**Dr. S. CHOUCHANE**

**First-Year Oral Expression Module**

**Academic Year: 2024-2025**

**Lesson 9**

**Idioms and Phrasal Verbs**

**Nicole's Day at School**

**Nicole tells her mother Susan about her successful presentation at school. Her brother Ted overhears and interrupts the conversation.**

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

**Nicole:** It was great, Mom. I gave a presentation on Hillary Clinton in government class. Afterwards, my teacher ***paid me a compliment***.

**Susan:** What did she say?

**Nicole:** She said my presentation was ***head and shoulders above*** the others.

**Susan:** ***Way to go!***

**Nicole:** She also said I should ***go into*** politics, just like Hillary.

**Ted:** You're so ***gung ho*** about school. It ***drives me crazy***.

**Nicole:** Ted, don't ***butt in***! You're just jealous.

**Ted:** Right. You ***hit the nail on the head***. I'm ***green with envy***.

**Nicole:** Would you just ***shut up?***You're ***on thin ice*** with me right now.

**Ted:** Oh no! Look at me. I'm ***shaking in my shoes***!

**IDIOMS**

* **(to) butt in**

**→** to interrupt; to interfere

EXAMPLE 1: Nancy is always **butting in** to other people's business.

EXAMPLE 2: Sara is really rude. She always **butts in** to other people's conversations.

* **(to) drive one crazy**

**→** to annoy someone very much

EXAMPLE 1: Don't ask Mrs. Smith how old she is. It **drives her crazy.**

EXAMPLE 2: Please stop chewing gum so loudly. It's **driving me crazy**!

SYNONYMS: to drive one nuts; to drive one up the wall

* **(to) go into**

**→** to enter a profession

EXAMPLE 1: Lisa enjoys arguing with people, so she decided to **go into** law.

EXAMPLE 2: Do you like solving people's problems? If so, you should consider **going into** psychology.

NOTE: "Go into" has several other meanings, including:

* 1. Enter. **Go into** the house and get a pen.
  2. Enter another emotional state. Sally **went into** hysterics.
  3. Discuss details. I don't have time now to **go into** the whole story.
* **green with envy**

**→** desiring another's advantages or things

EXAMPLE 1: When Daniel got promoted to vice president of the bank, his colleagues were **green with envy**.

EXAMPLE 2: You won the lottery? I'm **green with envy**!

* **gung ho**

**→** very enthusiastic; very excited (about something)

EXAMPLE 1: Heather is really **gung ho** about her new job.

EXAMPLE 2: Sharon really loves college. She's very **gung ho**.

NOTE: If the expression "gung ho" doesn't sound like English to you, there's a reason. It comes from a Mandarin Chinese phrase meaning "working together." A US Marine Corps commander in China adopted this expression as the motto for his battalion during World War 2 and from there it sailed over to the United States and came into common use.

* **head and shoulders above**

**→** far superior to

EXAMPLE 1: The Boston Symphony Orchestra is **head and shoulders above** any other orchestra in the area.

EXAMPLE 2: I can't believe you only won second prize in the competition. You were **head and shoulders above** the first-prize winner!

* **(to) hit the nail on the head**

**→** to be right

EXAMPLE 1: Dawn **hit the nail on the head** when she said that Tiffany is jealous of Amber.

EXAMPLE 2: Steve **hit the nail on the head** with his idea of moving his company's manufacturing facility to China.

* **(to be) on thin ice (with someone)**

**→** to be in a dangerous position; to be temporarily on somebody's bad side

EXAMPLE 1: Joey was **on thin ice** with his mom after he spent his lunch money on candy bars.

EXAMPLE 2: Bill was **on thin ice** with his girlfriend after she saw him at the movie theater with another girl.

NOTE: There is also the variation "to skate on thin ice." Joey knew he was skating on thin ice when he bought candy with his lunch money.

* **(to) pay (someone) a compliment**

**→** to give someone a compliment; to offer someone an admiring comment

EXAMPLE 1: Professor Russo **paid Jennifer a compliment.** He said she had a beautiful smile.

EXAMPLE 2: Isn't it wonderful to **pay someone a compliment**? It makes them feel good, and it doesn't cost you anything!

* **(to) shake in one's shoes**

**→** to tremble with fear; to be afraid

EXAMPLE 1: Brianna is scared of her French teacher, Monsieur Le Monstre. Whenever he speaks to her, Brianna starts **shaking in her shoes**.

EXAMPLE 2: During the storm, Billy was hiding under his kitchen table and was really **shaking in his shoes**.

* **shut up**

**→** be quiet, stop speaking; Stop speaking!

EXAMPLE 1: The professor talked for hours. I thought he'd never **shut up**.

EXAMPLE 2: Nicole kept telling Ted to turn down his stereo. Finally, he got angry and said, "**Shut up**!"

NOTE: Remember that telling somebody to "shut up!" is rude. It's better to say "Be quiet!" or more politely, "Please be quiet!"

* **Way to go!**

**→** Good work!

EXAMPLE 1: You won $2,000 in the poetry writing contest? **Way to go!**

EXAMPLE 2: That was an interesting article you wrote. **Way to go!**

**Practice The Idioms**

**Fill in the blank with the missing word:**

1. Nicole is in a good mood because her teacher \_\_\_\_\_ her a compliment.
   * a) told
   * b) paid
   * c) provided
2. Nicole's teacher told her she was \_\_\_\_\_ and shoulders above her classmates.
   * a) elbow
   * b) neck
   * c) head
3. When my friend Chad told me he'd just won the lottery, I was \_\_\_\_\_ with envy.
   * a) blue
   * b) green
   * c) red
4. When you do something well, your boss might tell you, "Way \_\_\_\_\_!"
   * a) to come
   * b) to go
   * c) to act
5. When the robbers entered my house, I was in the kitchen shaking in my \_\_\_\_\_.
   * a) slippers
   * b) pajamas
   * c) shoes
6. If somebody is bothering you, you can tell them they're driving you \_\_\_\_\_.
   * a) crazy
   * b) angry
   * c) unhappy
7. If you like power, you might consider going \_\_\_\_\_ politics.
   * a) above
   * b) towards
   * c) into
8. "You've been yelling and screaming for the past two hours. Could you just shut \_\_\_\_\_ already?"
   * a) up
   * b) in
   * c) off

**Bonus Practice**

**Choose the best substitute for the phrase or sentence in bold:**

1. When her friend Anna got into Yale, Nicole was **green with envy**.
   * a) sick
   * b) happy for her
   * c) very jealous
2. Bob and Susan are really **gung ho** about the TV show Survivor. They watch it every Thursday night.
   * a) enthusiastic
   * b) concerned
   * c) angry
3. **Shut up!** I can't take any more of your screaming.
   * a) Talk louder!
   * b) Be quiet!
   * c) Get out!
4. You got a scholarship to attend Harvard? **Way to go!**
   * a) Too bad!
   * b) Good work!
   * c) Oh well!
5. Please don't **butt in!** We weren't talking to you.
   * a) look at us
   * b) disagree with us
   * c) interrupt our conversation
6. These cookies aren't very good. I think you **hit the nail on the head** when you said I should add more sugar next time.
   * a) were wrong
   * b) were right
   * c) were confused