

Cambridge Learner's Dictionary



Teacher's notes

Idioms

Aims: to help students use the dictionary to expand their knowledge of English idioms

Skill: using the Cambridge Learner's Electronic Dictionary for independent language development

Level: Pre-intermediate and Intermediate

1. Introduction (10 minutes)

- Ask the class if they know any idioms in their own language that involve the word 'green'. Make a list on the right hand side of the board.
- Now ask if the students know any English idioms that involve the word 'green'. Make a list on the left hand side of the board, if they know any.
- Go to the dictionary and click onto the word 'green' and scroll down until the words in the list become red – these are idioms. Add these to the list on the left.
- Ask students to see if there are any similarities between the idioms in their own language and the English ones. Do they have idioms in their first language that mean the same as those in English?
- The English ones have two themes – gardening and envy. Is this the same in the students' language?
- Ask the students to work in pairs and write a short dialogue that includes one of these idioms. When they have finished, ask them to read them aloud to the rest of the class. Students can discuss which dialogues they felt used the idioms most naturally.

2. Class activity (15 minutes)

- Hand out the Class activity worksheet. If possible, display the Cambridge Learner's Electronic Dictionary on screen or on a computer in class.
- Ask the students to work in pairs and write down any idioms they know for the two key words, "red" and "blue". The idioms can come from English or the students' first language.
- Now ask the students to use the dictionary to check the idioms. They should record the idioms, examples and meanings in the tables in the worksheet.
- Now ask the students to make up example sentences for each idiom. They can write the examples on the worksheet.
- Which idioms do the students think will be useful? Which idioms will they try to remember?

- Tell the students that they can also find idioms in the Cambridge electronic Dictionary by using the *Advanced search* function.

How to use the Advanced search function

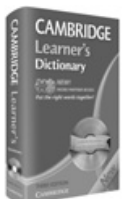
1. Click on the *Advanced search* button above the *Search box*. This will open the *Advanced search* window.
2. The *Category* search tool is the first drop-down box on the right of the window. Click on the *Category* box and select *idioms* from the options.
3. Now enter the word you want to search in the search query box at the bottom and click *find*.
4. This will produce a list of results in the *Results list* in the *Advanced search* window. If you enter "red" all the idioms that use the word "red" will be returned.

3. Homework (15 minutes)

- For homework hand out the Student research worksheets and assign the students some idioms to research. If you can't think of any words, try parts of the body; for example, "hand", "foot" or "heart".
- Ask the students to predict which of the words will have the most idioms.
- Ask students to do this activity on their own using the Cambridge Learner's Electronic Dictionary and to be ready to present some of their findings to the rest of the class next lesson.
- Ensure you allocate time next lesson for students to feed back on idioms they have researched.
- Encourage students to use this table when researching new idioms, especially when studying independently.

TIPS

- You can copy and paste words and definitions from the Cambridge Learner's Electronic Dictionary into other electronic documents.
- Why not start an electronic word bank for your favourite idioms by copying and pasting selected idioms and their meanings into a Word or Excel document?



Class activity worksheet

Idioms

Key word: red

- Write the idioms from the key word into the table in the left column. In the middle column write the meanings, and in the right column write down any similar idioms from your own language.

Table 1

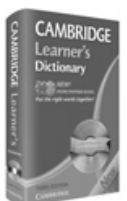
Idioms in English	Meaning	Idioms in own language

Key word: blue

- Write the idioms from the key word into the table in the left column. In the middle column write the meanings, and in the right column write down any similar idioms from your own language.

Table 2

Idioms in English	Meaning	Idioms in own language



Student research worksheet

Idioms

- Your teacher will give you some key words to research. Use the Cambridge Learner's Electronic Dictionary to find idioms that use the key words.
- You can do this at home or in the school computer lab if you have one.
- Record your research in Table 1.
- Pick an idiom from your search that you think is useful and/or interesting and that you would like to present to the class.

Key words:

- Write the idioms from the key words into the table in the left column. In the middle column write the meanings, and in the right column write down any similar idioms from your own language.

Table 1

Idioms in English	Meaning	Idioms in own language

TIPS

- You can copy and paste words and definitions from the Cambridge Learner's Electronic Dictionary into other electronic documents.
- Why not start an electronic word bank for your favourite idioms by copying and pasting selected idioms and their meanings into a Word or Excel document?
- You can use the *Advanced search* function to find idioms. Click the *Advanced search* button to open the search window and choose *idioms* from the *Category* drop down box. Then enter the word (for example, "heart") into the search box and click *find*.

