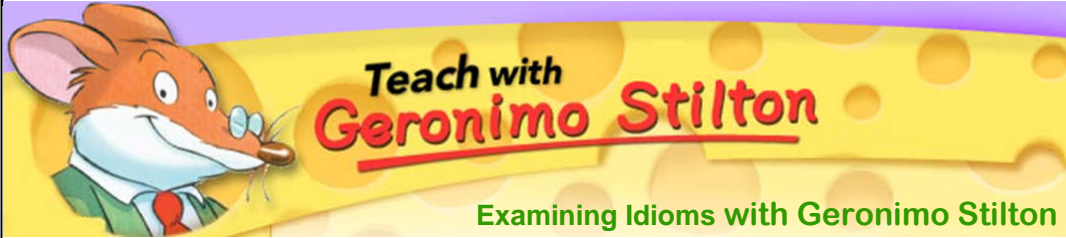


A Book Club Blackline Master

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Lesson Plan Title:

Examining Idioms with Geronimo Stilton

Grade Levels: 3-4

Student Goal:

1. Students will identify and analyse idioms in the Geronimo Stilton books.
2. Students will explore the expressive and figurative nature of idioms.

Student Objectives:

1. Students will analyse the meanings of idioms.
2. Students will incorporate idioms in their own writing.
3. Students will explore the history and origins of idioms.
4. Students will interpret idioms visually and create drawings based on them.

Materials:

1. Geronimo Stilton books
2. pens, pencils, crayons, coloured markers
3. writing paper

Directions:

1. An idiom is a common everyday expression which is not defined by the usual meanings of the words that compose it. Instead, it states ideas in unusual and imaginative ways to create vivid mental images in readers' minds. The idiom "It's raining cats and dogs" is one such example. It does not mean that cats and dogs are actually falling from the sky; instead, this idiom is a fun way of saying that it is raining heavily.

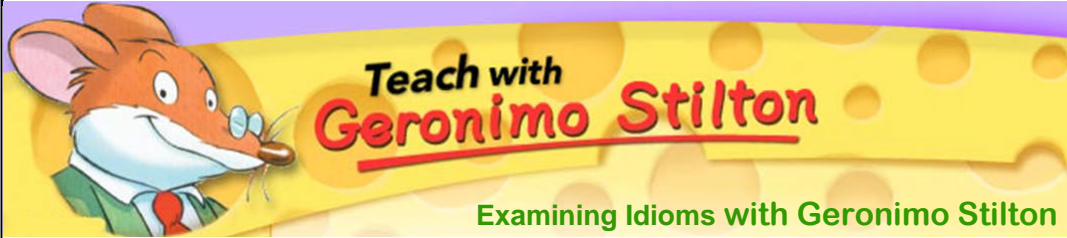
Have students use context clues to decipher the following idioms, highlighted in boldface, from the Geronimo Stilton books. (You may wish to read these excerpts aloud or write them on the board.)

- On page 77 of *Cat and Mouse in a Haunted House*:
"Get a grip, Geronimo, I told myself sharply. It's time to stop being such a scaredy mouse. Yes, I, Geronimo Stilton, **would turn over a new leaf.**"
- On page 28:
"My sister snorted. 'Why are you getting your whiskers in a twist, then?' she scolded.... 'You really **make a mountain out of a mousehill** sometimes!'"
(Point out that this idiom is a twist on the more commonly known expression "to make a mountain out of a molehill.")
- On page 70 of *I'm Too Fond of My Fur!*:
"The professor trusted me. I would never give away personal information. Yep, I can **hold my tongue** when I need to."

2. Have volunteers explain their answers and use each idiom in an original sentence of their own. Then ask each student to pair up with a classmate to find additional idioms in a Geronimo Stilton book of their choice. Ask them to be ready to explain to the class what they think each idiom means and why.
3. Print out the *Do You Know Your Idioms?* worksheet to examine other expressions that students may be familiar with. Have volunteers use crayons and/or coloured markers when making drawings based on idioms (without revealing the idioms themselves). Then invite other students to guess what expressions artwork refers to.

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Lesson Extension:

1. The history behind certain idioms is often as interesting as the expressions themselves. Some of them date back hundreds of years and come from other parts of the world. Ask students if they can guess the origins of simple idioms such as "having a bad hair day" (a day when everything seems to go wrong), then challenge them with trickier expressions such as "pulling the wool over one's eyes." You can research the origins of these idioms and more at Web sites such as www.idiomsite.com. (Note: This site has traces of adult language and should not be recommended for children to visit.)

Assess Students:

Teacher Observation: Were students able to identify idioms and their meanings? Did they understand relationships between literal and figurative meanings?

Evaluate Lesson:

1. Could the students decipher the meanings of idioms using context clues?
2. Could the students use idioms in original sentences?
3. Did creating drawings based on idioms help them make meaningful connections between literal and figurative meanings?

Assignment:

1. Write unfamiliar idioms on the front of note cards and give to each group of three to four students. Help each group determine and then write the idiom's real definition on the back of each card, along with two false definitions. Then have students from each group read aloud the front and back of their cards and ask the rest of the class to guess the true definition.



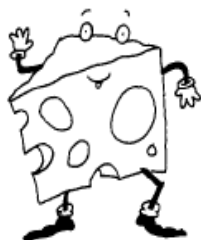


DO YOU KNOW YOUR IDIOMS?

An idiom is a familiar phrase that means something other than what it literally says. Here's your challenge!

Look closely at the pictures on the left. Each one shows the literal meaning of an idiom. Find the idiom in the list below that matches each of the pictures. Then choose four idioms from the list and draw your own literal meanings.

Write the correct idiom in each of the boxes below.



Apple of one's eye:

Favorite

Be all ears:

Listen closely

Be broke:

Be without money

Big Cheese:

Important person

Bent out of shape:

Annoyed

Drag one's feet:

Delay; take a long time

Easy as pie:

Very easy

Feather in your cap:

Achievement to be proud of

Feel blue:

Feel sad

Get cold feet:

Become nervous

Give someone a hand:

Applaud; help

Hard-headed:

Stubborn

Hit the books:

Study

Piece of cake:

Very easy

Pull someone's leg:

Tease

Turn over a new leaf:

Make a change

Raining cats and dogs:

Raining hard

Sell like hotcakes:

Sell quickly

Draw pictures of your favorite idioms in the boxes below.