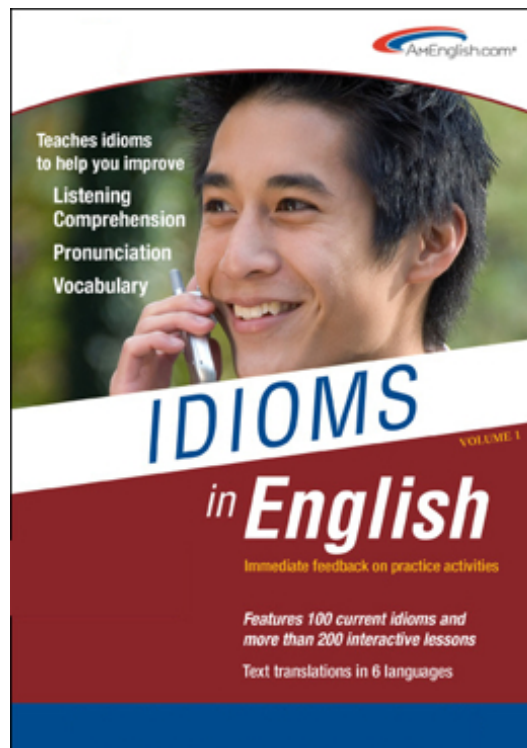


**Sample**

# Idioms in English Volume One

**Step-by-step Lesson Plans**



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## Introduction:

### Background

Idioms like “think out of the box” and “make waves” are used frequently in conversations, email, presentations, and media in English. When students don’t understand the idioms, they can feel left out of the conversation or presentation since the idiom is often the point of the sentence.

### Focus

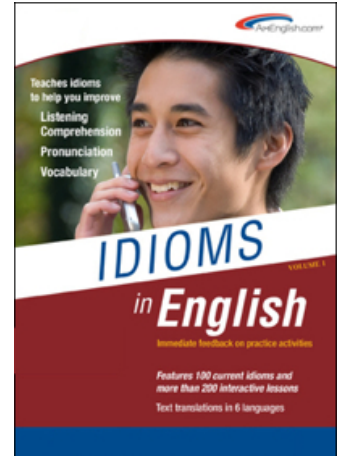
Our approach to teaching idioms also helps improve listening comprehension and pronunciation in English. We demonstrate how the concepts we teach in the *Pronunciation in English* program apply to idioms. The pronunciation notes on every idiom page demonstrate how stress (with content words), intonation (with focus words) and rhythm (with reduction and linking) apply to each idiom. *Idioms in English – Volume One* reinforces the concepts presented in the pronunciation program in a new context.

### Grammar

The grammar in the idioms programs is implicit rather than explicit. So, when you get to a dictation page, if the idiom has a verb, there is usually a variation that will show a different construction. For example, the first sentence in the dictation for “fall through” uses “falls.” (“If her plan **falls** through, she’ll have to get another job.”) The second sentence uses “fell.” (“We thought the deal was going to happen, but it **fell** through.”)

### Appealing to multiple learning styles

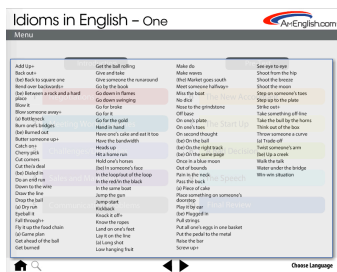
Clicking on the focus word to make it turn red and show up in a larger font is a great way to remind you that the focus word is number one in terms of emphasis. If you are a visual learner, the larger font and the red is the best way to reinforce this concept. If you are a kinesthetic or tactile learner, you learn best by experiencing or doing something. Clicking on the correct word will be a better way to reinforce this concept for you. We try to **cover all the**



**bases.** If you are an aural learner, then hearing the sentence when you click on the sound file will be the best reinforcement. If you are an oral learner, then you should take time to repeat the sentence aloud. Most of us benefit from a combination of practice activities that appeal to more than one learning style.

## Navigation

At the main Table of Contents, there are now two kinds of 'roll over' flash menus:



(1) Mouse over the magnifying glass at the bottom of the tool bar and a program level index appears.

(2) Mouse over each chapter and a chapter level index appears.



## Organization

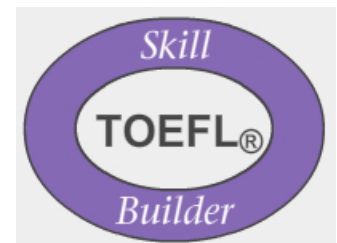
### Pre-Test

The pre-test has multiple rotating versions. Students' pre-test scores can be compared to their final review scores to track their progress. Scores are available in the User Management System.



