

# Tutor Training, Week 5

## Idiomatic Expressions

Idiomatic expressions cannot be understood from their literal definitions. For example: *break the news* has little to do with breaking. Rather, it is used as a more colorful way of saying that someone is informing another. Some idiomatic expressions are considered slang (blow the whistle), but the majority are well accepted in all but very formal communication. For students who are learning the English language, idiomatic expressions are particularly troublesome. Teach these expressions just as you would a single vocabulary word because they must be comprehended that way.

Stop pulling my leg.  
It looks like a record snow.  
It's raining cats and dogs.  
It's a dog's life.



We're all in the same boat.  
You'll catch a cold that way.  
He's a cracker-jack mechanic.  
The boss just gave him the ax.  
You could have knocked me over with a feather.  
By the skin of your teeth you won the game.

Tom caught the train at eight.  
You really put your foot in your mouth this time.  
Expensive? Naw, it's just chicken feed.  
Get off my back!  
She's always a ball of fire.  
The criminal tried to bear the rap.  
The manager's over a barrel on this one.  
Somebody might blow the whistle on your plan.  
We're up a creek.  
Stop bugging me!  
The boys had a bull session Friday night.  
You've hit it on the button.  
The judge threw the book at him.  
This car can stop on a dime.  
I'll put this one in the circular file.  
The boys were just shooting the breeze.  
He quit cold turkey.  
The way he got the job was dirty pool.  
That's the way the cookie crumbles.  
He's out on his ear.  
She's over the hill.  
He got in by the seat of his pants.  
I'm hung up on this problem.



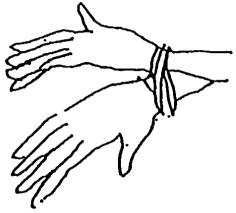
He's out in left field.  
I gave up the rat race.  
He's got rocks in his head.  
It's in the bag  
Take the tiger by the tail.  
I got it straight from the horse's mouth.  
We're in hot water.

Drop me a line.  
I'll do it when the cows come home.  
Go fly a kite.  
That's a sharp tie.  
I'd really like to catch her eye.  
We have to straighten up the house.  
Go jump in the lake.  
Button your lip.  
Can you dig it?  
Cat got your tongue?  
You're off your rocker.  
Get out of my hair.  
Time flies.  
You're out of sight.  
He has a green thumb.  
Keep a stiff upper lip.  
Lend a hand.  
She let the cat out of the bag.  
Cut it out.  
She gave him a dirty look.  
The traffic was heavy.  
We don't see eye to eye on this.



## Idiom Corner *Illustrations by Dave Nicholson*

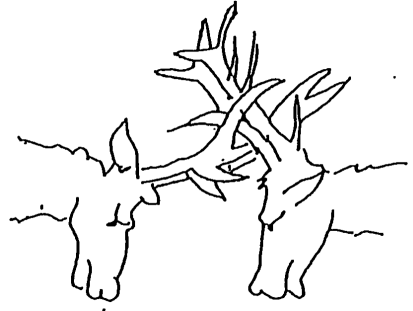
Can you match these idioms with their meanings?



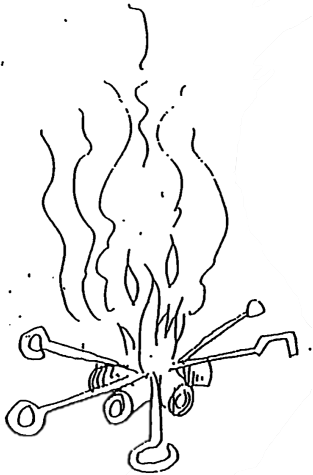
\_\_\_\_ 1. have one's  
hands tied



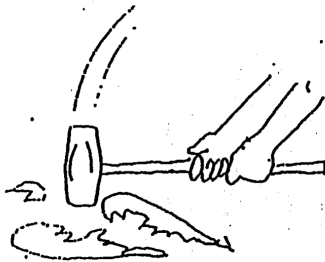
\_\_\_\_ 2. Keep it  
under your hat.



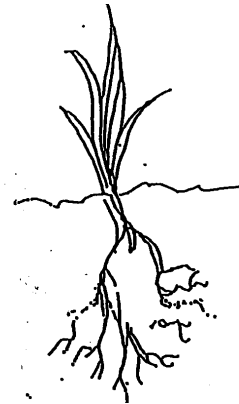
\_\_\_\_ 3. lock horns



\_\_\_\_ 4. have many  
irons in the fire



\_\_\_\_ 5. break  
someone's heart.



