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SL25. Action Idioms

Student Name: _____ Student ID Number: _____

Instructor: _____ Level: _____ Date: _____

For media links in this activity, visit [the LLC ESL Tutoring website for Upper Level SDLAs](#). Find your SDLA number to see all the resources to finish your SDLA.

Section 1: Introduction

In SL24: Introduction to Idioms, you learned that idioms are words, phrases or expressions which are commonly used in everyday conversation by native speakers of English. They often make the language more colorful, and they often don't mean what the speaker is actually saying. In this SDLA, you will learn about idioms that describe actions. Action idioms are used all the time. Have you ever heard of any of these action idioms? Check any of the ones you've heard before:

- blow the whistle
- rock the boat
- bite one's tongue
- get off the hook
- draw the line
- hit the nail on the head
- carry the ball
- get to the bottom of
- chill out
- catch you later



What do all of these idioms have in common? _____

<http://www.bleachernation.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/chill-out-penguin.jpg>

Section 2: Meaning from Conversation

Below is a conversation between two friends, Julia and Shanice. **Listen** to and read the conversation. Notice the **bold-faced** idioms. Try to use the context of the conversation to figure out the meaning of the idioms and write the meaning in the chart on the following page. The first one has been done for you as an example.



For listening and video links, go to Tinyurl <https://tinyurl.com/SDLA-Upperlevels>. Find your SDLA number on the left and all the resources to finish your SDLA will be on the right.

Take Action: A Phone Conversation

Ring...

Julia: Hello?

Shanice: Hey, Julia.

Julia: Hey. What's up?

Shanice: Not much. What did you think of the test we had today? I thought it was pretty difficult.

Julia: I did too. I should've studied more. Oh well. Oh yeah, and did you see what I saw while we were taking the test?

Shanice: Umm, are you talking about Carol? I'm pretty sure she was cheating. I can't believe we both noticed but the teacher didn't.

Julia: I know. Do you think I should **blow the whistle** on her or keep quiet and not **rock the boat**?

Shanice: Well, if you **bite your tongue** about this, she'll get away with it. And I don't think this is the first time she's cheated on a test for this class.

Julia: The problem is that I am pretty sure, but not positive, that she was cheating. What if I tell the teacher and she really wasn't cheating? I would feel really bad.

Shanice: If she really was cheating, do you want her to **get off the hook**?

Julia: No. I saw her do it once before on a test we took, but I didn't say anything. I guess it's time to **draw the line**. She needs to be stopped.

Shanice: Looks like you've **hit the nail on the head**. Now it's up to you to **carry the ball** and decide how to handle this situation.

Julia: I guess telling the teacher is the only way to **get to the bottom of it**.

Shanice: I know it'll be hard, but try to **chill out**. Just do what you know is the right thing.

Julia: OK. I will. Thanks for helping me.

Shanice: No problem. **Catch you later**.

Idiom**Meaning**

Blow the whistle

to report or tell that someone has done something wrong

rock the boat

bite one's tongue

get off the hook

draw the line

hit the nail on the head

carry the ball

get to the bottom of

chill out

catch you later

Section 3: Review Questions

In order to better understand the conversation and idioms, answer the questions below.

1. If someone suggests that you **chill out**, check the words that tell how you might feel.
 - a. nervous
 - b. hot
 - c. scared
 - d. troubled



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- e. warm
 - f. excited
 - g. anxious
 - h. worried
2. Julia and Shanice are not talking about nails, balls, whistles, drawing lines, or catching each other. What are they talking about? Describe the problem and solution.
 3. If you saw someone cheating in class, would you choose to **blow the whistle** or not **rock the boat**? Explain your answer.
 4. Is the language in this conversation similar to the way you talk to a friend on the phone in your native language? In English? In what way?
 5. Are there any idioms in your native language that are similar to any of these action idioms? Give some examples.

Section 4: More Idioms

Below are 8 more action idioms. Choose 4 of the 8 idioms and find their meaning. You can go to Section 4 link to help you find the meaning of the idioms. Then write a sentence to show how it is used for each of the idioms you've chosen.

- 1. beat around the bush
- 2. bury the hatchet
- 3. come out of one's shell
- 4. burn one's bridges
- 5. put a cork in it
- 6. hold your horses
- 7. throw in the towel
- 8. pull oneself together

Your Idioms

Idiom	Meaning	How is it used? (sentence)



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Idiom	Meaning	How is it used? (sentence)

Adapted from:

http://www.shelleducation.com/podcasts/idioms_and_other_english_expressions_handout.pdf

Section 5: Student Self-Assessment

Complete this self-assessment before meeting with a tutor. Now that you've completed sections 1 to 4, ☑ check the things you can do:

- I can use a conversation to infer the meaning of idioms.
- I can answer comprehension questions based on a conversation.
- I can find information about idioms using the Internet.
- I can create sentences with new idioms.

Good Job!

Now make an appointment
with a tutor on the LLC ESL Tutoring Website
(www.mtsac.edu/llc/passportrewards/llctutoring).



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Section 6: Practice with a Tutor

After completing the self- assessment, meet with a tutor and give this completed SDLA to the tutor. You will review the idioms and questions in Sections 2 and 3. Also, you will go over the information about the idioms you researched in section 4. The tutor will provide you with feedback in the following areas:

Grading Rubric

Possible Points	1 Point	3 Points	5 Points
Content	Student does not provide enough information in responses and does not use appropriate vocabulary.	Student provides sufficient information in responses and usually uses appropriate vocabulary.	Student provides all necessary information in responses and uses appropriate vocabulary.
Skill: Speaking	Student's speech is unclear and requires frequent listener effort.	Student's speech is generally clear but requires occasional listener effort.	Student's speech is clear and smooth and requires minimal listener effort.
Oral Fluency	Speaks in incomplete sentences that do not flow.	Speaks in complete sentences some of the time with frequent pauses.	Speaks in complete sentences with occasional pauses most of the time.

Possible Points _____ / 15

***Students must receive at least 10 points to move on**

Tutor Recommendations:

Congratulations! Move on

Student has successfully completed this SDLA and is ready to continue to the next.

Repeat

Student hasn't yet mastered this SDLA. It is recommended that the student complete it again

Tutor Signature: _____

Date: _____