
Appendix 2

Idioms

Consolidation 1

1. **all along** = from the beginning
2. **all but** = nearly, almost
3. **all in** = exhausted
4. **all in all** = when everything is considered
5. **all the same** = yet, however
6. **all told** = altogether
7. **be the apple of sb's eye** = to be very precious to sb
8. **be up in arms** = to be very angry
9. **for all** = in spite of
10. **for all I care** = I don't care
11. **for all I know** = as far as I know
12. **in the act of** = while performing the act
13. **In the air** = (1) uncertain, (2) spreading about
14. **make allowances for** = to take weaknesses etc. into consideration
15. **make amends for** = to try to counteract a past action
16. **of all people** = used to express annoyance/surprise
17. **on account of** = because of
18. **on no account** = under/in no circumstances
19. **on the air** = broadcasting (opp.: off the air)
20. **on the alert** = watchful and prepared
21. **take into account** = consider sth
22. **on this/that account** = for this/that reason
23. **whet sb's appetite** = to make sb eager to have/ experience more
39. **butter the boss up** = to flatter sb
40. **by and large** = generally speaking
41. **catch sb red-handed** = to be caught while committing a crime
42. **chip off the old block** = sb who is very like one of his parents
43. **cost a bomb** = very expensive
44. **deal a blow to** = to damage one's hopes
45. **don't hold your breath** = wait for sb anxiously
46. **drive a hard bargain** = to be a tough businessman
47. **drop a brick** = to say sth tactlessly
48. **feel in one's bones** = feeling sth instinctively
49. **get your own back** = to take/get revenge
50. **have a bee in one's bonnet** = to have an obsession about sth
51. **have butterflies in one's stomach** = to be very nervous about sth
52. **in black and white** = in writing; clear
53. **in cold blood** = (of a murder) done deliberately
54. **in the balance** = uncertain
55. **kick the bucket** = to die
56. **lay bare** = to make public
57. **make a clean breast of** = to confess
58. **make one's blood boil** = to cause sb to become very angry
59. **on the spur of the moment** = without thinking about sth
60. **out of the blue** = suddenly and unexpectedly
61. **ring a bell** = to remind sb of sth
62. **see the back of** = to be glad to see sb leave
63. **take the bull by the horns** = to take a bold step immediately
64. **wet blanket** = dull person who spoils people's happiness

Consolidation 2

24. **above board** = honest
25. **bark up the wrong tree** = to make a mistake
26. **be broke** = to have no money at all
27. **be full of beans** = to be very lively
28. **be in the black books** = not very popular
29. **beat about/around the bush** = to avoid saying what one means directly
30. **behind bars** = in prison
31. **big headed** = conceited; boastful
32. **black and blue all over** = covered with bruises
33. **blessing in disguise** = sth which appears bad at first but then turns out well
34. **blue-eyed boy** = favourite
35. **bolt from the blue** = suddenly
36. **brainwave** = sudden clear idea/thought
37. **break even** = to show neither loss nor profit
38. **browned off** = fed up; bored

Consolidation 3

65. **a close shave** = a narrow escape
66. **a piece of cake** = sth very easy to do
67. **a red-letter day** = a very important day
68. **a wild-goose chase** = a hopeless search
69. **be caught red-handed** = to be caught while committing a crime
70. **be on the cards** = to be likely to happen
71. **be over the moon** = to be elated
72. **call sb names** = to insult sb
73. **chair a meeting** = to preside a meeting
74. **crocodile tears** = false tears

Appendix 2

75. **cross one's mind** = to think of sth
76. **cut sb dead** = to ignore sb
77. **different as chalk and cheese** = very different
78. **down in the dumps** = not cheerful
79. **down the drain** = wasted; lost
80. **get a bit hot under the collar** = to get angry, upset or embarrassed
81. **get a problem off one's chest** = to tell sb else about your problem
82. **go to the dogs** = to go to waste
83. **have the cheek** = to dare to complain
84. **keep one's chin up** = not to be discouraged
85. **let sleeping dogs lie** = to avoid mentioning a subject which could cause trouble
86. **lost cause** = hopeless situation or case
87. **off colour** = to look slightly unwell
88. **on the dole** = receiving unemployment benefit
89. **play one's cards right** = to act cleverly
90. **show one's true colours** = to reveal one's character
91. **with flying colours** = with great success

