

Lesson 21

target

amount to
at (the) most
be broke
come to an end
deal with

either A or B
fall short of
in need (of)
or so
pay back

□ amount to = total

All of the money we collected amounts to two hundred dollars.

Sales during the Christmas season amount to half of the store's yearly profits.

A: All our work today doesn't seem to amount to much.

B: Yeah. I don't think we'll ever finish painting this house!

The list amounts to twelve dollars.



□ at (the) most = a certain amount and no more

I plan to study for two hours at the most.

At most, the boat can hold ten people.

A: How long will this flight take?

B: Four hours at the most.



I can only drink, at most, 4 or 5 shots of whiskey before I get sick.

❑ **be broke** = not have any money

He was broke, so he borrowed money from his roommate.
How can you be broke already? You just got paid!

A: Hey, let's go out to eat tonight.
B: I can't. I'm broke.



He couldn't go to the movies because he was broke.

❑ **come to an end** = end; finish

We left before the movie came to an end.
The war came to an end soon after the bomb was dropped.

A: It's been raining for a week! I'm going crazy!
B: Don't worry. It will come to an end tomorrow.



When the party came to an end, there was a big mess to clean up.

❑ **deal with** = handle; interact with

How do you deal with all the stress at work?
She is avoiding him because she doesn't want to deal with him.

A: I can't deal with all this noise!
B: Maybe you should get a different job.

I don't think I can deal with this every day!



❑ **either A or B** = one of; not both

I will go to either Mexico or Canada for my vacation.
You can have either cheese or sour cream on your baked potato.

A: You can either ride with me or with your mother.
B: I'll go with Mom. She's a better driver!



With any main dish, you can choose either soup or salad on the side.

❑ **fall short of** = not achieve a result or meet an expectation

The movie really fell short of my expectations.

Although the runner's time was good, it fell short of the world record.

A: Business is not as good this year.

B: Yes. We fell short of our goal of selling 1000 pizzas.

The team fell short of their dream of winning the championship.



❑ **in need (of)** = needing; suffering without

This apartment is in need of a good cleaning.

Our club is in need of a new president because the old one quit.

A: Hey, I can see your toes!

B: I am in need of some new socks.

After trying that spicy dish, he was in need of some water.



❑ **or so** = approximately

There were fifty or so people at the wedding.

Cook the chicken for twenty minutes or so.

A: When will Bob arrive?

B: He'll be here in about an hour or so.

Remember to stir the spaghetti sauce every 15 minutes or so until it is ready.



❑ **pay back** = return borrowed money

He still hasn't paid back the money he owes me.

Thanks for the money! I'll pay you back as soon as I can.

A: Why are you working three jobs?

B: I have to pay back the money I borrowed from the bank.

Now I can pay back my loan!



Practice

Choose the best answer.

1. All of the rain we have had this month only _____ two inches.
 - a. amounts to
 - b. is broke
 - c. comes to an end
2. They are still _____ of a few more actors for the play.
 - a. deal with
 - b. fall short of
 - c. in need
3. I am working hard to _____ my college loans.
 - a. amount to
 - b. pay back
 - c. be broke
4. That house has been abandoned for thirty years _____.
 - a. in need
 - b. or so
 - c. been broke
5. My brother _____, so I sent him some money.
 - a. is broke
 - b. at most
 - c. pays back
6. I thought that boring movie would never _____.
 - a. come to an end
 - b. amount to
 - c. in need
7. She wanted an A on the test, but she _____ by 5 points.
 - a. fell short
 - b. paid back
 - c. amounted to
8. They plan to have _____ two children.
 - a. either or
 - b. at most
 - c. deal with
9. Why does it have to be _____ the other? Why can't we get both?
 - a. or so
 - b. come to an end
 - c. either one or
10. You need to _____ the problem now before it becomes worse.
 - a. amount to
 - b. be broke
 - c. deal with

Dialog

Fill in the blanks.

at most
amount to

deal with
in need

either their money or
or so

At the orphanage:

Reporter: Hi! I'm from the newspaper. Do you mind if I ask you some questions about the orphanage? It will only take a minute _____.

Volunteer: I'm just a volunteer here, but I'll try to answer your questions.

Reporter: Great! First, how many kids do you have here?

Volunteer: I think we have about forty-five kids here now, but the orphanage can hold sixty kids _____.

Reporter: Wow! That's a lot of kids to take care of. How do you _____ them all?

Volunteer: One by one.

Reporter: Is the orphanage _____ of anything? I can put that in the article I'm writing.

Volunteer: The kids can always use extra clothes.

Reporter: Anything else?

Volunteer: Well, we would be grateful to anyone who can give _____ their time through donations and volunteer work. Even a little work can _____ a big help.



Idioms in Context

Read the following story.

My parents give me money each semester for my expenses at college. I try to live for a whole semester on what my parents give me, but I usually *fall short of* my goal. Before the end of the last semester, I *was broke*! I'm sure my parents would have been happy to send more money if they had known I was *in need*. However, I didn't want to have more to *pay back*. Besides, I wanted to *deal with* the situation myself.

² First, I tried to go without lunch every day, but I was too hungry to study after that. There was only a week *or so* left before the semester *came to an end*. I thought about selling my books to make a little money. I knew my books would not *amount to* much. *At most*, I could only get twenty dollars per book, but it was better than nothing. I could *either* sell my books *or* starve. I chose to sell my books.

³ When I went to take my final exam in history, the professor said, "This test is especially difficult. If you brought your book, you can use it during the test."

⁴ Somehow I managed to get a "B" on the final exam without the book. I guess everything worked out in the end, but from now on I'm not going to sell back my books until all of my classes are over.

