

Water and Weather Idioms

This unit highlights idioms that are related to water and weather. Below are two lists of idioms that focus on water and weather. The first, *Ten to Teach*, presents the 10 expressions introduced and taught in this unit. The second, *More to Mention*, offers additional expressions in this theme that you may want to mention or use to create additional activities.

Ten to Teach

1. under the weather
2. raining cats and dogs
3. soaked to the bone
4. usual sunny self
5. like water off a duck's back
6. in a fog
7. misty-eyed
8. a flood of tears
9. burning up (with fever)
10. in hot water

More to Mention

- ▶ sky-high temperature*
- ▶ a wet blanket*
- ▶ wash away the tears*
- ▶ a snow job
- ▶ an icy stare
- ▶ all steamed up
- ▶ turn on the waterworks
- ▶ on the sunny side of the street
- ▶ rain on someone's parade
- ▶ as fresh as springtime

*These idioms are also included in the story but are not highlighted individually in the unit.

Using This Unit

Begin by reading to students the basic *Ten to Teach* idioms. First, ask students if they have ever heard or used any of these expressions, and if so, how and where. Next, read the expressions again, and this time the students are to listen for anything they have in common. Be sure they point out that all the expressions have to do with water or the weather. Teach or review the definition of an *idiom*—an expression that means something other than what the words actually say. Read the list a third time and let students speculate on what each idiom might really mean.

On the next page is a story that includes the *Ten to Teach* idioms (along with three *More to Mention* idioms). Note that it is not intended to be an example of good writing; it would not be natural to use 13 idioms in such a short piece. The purpose of the story is simply to use all the expressions in context. The story is at approximately a 4.9 reading level. Use this information to read it aloud to students, have them read it, or both. This reproducible page includes the story and questions for students to answer related to the idioms used.

The final five pages of the unit introduce the basic *Ten to Teach* idioms individually, two to a page. These can be reproduced and used as is, or cut apart into separate cards. Use these after the story to reinforce the meanings of the idioms or to test students' understanding of them. Or, use them before the story as preparation for reading or for scaffolding as needed.

Optional: Use one of the ideas or activities in the introductory section of this book as an extension or follow-up to the unit.

Water and Weather Idioms (cont.)

Name _____ Date _____

Below is a story that includes 13 idioms related to water and weather. Can you tell what they mean?

Too Sick to Test

Jenny had a big social studies test coming up on Friday. Thursday evening she started feeling **under the weather**. Earlier in the day, it had **rained cats and dogs** and she got **soaked to the bone** walking home from school. Even though she wasn't feeling like her **usual sunny self**, she had to study. She tried to let how she was feeling roll off her **like water off a duck's back** and kept studying. As she struggled to learn the social studies words, she felt as if her brain were **in a fog**. She dutifully pressed on, but began to feel worse and worse. **Misty-eyed**, she wondered how she was going to learn all the terms in time for the test the next day. She wiped away one tear and then another, but then came a **flood of tears**.

Her mom heard Jenny's sobs and came in to her room. As soon as she saw Jenny, she went to get the thermometer. Sure enough, her **temperature was sky-high** and she was **burning up** with fever.

Mom immediately told Jenny to get into bed. Jenny protested, saying that she would be **in hot water** if she didn't keep studying.

"I hate to be a **wet blanket**," said her mom, "But there will be no test tomorrow—not for you! You are staying home until this fever breaks. Now **wash away those tears** and get some rest, young lady."

With that, Mom tucked Jenny in and gave her a kiss on the forehead. Jenny smiled, not just because Mom's cool lips on her warm skin felt good, but more because she knew her Mom loved her and would take care of her. And that was more important than any test.

Read or listen to the story again. Then answer these questions about the idioms. To help you find them, the idioms are in **dark print** in the story.

1. What caused Jenny to get sick? _____
2. What symptom of illness did Jenny have? _____
3. How did Jenny react as she tried to study? _____
4. What did Jenny think would happen if she didn't study?

