moving very slowly.

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## Butterflies in My Stomach

Carmel had practiced for weeks for the upcoming school debate. She said. 'I'm confident in my speaking skills, but to stand and debate in front of my class gives me **butterflies in my stomach.**'

- i. Butterflies in my stomach means... (Circle the correct answer)
  - a. I like to debate in front of an audience.
  - b. I'm nervous but also a little excited.
  - c. I have no fear.
- ii. Would you have butterflies in your stomach if... (Circle either yes or no)
  - a. you were asked to give a speech to 300 people at a wedding? Yes/No
  - b. you were given a net to catch butterflies? Yes/No
  - c. if you were at home watching a favorite movie? Yes/No
- iii. Word Knowledge (Define a key word and find 2-3 synonyms for the word)

Define Word: *debate* \_\_\_\_\_

Synonyms of *debate* \_\_\_\_\_

- iv. Reword this passage and include the idiom **butterflies in my stomach.**

I was very nervous about asking my teacher if I could have more time to finish the book report.

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## The World is Your Oyster

Jasmine had worked diligently throughout school and got high marks in all her subjects. She got accepted into the university of her choice to study as a vet. **The world is her oyster.**

- i. The world is your oyster means... (Circle the correct answer)
  - a. You get high marks in maths.
  - b. You have the opportunity to get what you want in life.
  - c. You study hard.
- ii. Would you say the world is your oyster if... (Circle either yes or no)
  - a. everything you did worked out well? Yes/No
  - b. you found some oyster shells on the beach? Yes/No
  - c. you dropped out of school? Yes/No
- iii. Word Knowledge (Define a key word and find 2-3 synonyms for the word)

Define Word: *diligent* \_\_\_\_\_

Synonyms of *diligent* \_\_\_\_\_

- iv. Reword this passage and include the idiom the world is my oyster.

I was delighted when I got my new job. I would now have money to buy my first car. Everything was in my favour.

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## As Blind as a Bat

The man squinted as he tried to read the newspaper. He said to his friend, 'Without my glasses I'm as blind as a bat.'

- i. As blind as a bat means... (Circle the correct answer)
  - a. To see like a bat.
  - b. To have poor vision.
  - c. To live in a bat cave.
- ii. Would you say someone was as blind as a bat if... (Circle either yes or no)
  - a. The person collected bats?      Yes/No
  - b. The person squinted while reading?      Yes/No
  - c. The person needed a guide dog while walking?      Yes/No
- iii. Word Knowledge (Define a key word and find 2-3 synonyms for the word)

Define Word: *squint* \_\_\_\_\_

Synonyms of *squint*: \_\_\_\_\_

- iv. Reword this passage and include the idiom **blind as a bat**.

I was having trouble seeing anything in the cave because it was so dark.

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## As Stubborn as a Mule

The mother became upset with her child when he refused to eat his oatmeal. She said to her husband, 'Your son is just like you. He's as stubborn as a mule.'

- i. As stubborn as a mule means... (Circle the correct answer)
  - a. Someone who refuses to cooperate.
  - b. A person who doesn't like oatmeal.
  - c. Someone who owns a mule.
- ii. Would someone be as stubborn as a mule if... (Circle either yes or no)
  - a. he/she was easy to get along with.      Yes/No
  - b. he/she was a fantastic rider.      Yes/No
  - c. he/she liked to get their own way all the time.      Yes/No
- iii. Word Knowledge (Define a key word and find 2-3 synonyms for the word)

Define Word: *refuse* \_\_\_\_\_

Synonyms of *refuse*: \_\_\_\_\_

- iv. Reword this passage and include the idiom as stubborn as a mule.

Ken tried to get his sister help him clean up. But she didn't help him because she didn't want to.

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## The Black Sheep of the Family

My brother James is one of those kids who is always in trouble with the authorities and with our family. He is nothing like me or my sister. My uncle says James is **the black sheep of the family**.

- i. Black sheep of the family means... (Circle the correct answer)
  - a. Someone who always does the right thing.
  - b. Someone who is different.
  - c. Someone from a good family who is always doing the wrong thing.
- ii. Would someone be **the black sheep of the family** if... (Circle either yes or no)
  - a. he/she was never in trouble. Yes/No
  - b. he/she is well liked and respected by all. Yes/No
  - c. he/she has a long history of being in trouble. Yes/No
- iii. Word Knowledge (Define a key word and find 2-3 synonyms for the word)

Define Word: *authority* \_\_\_\_\_

Synonyms of *authority* \_\_\_\_\_

- iv. Reword this passage and include the idiom **black sheep of the family**.

Mary got suspended from school for the fifth time this year. Her mother says sadly that Mary is not like her other children.

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## Bull in a China Shop

Erin said, 'I don't think it's a good idea to let my little brother go to the party. He's such a rascal, that he would be like a bull in a china shop.'

i. Bull in a china shop means... (Circle the correct answer)

- a. Someone who is clumsy and awkward.
- b. Someone who is polite and careful.
- c. Someone who is built like a bull.

ii. Would someone be a bull in a china shop if... (Circle either yes or no)

- a. he/she offends people easily. Yes/No
- b. he/she is always thoughtful and careful. Yes/No
- c. he/she breaks things without thinking. Yes/No

iii. Word Knowledge (Define a key word and find 2-3 synonyms for the word)

Define Word: *rascal* \_\_\_\_\_

Synonyms of *rascal* \_\_\_\_\_

iv. Reword this passage and include the idiom *bull in a china shop*.

Our new team mate has a reputation for being clumsy with people and hurting their feelings.

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