



Ted's chemistry class is way over his head.

TED'S DAY AT SCHOOL

Ted tells his parents he did poorly on his chemistry test. They tell him he needs to get serious and study more.

Susan: How was your day at school today, Ted?

Ted: Bad. I had a chemistry test, and I **blew it!**

Susan: Maybe if you didn't **cut class** so often, you'd do better.

Bob: That's right, son. Stop **slacking off** and start **hitting the books!**

Ted: But I **can't stand** chemistry class. Besides, it's a **lost cause**. That class is way **over my head**.

Susan: You need to **buckle down**.

Ted: When I'm a famous musician, people won't **give a hoot** about my knowledge of atoms and molecules.

Bob: That's **beside the point**.

Susan: We know you have your **heart set on** going to New York University.

Bob: And you don't **stand a chance** of getting in there with such poor grades!



IDIOMS – LESSON 3

beside the point – not relevant; not important

EXAMPLE 1: Whether or not I asked the waiter to bring us water is **beside the point**. Waiters should always bring water to the table.

EXAMPLE 2: The reason you're late is **beside the point**. The fact is, your dinner is now cold.

(to) blow something – to spoil or botch something

EXAMPLE 1: Brenda **blew the interview** and didn't get the job offer.

EXAMPLE 2: Randy managed to get a date with the most popular girl in his class. Now I hope he doesn't **blow it!**

(to) buckle down – to start working seriously

EXAMPLE 1: If Don **buckles down** now, he might be able to graduate from high school this year.

EXAMPLE 2: Team, if we want to win this tournament, we're going to need to **buckle down!**

can't stand – to hate

EXAMPLE 1: Bob **can't stand** bureaucrats, so he'd never do well working at a large corporation.

EXAMPLE 2: Nicole **can't stand** broccoli. She simply refuses to eat it.

(to) cut class – to miss class without an excuse

EXAMPLE 1: Ted often **cuts class** to spend more time with his girlfriend.

EXAMPLE 2: If you keep **cutting French class**, you're going to fail it.

Get real! – be serious or realistic about what's going on

EXAMPLE 1: You think you won't get a speeding ticket when you drive 85 miles per hour? **Get real!**

EXAMPLE 2: You think you're going to win \$1 million in the lottery? **Get real!**

(to) have one's heart set on – to really want something

EXAMPLE 1: Nicole **has her heart set on** going to New York this weekend.

EXAMPLE 2: Did you really **have your heart set on** going to Harvard?

(to) hit the books – to start studying

EXAMPLE 1: Ted parried all weekend. Finally, on Sunday night, he decided it was time to **hit the books**.

EXAMPLE 2: **Hit the books!** I know you have a test tomorrow.

lost cause - something hopeless

EXAMPLE 1: Cindy spent five years studying Russian. Finally, she realized it was a **lost cause**. She would never learn it.

EXAMPLE 2: Jack needs to stop drinking so much coffee, but he's so addicted to caffeine that it's a **lost cause**.

(to) not give a hoot - to not care about

EXAMPLE 1: Tom likes to walk around town in his pajamas — he **doesn't give a hoot** what people think.

EXAMPLE 2: Stephanie **doesn't give a hoot** if she's the only one wearing a green dress to the high school prom.

SYNONYMS: to not give a damn; to not give a darn

over one's head - beyond one's understanding

EXAMPLE 1: The professor was speaking **over our heads**. None of us could understand him.

EXAMPLE 2: The article on cloning was written for scientists. It was **over my head**.

(to) slack off - to waste time

EXAMPLE 1: Amanda doesn't get much done at the office. She's too busy **slacking off**.

EXAMPLE 2: I'd better stop **slacking off**. My essay is due in two hours.

NOTE: People who **slack off** all the time are called "slackers."

(to) stand a chance - to have the possibility of success

EXAMPLE 1: Although the American figure skaters were good, they didn't **stand a chance** of winning a gold medal at the Olympics.

EXAMPLE 2: Wilton High School has the best soccer team in the state. I'm afraid we don't **stand a chance** against them!

 PRACTICE THE IDIOMS

Choose the most appropriate reply to the following statements:

1) *Bob*: "Susan, I can't get my old job back. It's a lost cause."

Susan's reply:

- a) "Lost? Maybe I can help you find it."
- b) "Yes, I know it's not a good cause."
- c) "I understand. You'll find something else."

- 2) **Susan:** "How could Peter fire you? Were you slacking off?"
Bob's reply:
- "No. I was working very hard!"
 - "No. I talked on the phone to friends all day."
 - "Yes. I was working very hard!"
- 3) **Ted:** "It's getting late. I'd better start hitting the books."
Bob's reply:
- "Yes, that's a good idea. Spend some time studying."
 - "Hit the books? Why don't you read them instead?"
 - "Why don't you study instead?"
- 4) **Peter:** "I don't give a hoot how long you've been working here."
Bob's reply:
- "I wouldn't give you a hoot either."
 - "I guess our years together aren't important to you."
 - "Yes, it was a long time."
- 5) **Bob:** "Susan, the truth is that I couldn't stand Peter."
Susan's reply:
- "I know. Peter really liked you too."
 - "I liked him too. He was a nice guy."
 - "I didn't like him either. He was a jerk."
- 6) **Susan:** "Nicole, do you ever cut class?"
Nicole's reply:
- "No. I've never missed a single class."
 - "Yes. I had to leave my math class early yesterday."
 - "No. Sometimes I go to the mall during class time."
- 7) **Bob:** "This book on computers is way over my head."
Susan's reply:
- "Over your head? It should be in front of your face!"
 - "Why don't you start with an easier book?"
 - "Here, try this book. It's more difficult."
- 8) **Nicole:** "I've got my heart set on going to the school picnic."
Susan's reply:
- "Okay. You should definitely go."
 - "Really? Why don't you want to go?"
 - "I understand. Picnics can be boring."

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