

LESSON 8

TED FORMS A ROCK BAND

Ted plans to become a successful musician. First, he needs Susan to loan him money for a new guitar. Susan suggests that Ted bake cookies to earn the money.

Susan: You're **in good spirits** today, Ted.

Ted: I've got great news, Mom.

Susan: What is it?

Ted: Amber and I are going to start a rock band!

Susan: **Good for you!**

Ted: Mom, I'm not going to **beat around the bush**. I need to borrow \$1,000 for a new guitar.

Susan: Ted, your father and I can't **shell out** that much. We aren't **made of money**.

Ted: You're not? I thought you were millionaires, like Donald and Ivana Trump!*

Susan: Ha ha. This is no time to be a **wise guy**!

Ted: I promise I'll pay you back.

Susan: How?

- Ted:** We're going to **take the music world by storm** and make lots of money.
- Susan:** That sounds like a **pipe dream**. Aren't high school rock bands a **dime a dozen**?
- Ted:** Yeah, but we're different. With my guitar playing and Amber's beautiful voice, we're sure to **make a splash**!
- Susan:** Well, we're going through **hard times**. You're going to have to work for that \$1,000.
- Ted:** How?
- Susan:** You can bake cookies.
- Ted:** I bet Mrs. Clapton never made Eric** bake cookies, but I guess **those are the breaks**.

* Donald Trump is a famous American millionaire who made his money in real estate. Ivana is his ex-wife.

** Eric Clapton is a very popular guitarist.



IDIOMS – LESSON 8

(to) beat around the bush – to talk *around* the subject; to avoid getting to the point

EXAMPLE 1: Kara **beat around the bush** for an hour, then finally told us she needed a ride to Kennedy Airport.

EXAMPLE 2: If you want something, tell me. Don't **beat around the bush**!

dime a dozen – so plentiful as to be nothing special; common

EXAMPLE 1: Reality TV shows are a **dime a dozen** these days.

EXAMPLE 2: There are so many Starbucks coffee shops in Manhattan, they're a **dime a dozen**.

NOTE: This expression comes from the fact that a "dime" is worth only ten cents (very little value).

Good for you! – Good job! Well done!

EXAMPLE 1: You won \$100,000 on the TV game show *Jeopardy*? **Good for you!**

EXAMPLE 2: You passed your math test? **Good for you!**

hard times – a time of difficulty

EXAMPLE 1: Since his wife left him for her dentist, Dan has been going through **hard times**.

EXAMPLE 2: Nancy's family is going through **hard times**. Her father just lost his job.

(to be) in good spirits – happy; in a good mood

EXAMPLE 1: After she won the tennis tournament, Elizabeth was **in good spirits**.

EXAMPLE 2: Sam was **in good spirits** after receiving his Christmas bonus.

made of money – very rich

EXAMPLE 1: My neighbor is re-modeling his house to look like Versailles. He doesn't have good taste, but he certainly is **made of money**.

EXAMPLE 2: Max should be willing to loan you \$10,000 to start your new business. He's **made of money**.

SYNONYMS: loaded; rolling in dough; to have money to burn

(to) make a splash – to win popularity quickly

EXAMPLE 1: Nicole's beautiful cousin Cecilia from Santo Domingo really **made a splash** at the high school dance.

EXAMPLE 2: Those new jeans really **made a splash**. All the kids are wearing them.

SYNONYM: to be a hit

(to) pay (someone) back – to repay a loan or debt

EXAMPLE 1: Nicole **paid her friend back** the \$10 she borrowed.

EXAMPLE 2: You can borrow \$50, but don't forget to **pay me back**!

NOTE: "Pay back" also means to "get revenge." Example: I know you're the one who stole my car, and one day I'll think of a way to **pay you back**!

pipe dream – an unrealistic hope

EXAMPLE 1: Susan would like to move to New Zealand and write romance novels, but she knows that's just a **pipe dream**.

EXAMPLE 2: You want to become a famous actor on Broadway? That sounds like a **pipe dream**.

(to) shell out – to pay (often more than one would like)

EXAMPLE 1: Bob **shelled out** \$5,000 for Nicole's piano lessons before she decided she'd rather play the flute.

EXAMPLE 2: How much am I going to have to **shell out** to get two tickets to the Rolling Stones concert?

(to) take (something) by storm – to win popularity quickly

EXAMPLE 1: The play "The Producers" really **took New York by storm**.

EXAMPLE 2: That new restaurant really **took Chicago by storm**!

(that's or those are) the breaks – when something bad happens and you can't do anything about it

EXAMPLE 1: By the time we got to the theater, the new Harry Potter movie was already sold out. Oh well, **that's the breaks**!

EXAMPLE 2: Your glasses fell on a rock and broke while you were fishing? **Those are the breaks**!

wise guy [slang] – a smart aleck; one who makes a lot of sarcastic comments

EXAMPLE 1: When Mrs. Lee asked Joey what he wanted to be when he grew up, he said, "An adult." She told him not to be such a **wise guy**.

EXAMPLE 2: That clerk in the video store is a real **wise guy**. He's always making nasty comments about the customers.

SYNONYMS: wise ass [rude], smart ass [rude]

PRACTICE THE IDIOMS

Choose the best substitute for the phrase in bold:

- 1) I'm in **good spirits** today because I got a promotion at work.
 - a) happy
 - b) drunk
 - c) tired
- 2) Renting an apartment on Park Avenue in Manhattan is difficult, unless you're **made of money**.
 - a) wealthy
 - b) strange
 - c) famous

- 3) My friend's daughter paints beautiful pictures. In a few years, **she'll take the art world by storm.**
- a) something bad will happen and she'll lose her job
 - b) she'll draw an excellent painting of a storm
 - c) she'll become a very successful artist
- 4) Susan thinks that Ted's plan to become a famous rock star is **a pipe dream.**
- a) something that is not likely to happen
 - b) Ted's biggest hope
 - c) something very realistic
- 5) If you're looking for a new suit, you shouldn't have a problem. Clothing shops in this town are **a dime a dozen.**
- a) hard to find
 - b) everywhere
 - c) lousy
- 6) Ted performed at his high school dance. He knew he'd **made a splash** when all the girls started singing along.
- a) done something wrong
 - b) made a very positive impression
 - c) created waves
- 7) Being **a wise guy** can be fun, but it might not make you popular with your teachers.
- a) a very intelligent person
 - b) an obnoxious person who makes sarcastic comments
 - c) a person whom everybody admires
- 8) Nicole wants to attend Yale, but her parents don't want to **shell out** \$100,000 for the tuition.
- a) waste
 - b) save
 - c) pay

ANSWERS TO LESSON 8, p. 161