

Lesson 17

a far cry from
be better off
be out of the question
get through
ill at ease

in charge of
look into
think nothing of it
think up
what's up

❑ **a far cry from** = very different from

This hotel is a far cry from the last place we stayed. It's much nicer here!

The food here is a far cry from real Chinese food.

A: This beach is so dirty!

B: Yeah. It's a far cry from the picture in the magazine.

It's a far cry from the kind of pizza I usually eat.



❑ **be better off** = have more opportunity, be in a nicer position

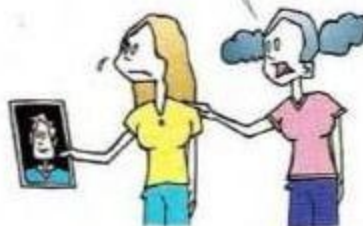
You would be better off living with your parents while you are in college.

Women are better off now than they were one hundred years ago.

A: It's raining very heavily.

B: You'd be better off staying here until it stops.

You're better off without him.

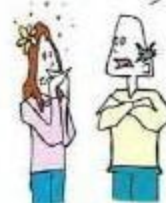


❑ **be out of the question** = impossible; forbidden

Don't ask me if you can go. It is out of the question.
She knew that leaving work early was out of the question.

A: Dad, can I quit school and become a professional wrestler?
B: That's out of the question!

Forget it! It's out of the question.



❑ **get through** = be able to communicate with someone

She was on hold for fifteen minutes before she finally got through to the operator.
The storm damaged the phone line so I can't get through to my parents' house.

A: Have you gotten through to Kim yet?
B: No. The line is still busy.

I tried to call but I couldn't get through.

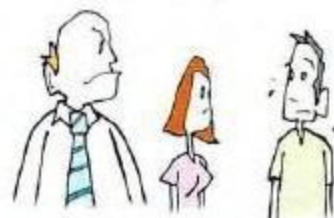


❑ **ill at ease** = not comfortable

He always felt a little ill at ease in crowded elevators.
The hostess tried to make sure none of her guests felt ill at ease at the party.

A: I feel ill at ease with you driving a motorcycle.
B: Don't worry, Mom. I'll be careful.

Her father made him feel ill at ease.



❑ **in charge of** = leading; controlling

Can you tell me who is in charge of cleaning the office at night?
No one was in charge of the project, so it was never completed.

A: What do you do at your job?
B: I'm in charge of sales and marketing.



You'll be in charge of the ceiling.

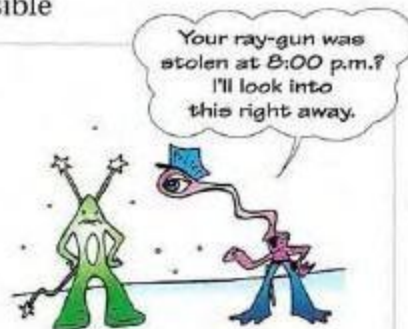
❑ **look into** = investigate; check to see if something is possible

He was looking into going to medical school.

I don't know much about that subject, but I'll look into it when I have time.

A: Why don't we see if we can stay an extra day?

B: Good idea. I'll look into it.



❑ **think nothing of it** = It is/was no trouble. (You're welcome.)

"Thank you for helping me." "Think nothing of it."

"I appreciate what you did." "Think nothing of it."

A: Thanks for saving me from that hungry bear!

B: Think nothing of it.



❑ **think up** = imagine; have an idea quickly

She was always thinking up new ways to make extra money.

He had to think up an excuse for being late.

A: Let's think up a way to surprise Dan on his birthday.

B: How about inviting all his old girlfriends?



❑ **what's up** = How are you?

"Jim, how is it going?" "What's up, Bob?"

"What's up, Sam?" "Not much, Mark. What's up with you?"

A: Hi Sarah! What's up?

B: Oh, nothing much. Just waiting for the bus.



Practice

Choose the best answer.

