

Introduction to Idioms and Multiple Meanings

1st and 2nd Grade

Objectives

- Students will discuss and decode the meaning of idioms and figures of speech from the book *Amelia Bedelia*.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of figures of speech by interpreting their meanings.

Materials Needed

- The book *Amelia Bedelia* by Peggy Parish
- Whiteboard and dry-erase marker (or chalkboard and chalk)
- Interpreting Idioms reproducible
- Scissors
- Box or hat

Introduction

Ask students if they have ever heard a joke that made them laugh their heads off! Ask volunteers to share the joke with the class.

Then ask students, “When we say ‘I laughed my head off,’ do we really mean that we laughed so hard that our heads fall off our bodies?” Once students have responded—and giggled a little—tell them that this kind of expression is called an *idiom*, or a common phrase that means something different than what it says.

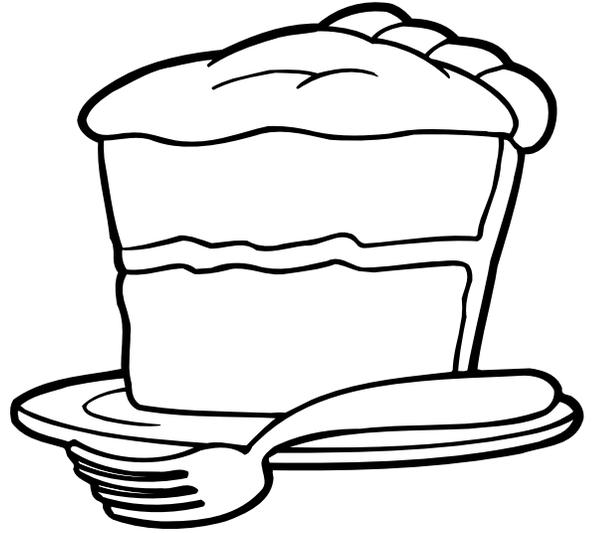
Hold up the book *Amelia Bedelia* by Peggy Parish. Explain that Amelia Bedelia is a character who often gets confused by idioms or words that have more than one meaning. Before you begin reading the story aloud, tell students to listen for Amelia’s misunderstandings and try to figure out what Amelia Bedelia should really be doing.

Procedure

1. Read *Amelia Bedelia* aloud to the students, stopping periodically to let students point out the things she is doing incorrectly. Ask them to identify what she should be doing instead.
2. After reading the book, ask students to recall some of the figures of speech that Amelia misunderstood from the story (e.g., “change the towels” or “dust the furniture”).
3. Write them on the board and have students discuss the real meaning of each one. Then have them suggest instructions that Mrs. Rogers could have written to make the meaning clearer to Amelia.

Guided/Independent Practice

1. Invite students to play the Interpreting Idioms Game! Before you begin, remind them that the words surrounding an idiom are clues to its meaning.
2. Cut apart the sentence strips from the Interpreting Idioms reproducible and place them in a box or hat.
3. One at a time, have volunteers draw a sentence from the box and read it aloud. Ask them to identify the idiom in each sentence and interpret its meaning.



Interpreting Idioms Game

Directions: Cut these sentence strips apart and place them into a box or hat. Invite students to take turns pulling out a sentence and reading it aloud. Then have them identify the idiom in the sentence and interpret what it really means!

That fancy new car costs an arm and a leg!

Max hit the books the night before the big test.

It's raining cats and dogs, so you'd better take an umbrella!

On the last lap of the race, the runner was so tired he ran out of steam.

Susan stayed home from school today because she was sick as a dog.

I lost my homework, so I had to start from scratch.

At bedtime, Mom told us to hit the hay!

I thought the test would be hard, but it turned out to be a piece of cake.