\_\_\_\_ 6. grass roots

Meanings:

- A. To get into a long argument with someone
- B. To hurt someone by not loving them anymore
- C. To have many jobs or interests, hoping at least one will be successful, even if the others fail
- D. At the level of ordinary citizens
- E. To be unable to do something because of rules or responsibilities
- F. To be quiet about something; to keep a secret

# Language Experience

## Using Pictures Story Books

Have students predict what happens next in the story. Have students read details from the pictures. Have students retell the story in their own word. Have students write a dialogue for the pictures. Have students write a text for the story.

## Compose Pictures and Story

Using photographs or pictures cut from magazines, present a large supply of pictures for the students to select from and have them compose a story with pictures and text. Or have students write captions for the photos or pictures.

## Cultural Stories

Have students conduct interviews with people of the student's choices and write the interviews into stories.

## Color Magazine Pictures

Present a large number of color pictures cut from magazines and have students pick one that interests them. Use the picture as a trigger for a story by asking, "Why did you pick this picture?" Have students read details from the picture. Have students tell or write a story about the picture. Have students tell a story about one person in the picture. Have students tell or write a story about the emotion the picture evokes.

## Other Real-Life Materials for Developing Writers and Readers

ads	comic strips	headlines	plays	requests
allegories	contracts	how-to-do-it	poems	resumes
announcements	conversations	interviews	posters	reviews
awards	definitions	journals	products	schedules
bedtime stories	directions	letters	descriptions	self descriptions
billboards	directories	lists	puppet shows	sequels
biographies	dramas	lyrics	puzzles	serialized stories
book jackets	editorials	magazines	questionnaires	slogans
book reviews	epitaphs	menus	questions	speeches
brochures	encyclopedia	mysteries	quiz games	tv commercials
bulletins	entries	myths	quotations	telegrams
bumper stickers	essays	newscasts	real estate	travel folders
campaign speeches	fables	newspapers	notices	tributes
captions	game rules	obituaries	recipes	vignettes
cartoons	graffiti	pamphlets	remedies	want ads
certificates	grocery lists	parodies	reports	wills

## Steps in the Language Experience Approach

1. **Initiate** a conversation — that will provide the basic experience upon which the balance of the lesson will be based.
2. **Record** the experience — on chalkboard or newsprint pad/easel — have the learners do this if at all possible. The tutor should do this if the learners are of minimal fluency or have very limited literacy skills with the Roman alphabet that English uses.
3. **Read** the story as recorded — several times as a group. This is layering experience with the sound/symbol word relationships in English in the context of a connected piece of writing.
4. **Discuss** the story — the meaning of individual words, the context of the whole story, details related to previous stories — all the while eliciting conversation from the learners.
5. **Read** the story again — as a group, then with individuals reading parts (or locating particular words).
6. **Elaborate** through discussion — by underlining or circling selected words, by copying selected phrases or words, and by asking each other comprehension questions that can be answered from information in the story.  
  
During the discussion of the story, the tutor can lead the group in a discussion of particular grammar or vocabulary points as they are evidenced in the story. (Past tense forms, the use of capitals, etc.)
7. **Write** — individuals can be given the option of copying the story and asking clarification questions during their writing. Some learners may wish to copy vocabulary words or phrases into a notebook or onto cards for practice.

### An Uncorrected Language Experience Story, *Pany's news*

*Last Saturday Pany went to be friend house in Providence I watched video of Cambodia now.*

## An Uncorrected Language Experience Story

Rang's news  
last Saturday Rang went to her  
friend's house in Providence. To  
watch video of Cambodia now.

### Listening Comprehension / Oral Fluency

This is a way of building listening comprehension and oral fluency for those ESL learners who read and write English well but have problems understanding and pronouncing spoken English.

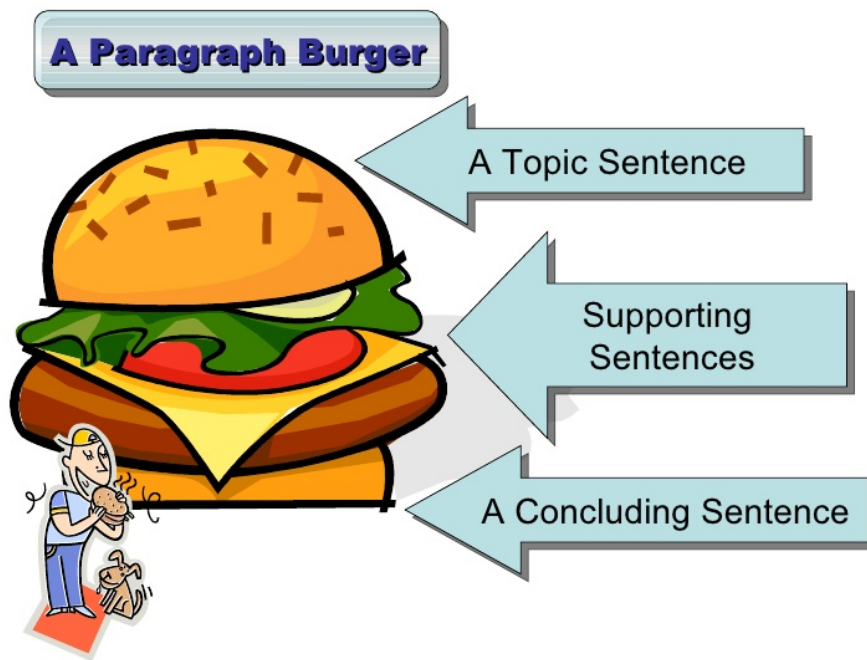
1. Select a text UNKNOWN to your student and below their reading level. It can be a story, essay, magazine article or news story.
2. Set the context by discussing the title or topic of the particular text.
3. Read it aloud, paragraph by paragraph unless the student can absorb lengthier reading.

