**Dr. S. CHOUCHANE**

**First-Year Oral Expression Module**

**Academic Year: 2024-2025**

**Lesson 6**

**Idioms and Phrasal Verbs**

**Ted's Day at School**

**Ted tells his parents he did poorly on his chemistry test. They tell him he needs to get serious and study more.**

**Susan:** How was your day at school today, Ted?

**Ted:** Bad. I had a chemistry test, and I ***blew it***!

**Susan:** Maybe if you didn't ***cut class*** so often, you'd do better.

**Bob:** That's right, son. Stop ***slacking off*** and start ***hitting the books***!

**Ted:** But I ***can't stand*** chemistry class. Besides, it's a ***lost cause***. That class is way ***over my head***.

**Susan:** You need to ***buckle down***.

**Ted:** When I'm a famous musician, people won't ***give a hoot*** about my knowledge of atoms and molecules.

**Bob:** That's ***beside the point***.

**Susan:** We know you have your ***heart set on*** going to New York University.

**Bob:** And you don't ***stand a chance*** of getting in there with such poor grades!

**IDIOMS**

* **beside the point**

**→** not relevant; not important

EXAMPLE 1: Whether or not I asked the waiter to bring us water is **beside the point**. Waiters should always bring water to the table.

EXAMPLE 2: The reason you're late is **beside the point**. The fact is, your dinner is now cold.

* **(to) blow something**

**→** to spoil or botch something

EXAMPLE 1: Brenda **blew the interview** and didn't get the job offer.

EXAMPLE 2: Randy managed to get a date with the most popular girl in his class. Now I hope he doesn't **blow it**!

* **(to) buckle down**

**→** to start working seriously

EXAMPLE 1: If Don **buckles down** now, he might be able to graduate from high school this year.

EXAMPLE 2: Team, if we want to win this tournament, we're going to need to **buckle down**!

* **can't stand**

**→** to hate

EXAMPLE 1: Bob **can't stand** bureaucrats, so he'd never do well working at a large corporation.

EXAMPLE 2: Nicole **can't stand** broccoli. She simply refuses to eat it.

* **(to) cut class**

**→** to miss class without an excuse

EXAMPLE 1: Ted often **cuts class** to spend more time with his girlfriend.

EXAMPLE 2: If you keep **cutting French class**, you're going to fail it.

* **Get real!**

**→** be serious or realistic about what's going on

EXAMPLE 1: You think you won't get a speeding ticket when you drive 85 miles per hour? **Get real**!

EXAMPLE 2: You think you're going to win $1 million in the lottery? **Get real**!

* **(to) have one's heart set on**

**→** to really want something

EXAMPLE 1: Nicole **has her heart set on** going to New York this weekend.

EXAMPLE 2: Did you really **have your heart set on** going to Harvard?

* **(to) hit the books**

**→** to start studying

EXAMPLE 1: Ted parried all weekend. Finally, on Sunday night, he decided it was time to **hit the books**.

EXAMPLE 2: **Hit the books**! I know you have a test tomorrow.

* **lost cause**

**→** something hopeless

EXAMPLE 1: Cindy spent five years studying Russian. Finally, she realized it was a **lost cause**. She would never learn it.

EXAMPLE 2: Jack needs to stop drinking so much coffee, but he's so addicted to caffeine that it's a **lost cause**.

* **(to) not give a hoot**

**→** to not care about

EXAMPLE 1: Tom likes to walk around town in his pajamas — he **doesn't give a hoot**what people think.

EXAMPLE 2: Stephanie **doesn't give a hoot** if she's the only one wearing a green dress to the high school prom.

SYNONYMS: to not give a damn; to not give a darn

* **over one's head**

**→** beyond one's understanding

EXAMPLE 1: The professor was speaking **over our heads**. None of us could understand him.

EXAMPLE 2: The article on cloning was written for scientists. It was **over my head**.

* **(to) slack off**

**→** to waste time

EXAMPLE 1: Amanda doesn't get much done at the office. She's too busy **slacking off**.

EXAMPLE 2: I'd better stop **slacking off**. My essay is due in two hours.

NOTE: People who slack off all the time are called "slackers."

* **(to) stand a chance**

**→** to have the possibility of success

EXAMPLE 1: Although the American figure skaters were good, they didn't **stand a chance** of winning a gold medal at the Olympics.

EXAMPLE 2: Wilton High School has the best soccer team in the state. I'm afraid we don't **stand a chance** against them!

**Practice The Idioms**

**Choose the most appropriate reply to the following statements:**

1. *Bob:* "Susan, I can't get my old job back. It's a lost cause."  
   *Susan's reply:*
   * a) "Lost? Maybe I can help you find it."
   * b) "Yes, I know it's not a good cause."
   * c) "I understand. You'll find something else."
2. *Susan:* "How could Peter fire you? Were you slacking off?"  
   *Bob's reply:*
   * a) "No. I was working very hard!"
   * b) "No. I talked on the phone to friends all day."
   * c) "Yes. I was working very hard!"
3. *Ted:* "It's getting late. I'd better start hitting the books."  
   *Bob's reply:*
   * a) "Yes, that's a good idea. Spend some time studying."
   * b) "Hit the books? Why don't you read them instead?"
   * c) "Why don't you study instead?"
4. *Peter:* "I don't give a hoot how long you've been working here."  
   *Bob's reply:*
   * a) "I wouldn't give you a hoot either."
   * b) "I guess our years together aren't important to you."
   * c) "Yes, it was a long time."
5. *Bob:* "Susan, the truth is that I couldn't stand Peter."  
   *Susan's reply:*
   * a) "I know. Peter really liked you too."
   * b) "I liked him too. He was a nice guy."
   * c) "I didn't like him either. He was a jerk."
6. *Susan:* "Nicole, do you ever cut class?"  
   *Nicole's reply:*
   * a) "No. I've never missed a single class."
   * b) "Yes. I had to leave my math class early yesterday."
   * c) "No. Sometimes I go to the mall during class time."
7. *Bob:* "This book on computers is way over my head."  
   *Susan's reply:*
   * a) "Over your head? It should be in front of your face!"
   * b) "Why don't you start with an easier book?"
   * c) "Here, try this book. It's more difficult."
8. *Nicole:* "I've got my heart set on going to the school picnic."  
   *Susan's reply:*
   * a) "Okay. You should definitely go."
   * b) "Really? Why don't you want to go?"
   * c) "I understand. Picnics can be boring."