

# GOOD YEAR BOOKS

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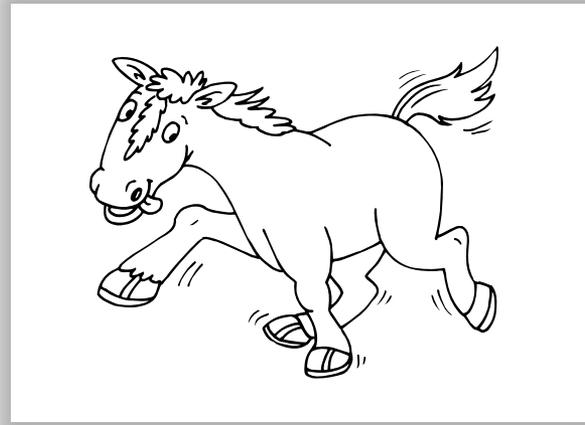
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Making Sense of  
Everyday Idioms  
Horsing Around

BY KATHERINE SCRAPER



GOOD YEAR BOOKS

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The following people have contributed to the development of this product:

Art and Design: M. Jane Heelan, Liz Nemeth, Judy Mates

Editorial: Judy Adams, Tisha Hamilton

Manufacturing: Mark Cirillo, Thomas Dunne

Production: Karen Edmonds, Alia Lesser

Publishing Operations: Carolyn Coyle

Cover Illustration: Doug Roy

Interior Illustrations: George Hamblin

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 06 05 04 03 02 01

# Table of Contents

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Introduction	5	She blew her top!	33
Quit horsing around!	6	She's on cloud nine!	34
It'll knock your socks off!	7	Are you down in the dumps?	35
It's time to bury the hatchet!	8	You hit the nail on the head!	36
You really put your foot in your mouth!	9	Get your head out of the clouds!	37
Don't let the cat out of the bag!	10	That's a pretty kettle of fish!	38
It's straight from the horse's mouth!	11	She got cold feet!	39
She's a penny pincher!	12	It's raining cats and dogs!	40
He drives me up the wall!	13	We're all in the same boat!	41
Come on, shake a leg!	14	Wake up and smell the coffee!	42
What have you got up your sleeve?	15	He got up on the wrong side of the bed!	43
That's a real feather in your cap!	16	You have a frog in your throat!	44
Don't spill the beans!	17	You're barking up the wrong tree!	45
I have butterflies in my stomach!	18	Put your money where your mouth is!	46
Has the cat got your tongue?	19	He plays by ear!	47
He left me high and dry!	20	She really got my goat!	48
You're on the right track!	21	Maybe that will shed some light on it!	49
I'd better hit the road!	22	He has a chip on his shoulder!	50
That's a fly in the ointment!	23	I'll try to butter her up!	51
Keep it under your hat!	24	He's all thumbs!	52
I'm sitting pretty now!	25	I'll try to pull some strings!	53
He's the big cheese around here!	26	It's on the house!	54
Let him off the hook!	27	She stole the spotlight!	55
You'll bring down the house!	28	Cartoon Frames	56
He's sure hot under the collar!	29	Story Sheet	58
You're pulling my leg!	30	Answer Key	59
She's a bookworm!	31	Bibliography	63
Don't throw in the towel!	32		

# Introduction

Idioms use words in a special way. We come to understand idioms best by reading or hearing them in contexts where they make sense. In *Horsing Around*, students have the opportunity to discover the intended meanings of 50 common idioms by seeing them used in many different and engaging contexts.

Knowledge of idioms is important for:

- ◆ oral language development
- ◆ reading comprehension
- ◆ creative writing
- ◆ practice for English Language Learners

Each reproducible sheet focuses on one idiom. That idiom is interpreted literally by a humorous illustration. After enjoying the illustration, students read a passage that contains the idiom and use the context of the passage to decipher the phrase. Then, on the lines below the passage, they explain what they think the idiom “really means.”

Extend the basic activities by giving students the following challenges:

- ◆ Role-play the scenarios.
- ◆ On the reproducible cartoon frames, draw pictures and use speech balloons to demonstrate an understanding of an idiom’s actual meaning.
- ◆ On the reproducible Story Sheet, use an idiom in a new written passage.
- ◆ Consult etymology books listed in the bibliography to research the origins of the expressions.

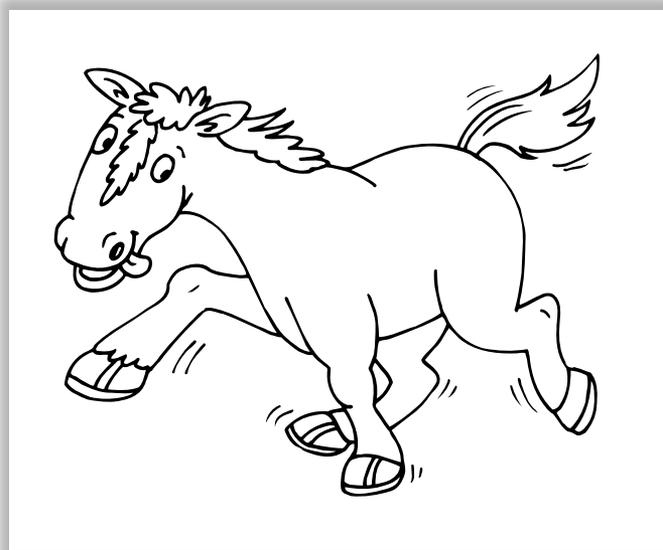
While your students are *horsing around*, you’ll all be *shedding some light* on the English language. Enjoy!

# “Quit horsing around!”

“Please set the table while I finish making supper,” Mr. Chung instructed Lin and Sam. Sam spread a tablecloth on the small dining table and got the knives, forks, spoons, and napkins. “You get the plates and glasses,” he told Lin.

“Okay!” Lin replied as she skipped to the cupboard. She opened the door and reached for the dinnerware. Grinning, Lin balanced the plates on her head, and then began juggling the drinking glasses.

“Quit horsing around!” yelled Sam. “You’ll break something!”



◆ Sam really meant that \_\_\_\_\_

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# “It’ll knock your socks off!”

Aunt Harriet was making chili. “I like it spicy. I’ll add extra chili powder,” she decided. Then she went out to the library.

Gloria came home. “M-m-m, chili!” she sighed. “I like it spicy. I’ll add extra chili powder.” Then she went into her room to start on her homework.

Allen came home. “Yum! Chili!” he said. Then he tasted a spoonful. His eyes widened, and he ran to the sink for a glass of water.

Just then there was a knock on the door. It was Allen’s friend Donald. “Hey, Donald, do you want to stay for supper?” asked Allen. “We’re having chili. It’ll knock your socks off!”



Allen really meant that \_\_\_\_\_

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