1. "Hi, Al! _____?" "Not much, Tom. How are you?"
 - a. Out of the question
 - b. What's up
 - c. Who is in charge
2. Having a pet in this apartment is _____.
 - a. out of the question
 - b. think up
 - c. get through
3. He felt a little _____ when she started asking very personal questions.
 - a. better off
 - b. ill at ease
 - c. in charge of
4. If no one answers the phone at work, you can always _____ to me on my cell phone.
 - a. ill at ease
 - b. a far cry from
 - c. get through
5. It was my pleasure to assist you. Please _____.
 - a. get through
 - b. look into
 - c. think nothing of it
6. Our new house is _____ where we used to live. This house is much nicer.
 - a. a far cry from
 - b. better off
 - c. out of the question
7. The new commercials are so funny! Whoever _____ the idea of a dog selling hamburgers was very clever.
 - a. looked into
 - b. got through
 - c. thought up
8. I need someone to research how much our profits have dropped. Could you _____?
 - a. get though
 - b. look into it
 - c. think nothing of it
9. The person _____ hiring new people won't be in until ten o'clock.
 - a. in charge of
 - b. think up
 - c. better off
10. These animals would be _____ in the wild than in the zoo.
 - a. out of the question
 - b. look into
 - c. better off

Dialog

Fill in the blanks.

a far cry from
in charge of

be better off
Think nothing of it

out of the question
what's up

At the office:

Sue: Mark, I haven't seen you around the office for a while. _____?

Mark: I had to take some time off after my accident and stay at home.

Sue: Who was _____ the office while you were gone?

Mark: Lisa. I would _____ at home resting, but my staying at home any longer was _____.

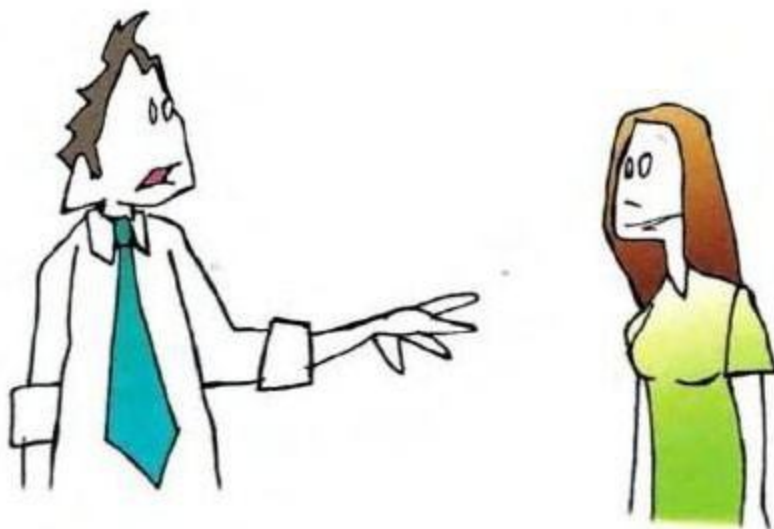
Sue: You look OK to me. Aren't you fully recovered?

Mark: No, I can't move my left arm very much. And my typing speed is _____ what it used to be. My fingers aren't as flexible as they were.

Sue: Hey, if you need anything typed, just send it to me.

Mark: Thanks, Sue. That would be a great help.

Sue: _____. I'm happy to help.



Idioms in Context

Read the following story.

My sister called me last week. She tried to *get through* to me on the phone for over an hour. I was on the Internet at the time, so my phone was busy.

² I apologized, "I'm sorry, Kim. I didn't plan to use the computer for so long. I guess I wasn't keeping track of time. So, *what's up?*"

³ Kim sounded a little *ill at ease* when she answered, "I need your help. You know that we have moved. I wanted to have a party to meet our neighbors, but I think I invited too many people. Now I am *in charge of* cooking dinner for twelve people tomorrow night!"

⁴ I told Kim, "Maybe you should *look into* getting pizza delivered or something."

"No," Kim said. "Pizza *is out of the question*. Everyone is expecting a home cooked meal. Can you *think up* any good recipes I can try?"

⁵ I'm *a far cry from* a chef or anything, but I know how to make a few simple things that are good for parties. I told my sister how to make them.

Kim said, "Your ideas sound great, Alice! Thanks."

"*Think nothing of it,*" I said. "But wouldn't you have *been better off* calling Mom for recipes?"

⁶ Kim replied, "Mom is good at cooking. Her recipes might be too hard for me. I know that if you can cook something, I can cook it."