5. Jenny tried not to let how she felt stop her from studying. Describe a time when you tried to let something roll off you **like water off a duck's back**.

Water and Weather Idioms (cont.)

Name _____ Date _____

Idiom ► **under the weather**

Meaning ► sick; ill; not feeling well

How It Is Used ► Fluffy was *under the weather*. She usually wagged her tail and teased her owners to play. Today she mostly slept and whined. Fluffy's owner finally called the veterinarian to schedule an appointment.

Which Is Right? ► Read the two selections. Choose the one in which *under the weather* is used as an idiom. Circle the number of your choice.

- 1 Our family was supposed to go on a picnic on Sunday. But our mom woke up feeling *under the weather*, so we postponed our picnic for another day.
- 2 Our teacher kept many kinds of maps in the classroom. *Under the weather* map, she kept world maps, a map of the solar system, and even a map of our school!

Idiom ► **raining cats and dogs**

Meaning ► pour down rain; rain hard

How It Is Used ► "Since it is *raining cats and dogs*, let's go to the movies today," Marsha's mom suggested. Marsha grabbed the phone and called a friend to join them.

Which Is Right? ► Read the two selections. Choose the one in which *raining cats and dogs* is used as an idiom. Circle the number of your choice.

- 1 The cartoon show was a favorite of the two girls. They laughed out loud when the airplane *rained cats and dogs* wearing parachutes down upon the pet shop. This was how the shop received its shipments of new animals!
- 2 Ryan asked his mom if he could go outside to play, but his mom wouldn't let him. "Haven't you looked outside?" she asked. "It's *raining cats and dogs*!"

Water and Weather Idioms (cont.)

Name _____ Date _____

Idiom ► **soaked to the bone**

Meaning ► very wet; so wet as to seem never to dry

How It Is Used ► John was kind to mow the Frost's yard while they were away on vacation. But before even half the yard was done, John found himself surprised by the Frost's sprinkler system, and he got *soaked to the bone*.

Which Is Right? ► Read the two selections. Choose the one in which *soaked to the bone* is used as an idiom. Circle the number of your choice.

- 1 While walking downtown, a fire hydrant burst, showering the entire corner of First and Fifth Streets. We wound up *soaked to the bone* by the gushing water.
- 2 Step two of the recipe read: "Place your chicken in a bowl with buttermilk, and *soak to the bone* of the chicken, at least three hours, or overnight."

Idiom ► **usual sunny self**

Meaning ► a person who is happy or smiles a lot; a person who makes other people happy

How It Is Used ► Viewers tuned in every day to watch their local newscaster deliver the news. Not only did they learn what was happening in their community, but the newscaster was always her *usual sunny self*. Those who watched her left their homes in a good mood, ready for the day.

Which Is Right? ► Read the two selections. Choose the one in which *usual sunny self* is used as an idiom. Circle the number of your choice.

- 1 Radio broadcast: "It's another hot day out there, with the sun its *usual sunny self*, beaming down on our town. Be sure to wear plenty of sunscreen today, folks, and keep the water coming."
- 2 Michelle was nervous before she gave her speech to the students at Rockville Elementary School. But as she shared her ideas about school improvements, she was her *usual sunny self*. Her positive outlook gave her a quiet confidence that her classmates liked.

Water and Weather Idioms (cont.)

Name _____ Date _____

Idiom ► **like water off a duck's back**

Meaning ► when something has no effect on a person; when something does not bother someone

How It Is Used ► The Bush family's dog, Cobb, was great with little children. Baby Emma would tug and pull on his fur, tail, and ears, but Cobb never bit, nipped, or even growled. The family liked that Cobb could let the annoyance roll off him *like water off a duck's back*.

Which Is Right? ► Read the two selections. Choose the one in which *like water off a duck's back* is used as an idiom. Circle the number of your choice.