REMEMBER: THE STUDENT SHOULD NOT BE FAMILIAR WITH THE MATERIAL and THE STUDENT DOES NOT HAVE THE MATERIAL IN FRONT OF HIM

4. After each segment see if there are unfamiliar words. Reread the sentences if necessary for them to guess/ understand the meaning. Read it again and have the student repeat it.
5. Have the student tell you in their own words what they have heard.
6. When finished, give the student a copy of the text to read silently.
7. Have the student read it aloud.
8. Discuss the reading.
9. Give homework having the student write an opinion or paraphrase the writing.

# Paragraph Writing for Multicultural Night in April

Pot Luck Celebration and Essay night.



## What Is a Topic Sentence?

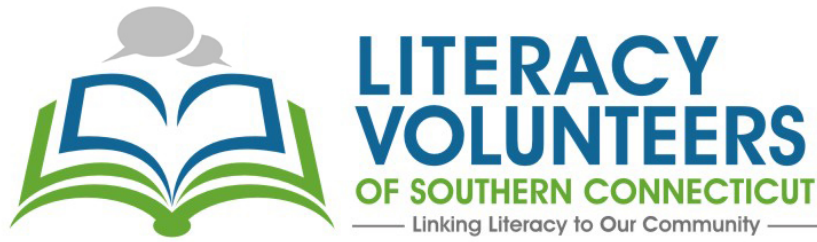
The topic sentence contains the central idea around which a paragraph is developed. A good one has the following six characteristics:

1. It introduces the topic of a paragraph without announcing it.
2. It hooks the reader.
3. It plants questions in the readers' mind.
4. It uses thought-provoking words.
5. It is usually the first sentence; however, it can occur anywhere in the paragraph or it can be implied.
6. It provides a transition from the previous paragraph.

Not all topic sentences will contain every single characteristic. A writer should strive for the ideal; the ideal, however, is not always ideal.

## Procedures

1. Have students read their rough draft or one of their previous essays.
2. Instruct them to highlight each topic sentence.
3. Identify which characteristics each topic sentence contains.
4. Revise topic sentence.
5. I find it best to practice some together first.



**Tutor Training Evaluation, Please submit on last class**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Was the information that was presented clear? Yes No Somewhat
2. Did you think the instructor was prepared at every class? Yes No Somewhat
3. Was the pace of the sessions appropriate for the materials presented? Yes No Somewhat
4. Aside from the readings, if you couldn't do the "practice" and written assignments, what was the reason?

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5. Did the instructor answer questions thoroughly? Yes No Somewhat
6. Were the handouts helpful? Yes No Somewhat
7. Aside from normal apprehension of beginning the tutoring experience, do you think the five-week course has prepared you to start tutoring? Yes No Somewhat

8. Which videos were most helpful? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Did you think any of the videos were not good? \_\_\_\_\_

10. On a scale of 1, low -5, high, rate text book, "I Speak English" as to its value to you. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

11. On a scale of 1-5, rate the hands on assignments. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

12. On a scale of 1-5, rate the written homework assignments. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

13. Other Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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 203-878-4800 Fax: 203-878-1080  
 Email: [director@lvsct.org](mailto:director@lvsct.org)  
**Satellite Offices at Milford Library and Stratford Library**  
[www.LVSCT.org](http://www.LVSCT.org)

## Session 6

### ESL Tutor Roundtable, Follow up

1. Has tutoring been a positive experience? Yes No

Examples-

2. Have you had any problems and how did you solve them? Yes No

Are any problems not solved yet?

3. Do you like the Challenger Series? Yes No

Name some materials you've found helpful in your first weeks of tutoring.

4. What techniques have you used and found helpful?

5. Tell about something you have learned. ☺

Name- Optional \_\_\_\_\_.