

Unit 10 A Mixed-up Story



Early one sunny morning, Jim and Sarah, passionate fishers, headed to a tranquil lakeside. Settling in at the end of the lake's solitary dock, they opened their tackle boxes, baited their hooks, and lowered them into the water.

Under most circumstances, Jim was an easygoing man, known for his patience – unlike Sarah, whose Achilles'...

... heel was her restlessness, which often undermined her enjoyment. Yet after a full hour with no bites, it was Jim, not Sarah, who expressed some frustration with the lack of action.

"What a waste of time," he huffed. "Where are all the fish?"

Sarah laughed and chided Jim for his impatience, to which he replied, "Well, that's the pot calling ...

... the kettle black. We both know how much you struggle to sit still for very long."

They both laughed at this, but then stopped abruptly when they heard a loud, anguished voice from the shore.

"It's hopeless!" the voice exclaimed, "This is a wild ...

... goose chase! I'll never find it!"

Jim said, "That person sounds upset. Should we see if we can help him?"

Sarah nodded resignedly, and they set down their rods. Walking along the shore, they spotted the man who was making all the noise and stopped in their tracks. His appearance gave them ...

... the creeps. His clothing was ragged, he had a heavy, unkempt beard, and he didn't seem to have showered in weeks. Furthermore, he was on his hands and knees, digging frantically in the dirt.

Perhaps sensing their presence, he looked up and saw them standing there. Suddenly he smiled and his expression brightened. Rising to his feet, he exclaimed: "What a sight for ...

... sore eyes! Reinforcements!" Approaching Jim and Sarah, he explained rapidly that he had lost his favourite diamond somewhere on the lake shore, and he needed their help finding it.

Despite their trepidation, they were unable to turn their backs on such a clearly desperate man, and moments later, all three of them were on their knees digging in the dirt.

"If you find it," the man assured them, "the world will be ...

... your oyster! I'm extremely wealthy, and I can make all your dreams come true!"

Hearing this, Sarah caught Jim's eye and pointed at the man's shoes. They were in tatters, practically falling off of his feet.

Extremely wealthy? Sarah thought. Based on present evidence, this was very hard to believe...

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Activity

In pairs or small groups: speaking and reading

Aim

To give students the opportunity to revise some literature idioms

Idioms

From literature

Preparation

Make one copy of the worksheet for each pair or small group and cut up the seven sections of the story.

Time

15 minutes

Teaching notes

Procedure

- › Tell your students that they are going to be given a story that has been cut up into seven sections which they have to reassemble. Point out that the key to reassembling the story is reassembling literature idioms. Add that the story doesn't have an ending – yet!
- › Put your students in pairs or small groups and give each team a set of the seven sections; make sure the sections have been mixed up. Then give your students a few minutes to reassemble the story; while they are doing this, circulate and provide support.
- › Once your students have finished the task, confirm that each team has completed the story correctly. Then ask them to work together to create a satisfying ending to the story. Give them five minutes to do this, during which time you should circulate and provide support.
- › After five minutes, each team selects a student to share their ending with the class.

Extension activity

In their pairs or small groups, ask your students to come up with their own sentences or short texts using some of the idioms from the story. Their sentences or short texts should demonstrate that they understand what the idioms mean.