### TOEFL® Skill Builder Buttons

Mouse over the TOEFL® skill builder buttons in each section to get specifics on how this program will help build skills required for the TOEFL® test.

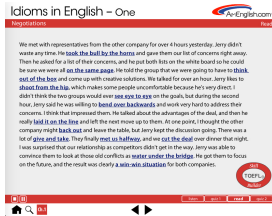
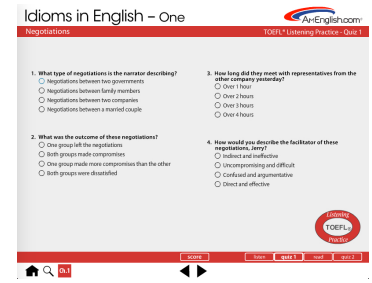


### Story/Dialogue: Listen

Students see a picture and listen to the story or dialog, which uses the idioms in context.

## Quiz 1

The audio for each story/dialogue is followed by a quiz with listening comprehension questions about the main idea, the speaker's attitude, and supporting details. There is automatic scoring for this practice (this is similar to the listening comprehension practices for the TOEFL® and the TOEFL® Junior).

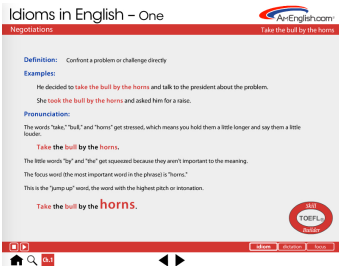
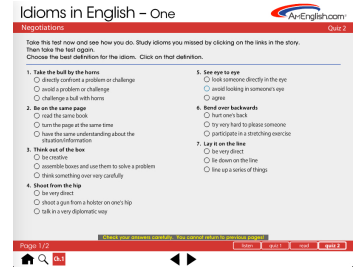


## Story/Dialogue: Read

Students see the text and can listen to the audio again for the story or dialog, which uses the idioms in context.

## Quiz 2

The text for each story/dialogue is followed by a quiz on the definitions for each idiom. There is automatic scoring for this practice.



## Individual Idioms

Individual idiom screens show:

- Idiom definition (with a translation option)
- Two example sentences using the idiom
- Pronunciation notes for each idiom

## Phrasal Verbs

Each volume of *Idioms in English* has some phrasal verbs. Phrasal verbs are marked with a (+) sign in the alphabetical index and on the individual idiom page. Having both audio and text for the phrasal verbs in these programs will help students improve both their listening comprehension and spoken English for the TOEFL® test, which includes phrasal verbs.



## Dictation practice/Focus word practice

Every idiom page is followed by a scored dictation practice and a focus word exercise, both of which help build listening comprehension.

## Chapter review

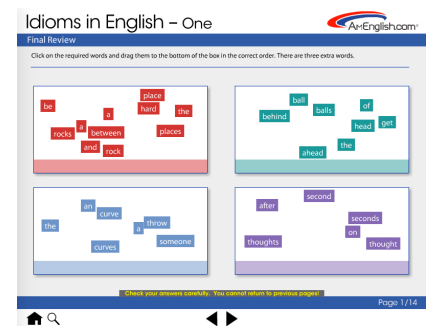
At the end of every chapter is a scored dictation for the story/dialogue.

## Final Review

The Final Review has multiple rotating versions. Students' final review scores can be compared to their pre-test scores to track their progress. Scores are available in the User Management System.

The final review features 4 different question types:

- (1) Word scramble – checks grammar/syntax
- (2) Dictation – checks listening comprehension
- (3) Fill-in the blank – checks reading comprehension
- (4) Multiple-choice – checks reading comprehension



Each final has 100 items with 25 from each category, rotating randomly to cover all 100 idioms (there are 500 total question items).

It is a lot of fun to spot idioms in everyday conversations, in online media, and movies. Learning about idioms in English helps students become more fluent in the language as it used every day by native speakers.

## Target Audience

This program was designed for students at the intermediate through advanced level.

## Formats

The material is available online.

## **Customers**

This program is used at schools like Reedley College and the University of South Carolina and companies like IBM and Deloitte to improve communication skills in English.

# Lesson One: In the Lab

## Pre-Test

Have students take the pre-test, so that there is a score to compare to the final review at the end of the program. Lower the affective filter by telling students that if they get a perfect score, they don't need to be in the class.