Consolidation 4

92. **be dying for sth** = to really want sth
93. **be fit for** = to be good enough for
94. **be flat out** = to be very tired
95. **be green** = not to be experienced
96. **cook one's goose** = to end one's plans abruptly
97. **fair and square** = within the rules
98. **fall head over heels** = to fall in love quickly
99. **feel one's ears burning** = to be sure that sb is talking about you
100. **gatecrasher** = sb attending a party, event etc without an invitation
101. **get off on the wrong foot** = to argue or disagree at the beginning of a relationship
102. **give and take** = to compromise
103. **have a frog in one's throat** = inability to speak due to nervousness
104. **have the gift of the gab** = to be able to talk well, persuasively
105. **hear it through the grape-vine** = to find out information indirectly
106. **in a flash** = very quickly
107. **it's all Greek to me** = sth new or foreign; not easily understood
108. **keep a straight face** = to manage to look serious
109. **keep an eye on sth** = to guard sth
110. **meet behind closed doors** = to meet secretly

111. **one's flesh and blood** = family member
112. **plenty more fish in the sea** = many opportunities in life, for love etc
113. **put one's foot down** = to insist
114. **put one's foot in it** = to join or interrupt a conversation you are not a part of
115. **take it easy** = to calm down
116. **take sb for granted** = to rely on sb to do things for you all the time

Consolidation 5

117. **a bit of a dark horse** = person with hidden abilities
118. **be for the high jump** = to be in serious trouble
119. **be in two minds about sth** = not to know which of the two things to do
120. **be sound asleep** = to sleep heavily
121. **be the perfect image of sb** = to look exactly like sb
122. **before one can say Jack Robinson** = extremely quickly
123. **break the ice** = to ease the tension when one first meets people
124. **eat one's heart out** = to feel jealous
125. **flog a dead horse** = to waste time
126. **fly off the handle** = to become very angry
127. **get out of hand** = to get out of control
128. **get the hang of it** = to get in the habit of sth
129. **go to one's head** = to make conceited
130. **grey matter** = the brains; intelligence
131. **hand in glove with sb** = to be in very close contact with sb
132. **have a job** = to find it difficult
133. **have many irons in the fire** = to have a lot of plans/possibilities in progress
134. **have one's heart in one's mouth** = to be extremely anxious
135. **have time on one's hands** = to have free time
136. **hold one's horses** = to wait, be patient
137. **ill at ease** = embarrassed; uncomfortable
138. **keep sth under one's hat** = to keep sth secret
139. **keep up with the Joneses** = to compete with others in status/material goods
140. **lend sb a hand** = to give help
141. **like the back of one's hand** = to know sth extremely well
142. **lose heart** = to become discouraged
143. **make head or tail of** = to understand
144. **off the cuff** = without preparation
145. **stew in one's own juice** = to suffer the consequences of one's own actions
146. **straight from the horse's mouth** = from the most direct source

147. **strike gold** = to come across sth useful
 148. **take everything to heart** = to take personally/ be hurt by
 149. **take to one's heels** = to run away
 150. **the ins and outs** = the details of an activity
 151. **the tip of the iceberg** = small evident part of a much larger, concealed situation

Consolidation 6

152. **at large** = free, not caught
 153. **be in the know** = to be well-informed
 154. **bring to one's knees** = to destroy, humble
 155. **bury one's head in the sand** = to avoid or ignore reality/responsibility
 156. **come to a head** = to reach a crisis (of an affair, course of events)
 157. **drop sb a line** = send sb a letter
 158. **fine kettle of fish** = confused state of affairs
 159. **get rid of sth** = to give sth away
 160. **go to any lengths** = to do anything necessary to get sth desired
 161. **have kittens** = to be upset
 162. **keep one's fingers crossed** = to hope that sth will turn out well
 163. **keep oneself to oneself** = to live quietly, unsociably
 164. **make a killing** = to have a sudden, great success
 165. **make light of** = to treat sth as unimportant
 166. **make/earn a/one's living** = to earn money
 167. **on the level** = honest
 168. **pull sb/one's leg** = to tease or trick sb
 169. **shed light upon** = to give new/further information
 170. **sleep like a log** = to sleep soundly
 171. **take sb for granted** = not to appreciate sb
 172. **the life and soul of sth** = the most lively and amusing person present somewhere
 173. **the lion's share** = the biggest part/portion
 174. **turn over a new leaf** = to make a new start
 175. **with a view to doing sth** = with the intention or hope of doing sth

