

## Understanding the Difference Between Idioms and Proverbs

### Understanding Idioms and Proverbs: Practice Exercises

#### Exercise 1: Identify the Type

Read each expression and mark it as either an Idiom (I) or a Proverb (P). Then explain your choice.

1. "It's raining cats and dogs."

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2. "Look before you leap."

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3. "Break a leg!"

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4. "A stitch in time saves nine."

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5. "Pull someone's leg."

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6. "Where there's smoke, there's fire."

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7. "Hit the books."

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8. "Practice makes perfect."

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9. "Spill the beans."

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10. "All that glitters is not gold."

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Exercise 2: Complete the Sentence

Choose whether each blank should be filled with an idiom or a proverb to make sense.

1. When my sister saw my new bike, she was \_\_\_\_\_ (green with envy / actions speak louder than words).
2. My grandfather always says \_\_\_\_\_ when I'm impatient about learning a new skill (piece of cake / Rome wasn't built in a day).
3. Instead of telling the truth, Tom kept \_\_\_\_\_ (beating around the bush / honesty is the best policy).
4. When I was nervous about the test, my teacher reminded me that \_\_\_\_\_ (break a leg / practice makes perfect).
5. Sarah \_\_\_\_\_ when she accidentally told everyone about the surprise party (spilled the beans / better late than never).

### Exercise 3: Context Clues

Read each situation and decide whether an idiom or a proverb would be more appropriate. Then choose the best expression from the box.

Box of Expressions:

- Under the weather
- A penny saved is a penny earned
- Costs an arm and a leg
- Birds of a feather flock together
- Hit the nail on the head
- Slow and steady wins the race

Situations:

1. Tom wants to save money for a new bicycle. His father gives him advice about saving.
2. Maria isn't feeling well and needs to explain why she's missing school.
3. The teacher wants to encourage a student who feels discouraged about learning at a slower pace than others.
4. Jake perfectly guessed the answer to a difficult question.
5. The new gaming console is very expensive, and Sarah wants to describe the price to her friend.

### Exercise 4: Create Your Own

Write a short story (about 100 words) using:

- At least 2 idioms
- At least 2 proverbs

Underline the idioms in blue and the proverbs in red.

### Exercise 5: Fix the Mix-Up

Some expressions below are used incorrectly as idioms or proverbs. Explain why they're wrong and fix them.

1. "I'm feeling a stitch in time saves nine today."
2. "The early bird catches the worm your homework."
3. "My mom always says it's raining cats and dogs about being honest."
4. "I break a leg that we should start saving money."
5. "She was under the weather wins the race."

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## Answer Key

### Exercise 1:

1. I - It's a phrase describing heavy rain, not teaching a lesson
2. P - It teaches a lesson about being careful before acting
3. I - It's a phrase wishing good luck, not teaching a lesson
4. P - It teaches the value of fixing problems early
5. I - It's a phrase meaning to joke with someone
6. P - It teaches that signs of trouble indicate real problems
7. I - It's a phrase meaning to study hard
8. P - It teaches the value of continued effort
9. I - It's a phrase meaning to reveal a secret
10. P - It teaches not to judge by appearances

### Exercise 2:

1. green with envy (idiom - describes a feeling)
2. Rome wasn't built in a day (proverb - teaches patience)
3. beating around the bush (idiom - describes indirect action)
4. practice makes perfect (proverb - teaches value of practice)
5. spilled the beans (idiom - describes revealing a secret)

### Exercise 3:

1. Proverb: "A penny saved is a penny earned" (teaches about saving)
2. Idiom: "Under the weather" (describes feeling sick)
3. Proverb: "Slow and steady wins the race" (teaches persistence)
4. Idiom: "Hit the nail on the head" (describes accuracy)

5. Idiom: "Costs an arm and a leg" (describes high price)

#### Exercise 4:

##### Sample Story:

Last week, I was feeling under the weather and missed soccer practice. My coach always says "practice makes perfect," so I was worried about falling behind. My teammates gave me a hand with catching up, proving that actions speak louder than words. When I finally returned, I was like a fish out of water, but remembered that slow and steady wins the race.

#### Exercise 5:

1. Wrong: "A stitch in time saves nine" is a proverb, not a way to describe feeling  
Correct: "I'm feeling under the weather today."
2. Wrong: Mixed idiom and proverb incorrectly  
Correct: "Hit the books to do your homework."
3. Wrong: "It's raining cats and dogs" is an idiom, not a proverb about honesty  
Correct: "My mom always says honesty is the best policy."
4. Wrong: "Break a leg" is an idiom for good luck, not starting a statement  
Correct: "I think that we should start saving money."
5. Wrong: Mixed two different expressions  
Correct: "She was under the weather."

#### Teaching Tips:

1. Have children create flashcards with idioms on one side and proverbs on the other.
2. Use role-play situations where children decide whether an idiom or proverb is more appropriate.
3. Create a room wall with two sections: "Idioms We Know" and "Proverbs We Live By."

4. Have children keep a journal where they record new idioms and proverbs they encounter, noting how they're used.

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