- 1 A marine biologist visited our classroom to show the effects of oil spills on birds that live in water. "As you can see, the oil sticks to the feathers, and doesn't allow the water to roll off the duck's back."
- 2 Good comedians never let the audience bother them. They have a way of letting comments and jeers roll off them *like water off a duck's back*. Sometimes they might even be quick-witted enough to use the jeers as part of the comedy routine.

Idiom ► **in a fog**

Meaning ► unknowing; unaware; confused; sad or depressed

How It Is Used ► Raul had always wanted to visit the big city. He had spent all 12 years of his life in a small town where everyone knew one another. When he first stepped off the bus in Dallas, there were so many lights, noises, and people, it seemed as if his head were *in a fog*.

Which Is Right? ► Read the two selections. Choose the one in which *in a fog* is used as an idiom. Circle the number of your choice.

- 1 Beth and her dog had been together since Beth was born. After 15 years, Boots had died. Beth walked around *in a fog* for over a week, feeling sad and empty without her best friend.
- 2 The young children on the bus had learned a great trick. They breathed on the bus window, then wrote their letters *in a fog* that condensed on the window.

Water and Weather Idioms (cont.)

Name _____ Date _____

Idiom ► **misty-eyed**

Meaning ► having tears in a person's eyes, but not shedding tears; having strong emotions (from an event that may make a person cry)

How It Is Used ► Itty Bitty Daycare had practiced for many weeks for their preschool graduation ceremony. All the moms and dads looked on, many of them *misty-eyed*, knowing their young children would soon be in kindergarten.

Which Is Right? ► Read the two selections. Choose the one in which *misty-eyed* is used as an idiom. Circle the number of your choice.

- 1 The final scene in the movie was quite sad. Most, if not all, of the moviegoers left the theater *misty-eyed*.
- 2 At the carnival, a clown came up and surprised us by spraying us with a water gun, leaving me *misty-eyed* and in need of a towel.

Idiom ► **a flood of tears**

Meaning ► crying endlessly; crying for a long time

How It Is Used ► The teenager was arrested for stealing a car. After hours of questioning, *in a flood of tears*, he confessed to the crime.

Which Is Right? ► Read the two selections. Choose the one in which a *flood of tears* is used as an idiom. Circle the number of your choice.

- 1 The Pearson's new house was supposed to be done at the end of the month. Mrs. Pearson couldn't wait to see it. When she walked in and saw that the house was still months away from completion, she ran out in *a flood of tears*.
- 2 "What are you doing with the salt and the water?" Mom asked. "We are making salt water for our Indian play set," I explained. "We want a *flood of tears* to come down over the village during a ceremonial dance."

Water and Weather Idioms (cont.)

Name _____ Date _____

Idiom ► **burning up (with fever)**

Meaning ► having a high fever; very hot from a high fever

How It Is Used ► The school nurse called with concern in her voice. “Your daughter, Emily, is in our clinic,” she explained. “She is *burning up* with a 103.8° fever.” Emily’s mom promised to be right there. Before she left the house, she called Emily’s doctor for an appointment.

Which Is Right? ► Read the two selections. Choose the one in which *burning up* is used as an idiom. Circle the number of your choice.

- 1 We watched from down the road as the abandoned house was *burning up*. The fire department was already there, trying to control the flames.
- 2 My baby sister was crying most of the night. We just thought she was being fussy. But when Mom checked on her, she found that she was *burning up* with fever.

Idiom ► **in hot water**

Meaning ► in trouble; in a situation that may bring punishment

How It Is Used ► Brian was so busy with sports that his grades were falling. If he didn’t start working harder in school, he was going to be *in hot water* with his parents.

Which Is Right? ► Read the two selections. Choose the one in which *in hot water* is used as an idiom. Circle the number of your choice.

- 1 When he got home from a hard day at work, the gardener liked to shower *in hot water* to remove all the dirt and grime.
- 2 The grocery store cashier stole a few dollars from her register each night before closing, but she didn’t think anyone would notice. One night, when she went into the office to turn in her drawer, she was surprised to see a police officer. She realized then that she was *in hot water* with the law.