Consolidation 7

176. **a night owl** = person who enjoys staying up late
 177. **be second to none** = to be as good as the best
 178. **cross one's mind** = to occur to one, have a sudden idea
 179. **cry over spilt milk** = to grieve over sth that can't be put right
 180. **every nook and cranny** = everywhere

181. **feel down in the mouth** = to feel discouragement or depression
 182. **get a move on** = to hurry up
 183. **get on one's nerves** = to irritate or annoy sb
 184. **have an early night** = to go to bed early
 185. **hit the nail on the head** = to say exactly the right thing
 186. **in a nutshell** = briefly; in a few words
 187. **lose one's nerve** = to back out because of fear
 188. **make a name for oneself** = to become famous
 189. **make hay while the sun shines** = to take advantage of favourable circumstances
 190. **make money hand over fist** = to make a lot of money quickly and easily
 191. **make one's getaway** = to escape
 192. **moon around** = to look miserable
 193. **null and void** = invalid; not legally binding
 194. **once in a blue moon** = very rarely
 195. **put sb's name forward** = to nominate
 196. **put words into one's mouth** = to pretend that sb has said sth that he/she hasn't actually said
 197. **slip one's mind** = to forget about sth
 198. **work a miracle** = to make sth impossible happen

Consolidation 8

199. **a bitter pill to swallow** = a difficult fact to accept
 200. **against all odds** = despite the difficulties
 201. **be out of practice** = lacking practice
 202. **come to the point** = to reach the main point in a discussion
 203. **fall into place** = to become clear
 204. **get the sack** = to be dismissed from one's job
 205. **get the wrong end of the stick** = to misunderstand completely what has been said
 206. **golden opportunity** = the best chance
 207. **grease sb's palm** = to bribe sb
 208. **grow out of sth** = to become too big for sth
 209. **have no option but** = must; have no choice
 210. **if I were in sb's shoes** = if I were sb
 211. **in public** = in the presence of other people
 212. **in the offing** = likely to happen
 213. **off the point** = irrelevant
 214. **once and for all** = for the last time
 215. **out-and-out** = thorough; complete
 216. **out in the open** = (of secrets) revealed
 217. **out of print** = (of books) not available anymore
 218. **out of the frying pan into the fire** = from a difficult situation to a worse
 219. **part and parcel of** = basic part of
 220. **past one's prime** = growing old

Appendix 2

- 221. **pop the question** = to make a proposal of marriage
- 222. **short and sweet** = very short and to the point
- 223. **status symbol** = property/possession that shows sb's high social rank
- 224. **take things to pieces** = to dismantle things
- 225. **throw a party** = to have a party
- 226. **white elephant** = useless possession

Consolidation 9

- 227. **an unknown quantity** = person or thing that one has no experience of
- 228. **as a last resort** = when all else has failed
- 229. **at close quarters** = from a short distance
- 230. **be in a quandary** = to be confused; undecided
- 231. **beg the question** = to fail to deal directly with a question
- 232. **call it quits** = to give up; to stop
- 233. **cut sb to the quick** = to deeply hurt sb's feelings
- 234. **hit the roof** = to get very angry
- 235. **in a rut** = to be fixed in a monotonous routine
- 236. **in the long run** = after a long period of time
- 237. **it stands to reason** = it is logical
- 238. **keep sth quiet** = to keep sth secret
- 239. **know the ropes** = to know all the details of a business
- 240. **off the record** = unofficial(ly)
- 241. **on the quiet** = secretly
- 242. **on the rack** = in a state of great anxiety
- 243. **open to debate** = not decided/settled
- 244. **out of the question** = impossible
- 245. **put down roots** = to settle down
- 246. **work to rule** = to adhere strictly to the rules as a form of protest

Consolidation 10

- 247. **a long shot** = a risky guess
- 248. **a memory like a sieve** = a poor memory
- 249. **be all at sea** = to be in a state of confusion
- 250. **be in sb's shoes** = to be in sb's position
- 251. **be in the same boat** = to be in the same (usu bad) situation
- 252. **be the spitting image of sb** = to look exactly like sb
- 253. **be/get soaked to the skin** = to be/get very wet
- 254. **be/have a close shave** = to barely escape an accident etc
- 255. **behind the scenes** = in secret
- 256. **come out of one's shell** = to gain personal confidence

