Lesson 4

a steal at hand get better more or less on hand on one's own refer to A as B take one's time think highly of try out

a steal = very cheap; a very good price

My friend sold me his old car. It was a steal! The land next to the river is a steal! You should buy it.

A: I just bought a DVD player for \$95!

B: Wow! What a steal!



at hand = near (time or space)

Christmas is at hand. I have to buy gifts for my family.

When I was a child, my mother was always close at hand.

A: I fear that war is at hand.

B: Don't worry. I'm sure the countries will reach an agreement.

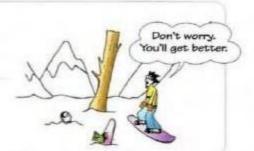


get better = improve

His cold got better after he took a day off work. Her singing will get better if she practices every day.

A: This movie is boring!

B: Don't worry. It gets better.



☐ more or less = approximately; almost

My cousin and I are more or less the same age. The airline tickets were more or less the same price.

A: Which shirt is better?

B: They are more or less the same quality.



The male and female fish look more or less the same.

☐ on hand = near and ready for use

Do you have any bandages on hand? I cut myself.

There is a representative on hand twenty-four hours a day to help customers.

A: There's going to be five extra people at the party.

B: No problem. We have plenty of food on hand.



on one's own = without help from others

She has lived on her own since she was twenty-two.

He cooked this whole meal on his own without any help from his mother.

A: Do you need help fixing the sink?

B: No, thanks. I can do it on my own.



Little Jimmy was proud of his sculpture of a giraffe, which he'd made on his own.

refer to A as B = use the name B for A

He referred to his classmate as his friend even though they only studied together.

Many people refer to this book as the author's greatest work.

A: What did your teacher say about your paper?

B: He referred to it as the work of a genius!



□ take one's time = slowly; in a relaxed way

She took her time and made sure she did not make any mistakes on the test.

He is taking his time getting ready. He wants to look nice.

A: I'll be there as soon as I can!

B: Take your time. The movie doesn't start until 3:00.

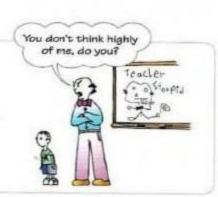


think highly of = have a good opinion of

Her teacher thought highly of her ability to draw. He doesn't think very highly of his neighbors.

A: Mr. Henry is such a great teacher!

B: Yes. All the students think highly of him.



□ try out = do or use to see if something works correctly

Don't buy the bike until you try it out first.

I tried out several software programs, but none of them were good.

A: Your skateboard looks really fun.

B: It is! Why don't you try it out?



Practice

Ch	oose the best ans	wer.				
1.	He often best friend.	his wife as his	6.	Wherever the president g bodyguards are close		
	a. refers to b. tries out c. thinks highly of			a. on their ownb. a stealc. at hand		
2.	I want to that new language program for learning English while sleeping. a. try out b. take my time c. get better		7.	There is no rush, so you can getting ready. a. get better b. refer to c. take your time		
3.	It has been six years,, since I visited my hometown. a. more or less b. at hand c. a steal			8. This computer is at this price. You should buy it before the sale finishes.a. on handb. a stealc. refer to		
4.	Keep plenty of coffee because this is going to be a long meeting. a. more or less b. on hand c. on your own		9.	We had to study most of the material because the professor only wanted to talk about his theory in class. a. try out b. more or less c. on our own		
5.	She her she does not mind her suggestions. a. takes her time b. thinks highly of c. is on her own		10	You will never don't rest and do as the d says. a. think highly of b. get better		

Dialog

Fill in the blanks.

take your time more or less refer to him as getting better on my own thinks highly of

In the hospital:

Bob:	How are you feeling, Mark?				
Mark:	I think I'm At least I can move my fingers today.				
Bob:	Great! Everyone the doctor who is treating you. They say he is the best.				
Mark:	Yeah. He is good. I heard the nurse Dr. Miracle.				
Bob:	Well, everyone at work is hoping you can come back soon, but Do you know how long you will be in the hospital?				
Mark:	Actually, I am going home tomorrow. And since my wife has to work, I'll be there all day.				
Bob:	Will you be OK?				
Mark:	I think so. I can manage things with my left hand				
Bob:	If you need anything, just call. I'll be close at hand. I'll come over and give you a hand. Just hand over all your problems to me. I can handle them. I'll be on hand.				
Mark:	OK! OK! I get it. Very funny! Thanks, Bob!				

Idioms in Context

Read the following story.

y Brazilian friend has only lived in the United States for six months, but his English is great. Before he came to the US, he studied in a language school, but mostly he learned English on his own from reading English books and watching movies. He had learned basic conversation before he arrived in the US. Then, after he got here, his vocabulary and listening got better very quickly. I would say that he is now more or less fluent in English. However, sometimes he still has trouble with idioms.

² One day, he asked me to help him buy some jewelry for his girlfriend back in Brazil. Her birthday was close *at hand* and he wanted to get something nice. He showed me a picture of his girlfriend before we went shopping. When I saw the picture I said, "Wow! Your girlfriend is a real spring chicken."

³ My friend asked me, "Why do you refer to my girlfriend as a chicken?"

I explained to my friend, "I just mean your girlfriend is very young and beautiful."

*At the jewelry store, they had several very nice necklaces on hand. I suggested that we take our time and look at several stores, but my friend found a diamond necklace that was a steal. He called the saleswoman over to buy it.

As the saleswoman was taking out the necklace, my friend decided to try out the new idiom he learned. He showed the saleswoman the picture of his girlfriend and asked, "Don't you think she is a chicken noodle?"

My friend's English may not be perfect, but I still think highly of it.

