

## Lesson Plan

### Understanding Idioms

**Book:** *JuJu Smith-Schuster: Football Star*

**Series:** Biggest Names in Sports

**Level:** Navigator

### Objective

To help students use context clues to understand the meanings of common English idioms.

### Supplies

- *JuJu Smith-Schuster: Football Star* book
- Understanding Idioms worksheet (attached)
- Pencils

### Before the Activity

Read through the *JuJu Smith-Schuster: Football Star* book, or assign it to students to read on their own. Print enough copies of the Understanding Idioms worksheet for each student.

### Activity

Idioms are common expressions used in writing and in conversation. While idioms have a definite meaning, the meaning of each phrase is not immediately clear from the individual words. For example, “with flying colors” is an idiom in the English language. Combining the meanings of the words *flying* and *colors* is not enough to understand what the whole phrase means.

On page 9, the book says, “Getting the start was an early test in Smith-Schuster’s career. He had passed with flying colors.” Ask students to speculate what it means to pass with flying colors, using the context clues of the surrounding sentences (Answer: to do extremely well at something).

Pass out the Understanding Idioms worksheet. Students will use context clues from the sentences to write a definition for each idiom. As students work, walk around the classroom and coach students who seem to be struggling.

### Evaluation

Use the attached answer key to award students 1 point for each correct answer, for up to 8 points.

### Standards

This lesson may be used to address the Common Core State Standards’ language standards, grade 4 (L.4.5.B).

# Understanding Idioms

1. After spending nine hours at the library studying for her test, Louise decided to call it a day and go home.

**Call it a day** = \_\_\_\_\_

2. Raul was feeling under the weather, so his mom called the school to let his teachers know he'd be absent.

**Under the weather** = \_\_\_\_\_

3. Lakesha thought about going to the party, but she was so tired, she decided to hit the sack instead.

**Hit the sack** = \_\_\_\_\_

4. No matter how much the teacher explained algebra, Elijah just couldn't wrap his head around it.

**Wrap your head around something** = \_\_\_\_\_

5. Duarte couldn't understand why his father was getting bent out of shape: he'd only failed the one test.

**Get bent out of shape** = \_\_\_\_\_

6. Sarita getting sick and missing school ended up being a blessing in disguise; her math teacher had surprised the class with a pop quiz.

**A blessing in disguise** = \_\_\_\_\_

7. The set for the school play fell apart the day before the performance because the students had cut corners and gone to a concert instead.

**Cutting corners** = \_\_\_\_\_

8. When the students learned another group had already taken their idea for the science project, they realized they'd have to go back to the drawing board and come up with a new one.

**Go back to the drawing board** = \_\_\_\_\_

# Understanding Idioms **Answer Key**

1. After spending nine hours at the library studying for her test, Louise decided to call it a day and go home.

**Call it a day = stop working on something**

2. Raul was feeling under the weather, so his mom called the school to let his teachers know he'd be absent.

**Under the weather = sick**

3. Lakesha thought about going to the party, but she was so tired, she decided to hit the sack instead.

**Hit the sack = go to sleep**

4. No matter how much the teacher explained algebra, Elijah just couldn't wrap his head around it.

**Wrap your head around something = understand something complicated**

5. Duarte couldn't understand why his father was getting bent out of shape: he'd only failed the one test.

**Get bent out of shape = get upset**

6. Sarita getting sick and missing school ended up being a blessing in disguise; her math teacher had surprised the class with a pop quiz.

**A blessing in disguise = a good thing that seemed bad at first**

7. The set for the school play fell apart the day before the performance because the students had cut corners and gone to a concert instead.

**Cutting corners = doing something poorly in order to save time or money**

8. When the students learned another group had already taken their idea for the science project, they realized they'd have to go back to the drawing board and come up with a new one.

**Go back to the drawing board = start over**