- 257. **does it show?** = is it obvious?
- 258. **give sb the slip** = to escape from sb
- 259. **go for a song** = to be sold very cheaply
- 260. **go without saying** = to be a foregone conclusion
- 261. **hit the sack** = to go to bed
- 262. **live out of a suitcase** = to travel often
- 263. **make quite a scene** = to become angry in a dramatic way
- 264. **on a shoe string** = on a very small budget
- 265. **pull a few strings** = to use influential friends in order to obtain an advantage
- 266. **pull one's socks up** = to make a greater effort
- 267. **sleep on it** = to think about sth
- 268. **smell a rat** = to suspect that sth is wrong
- 269. **spill the beans** = to reveal a secret
- 270. **stand in sb's way** = to prevent sb from doing sth
- 271. **take ... with a pinch of salt** = not to believe sth completely
- 272. **the last straw** = the last and worst episode in a chain of bad experiences
- 273. **thick-skinned** = insensitive

Consolidation 11

- 274. **(by) trial and error** = learning from one's mistakes
- 275. **be ahead of one's time** = to have modern ideas
- 276. **be thick** = to be stupid
- 277. **be tickled pink** = to be really pleased
- 278. **come to a standstill** = not to progress
- 279. **come to terms with** = to accept a difficult situation
- 280. **do time** = to serve a prison sentence
- 281. **for the time being** = temporarily
- 282. **in a tick** = shortly; soon
- 283. **in the nick of time** = just in time
- 284. **kill time** = to pass time while waiting for sb/sth
- 285. **lay the table** = to set the table
- 286. **not be one's cup of tea** = not to suit one's taste
- 287. **on second thoughts** = having changed one's mind
- 288. **out of turn** = not in the correct order/time
- 289. **paint the town red** = to have a lovely time
- 290. **play truant** = to stay away from school without good reason
- 291. **put two and two together** = to arrive at the truth by looking at facts
- 292. **red tape** = unnecessary bureaucracy
- 293. **take one's time** = not to hurry
- 294. **through thick and thin** = whatever happens
- 295. **touch and go** = with uncertain result

Consolidation 12

296. **be all very well** = to appear satisfactory but in fact not be
297. **be on the up and up** = to improve steadily
298. **be up and about** = to have recovered from an illness
299. **drive (sb) up the wall** = to make sb angry; to annoy sb
300. **frosty welcome** = unfriendly reception
301. **get out of bed on the wrong side** = to be in a bad mood
302. **get wind of** = to receive information about sth indirectly
303. **give vent to** = to express sth freely
304. **give way to** = to give in; yield
305. **hold water** = to be able to be proved true
306. **make a flying visit** = to make a quick trip
307. **make waves** = to cause trouble
308. **no/little wonder** = not surprising
309. **quick/slow on the uptake** = quick/slow to understand
310. **set in one's ways** = fixed in one's habits
311. **speak volumes** = to be strong evidence of sb's merits etc
312. **under the weather** = depressed; unwell
313. **up and coming** = likely to be successful
314. **ups and downs** = alternate good and bad luck
315. **wet behind the ears** = inexperienced
330. **have words with sb** = to have an argument
331. **have/keep one's wits about one** = to be alert and able to deal with difficulties
332. **in black and white** = in writing
333. **in deep water** = in trouble/difficulty
334. **make sb's day** = to make sb very happy
335. **once in a blue moon** = very rarely
336. **out of the blue** = unexpectedly
337. **scream blue murder** = to make a lot of fuss
338. **see/look at sth through rose-coloured spectacles** = to see sth from an unrealistically positive point of view.
339. **the black market** = illegal trading of goods
340. **the black sheep of the family** = a disgraced family member
341. **the boys in blue** = the police
342. **the pot calling the kettle black** = accusing sb of a fault one has oneself
343. **the year dot** = a long time ago
344. **until one is blue in the face** = as hard/long as one possibly can (usu. without success)

Consolidation 14**Consolidation 13**

316. **(be) in sb's black books** = to be) unpopular with sb
317. **(like) a bolt from the blue** = a complete surprise
318. **a blue film** = a pornographic film
319. **an old wives' tale** = false belief (use about health)
320. **be born yesterday** = a long time ago
321. **be in the black** = to be out of debt
322. **be in the pink** = to be healthy
323. **be tickled pink** = to be very pleased
324. **beat sb black and blue** = to hit sb repeatedly until bruised
325. **blue eyed boy** = favourite boy
326. **feel/be blue** = to be depressed
327. **go back on one's word** = not to fulfil a promise
328. **have a yellow streak** = to be a coward
329. **have it both ways** = to refuse to make a decision between two pleasant things (usu in expression "You can't have it both ways!")
345. **(fight) like cat and dog** = (disagree) violently
346. **(like) a bull in a china shop** = a very clumsy person
347. **(to make) a dog's breakfast/dinner (of sth)** = (to make) a mess (of sth)
348. **a bear with a sore head** = an irritable person
349. **a cat in hell's chance** = no chance at all
350. **a different kettle of fish** = a totally different situation etc from the one just mentioned
351. **a dog's life** = a difficult, hard life
352. **a fish out of water** = person who feels uncomfortable because he is in unfamiliar surroundings
353. **a night owl** = sb who enjoys the night life
354. **a red rag to a bull** = action, comment etc liable to provoke sb
355. **a sitting duck** = an easy target
356. **as busy as a bee/a busy bee** = (sb) very busy
357. **as the crow flies** = in a direct line/by a direct route
358. **be in the doghouse** = to be out of favour, in trouble
359. **bought it** = got killed
360. **cook sb's goose** = to make sure of sb's defeat
361. **dog eat dog** = ruthless competition, rivalry
362. **dog-eared** = (of books) with the corners bent and turned down through use
363. **donkey work** = boring, monotonous work
364. **donkey's years** = a long time
365. **drink like a fish** = to drink a lot (of alcohol)

Appendix 2

366. **flog a dead horse** = to pursue a hopeless course of action
367. **go to the dogs** = to deteriorate
368. **have a bee in one's bonnet** = to be obsessed with sth
369. **hold one's horses** = to wait a moment; to restrain oneself
370. **kill two birds with one stone** = to achieve two things with one action
371. **let sleeping dogs lie** = to avoid interfering with a situation that could potentially become a problem
372. **let the cat out of the bag** = to reveal a secret
373. **like water off a duck's back** = having no effect
374. **make a fool of oneself** = to make oneself look stupid
375. **make a mountain out of a molehill** = to cause a fuss about a trivial matter
376. **make a pig of oneself** = to eat/drink to excess
377. **no room to swing a cat** = no room at all
378. **play cat and mouse with sb** = to keep sb in a state of uncertain expectation treating alternatively cruelly and kindly
379. **put the cat among the pigeons** = to cause trouble
380. **rain cats and dogs** = to rain heavily
381. **straight from the horse's mouth** = from the original source
382. **swim like a fish** = to swim well
383. **take the bull by the horns** = to deal decisively with sth
384. **talk the hind legs off a donkey** = to talk constantly
385. **the rat race** = the competitive nature of modern urban life
386. **until the cows come home** = for a long time

Consolidation 15

387. **a brainwave** = a sudden idea
388. **a pain in the neck** = annoying person/thing
389. **be all fingers and thumbs** = to be awkward, clumsy
390. **be up in arms** = to protest loudly
391. **fell/be down in the mouth** = to be depressed
392. **get cold feet** = to lose courage
393. **get off on the wrong foot** = to begin badly
394. **give sb the cold shoulder** = to ignore/shun sb
395. **have a cheek/nerve** = to act/speak rudely or impudently
396. **have a sharp tongue** = to tend to say unkind or hurtful things
397. **have an eye for** = to be a good judge of
398. **keep one's fingers crossed** = to wish for good luck
399. **look down one's nose at sth/sb** = to feel/act superior to
400. **lose one's head** = to lose self-control
401. **pull sb's leg** = to tease; to try to make sb believe sth untrue
402. **put one's foot down** = to insist
403. **put one's heart and soul into sth** = to be devoted to sth
404. **take sth to heart** = to take personally, to be offended/upset by sth
405. **tongue in cheek** = not serious, ironic
406. **tooth and nail** = fiercely
407. **turn a blind eye to sth** = to ignore
408. **with one's heart in one's mouth** = fearfully