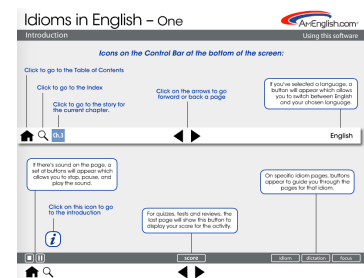
## Notes for Teachers:

- This will give students a baseline and an awareness of their shortcomings.
- It will also intensify students' focus on the material in the programs.
- Teachers can compare scores on the Pre-test with the Final Review to measure improvement.

## User Interface Tour

Spend some time in the lab with the program on the screen to give students a quick tour of the navigation. Make sure students know how to use the “Choose your language” button at the Table of Contents screen.

Show students the “Using this Software” section in the Introduction. Take some time to show students how to control the audio, so they can start and stop in the middle of a story/dialogue and pick up where they left off.



## Overview

1. Show the table of contents with 9 stories/dialogues & Final Review
2. Click on the magnifying glass at the bottom left of the screen to show them the alphabetical list of idioms in this volume.
3. Show the first picture in **Chapter 1 - Negotiations**
4. Let students listen to the dialogue and then go to the TOEFL® Listening Practice. Highlight the navigation at the bottom right of the screen.



5. Next, take students to the “read” section where they can listen to the audio again and see the text. Show them “Quiz 2.”
6. Finally, show them one of the idiom screens from the first chapter. Highlight the buttons at the bottom right of the screen for “dictation” & “focus word” practice.
7. Finally, take students back to the alphabetical index to show them the reviews for each chapter (see box at lower right of the screen).

### **On your own in the lab/Homework**

Review all of Chapter One: Negotiations

Complete all of the quizzes and practices in this chapter

# Lesson Two: Negotiations

## In the classroom: Warm-up

Define the word “idiom” and elicit examples from the class.



An idiom is a group of words with a special meaning of its own that is not clear from the meanings of the individual words.

Note: Phrasal verbs, like “add up,” are included in this program.

This can be a whole class exercise with teachers facilitating the discussion, or people can work in small groups or with partners to answer the questions.

Show the picture for chapter one (with no audio) or put the title of the chapter on the board: **Negotiations**

<b>Ask students:</b>
Have you ever negotiated something?
Do you like to negotiate?
Do you think negotiations need to be balanced to work?

## Presentation

Idioms from chapter One

(Ideally, this is a review, but it can be a preview.)

Note: The focus words for the idioms in this program were chosen based on common usage. The speaker can sometimes change the focus word in a phrase depending on what he/she wants to emphasize. For example, with the idiom, “put all one’s eggs in one basket,” the stress would usually be on “one,” but if the speaker wants to emphasize the fact that all the money/time is invested in one place, the word “all” could become the focus word. Other idioms are not flexible, and the focus word does not change. An example would be: “a **long** shot.”

Read the list of idioms from Chapter One, emphasizing the focus words in each idiom. After each one, elicit the “Jump up” word or the focus word from the class:

Take the bull by the <b>horns</b>
Be on the same <b>page</b>
Think <b>out</b> of the box
<b>Shoot</b> from the hip
See eye to <b>eye</b>
Bend over <b>backwards</b>
Lay it on the <b>line</b>
Back <b>out+</b>
<b>Give</b> and take
Meet someone <b>halfway+</b>
Cut the <b>deal</b>
Water under the <b>bridge</b>
Win- <b>win</b> situation

### Whole class practice: In the classroom

Write these idioms on the board with the marking for the focus word. Have individuals read each of the following idioms aloud, emphasizing the focus word.

If you hear mistakes where students mispronounce a vowel sound or put too much stress on a function word like “the” or “it,” take note and talk about it when the group is finished.

### Grammar Focus

Elicit from the class which of these idioms have verbs (**yellow highlight**). Have them supply the past tense of the verb. Take a moment to write the past tense next to the idiom. This will highlight irregular verbs and help prevent errors in the group practice that follows.

Note the (+) sign next to idioms that are phrasal verbs. Remind students that the stress usually falls on the last part of a phrasal verb, the particle\*.

*The last word in a phrasal verb is often called a particle rather than an adverb or preposition.
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## Pronunciation focus: The schwa for “of”

Take a minute to focus on the schwa for “of” in the idiom “think out of the box.” Project the individual idiom page for “think out of the box” on the board or just write the pronunciation sentence on the board:

We need to think out *uh* the box.

Note that the word “of” is reduced to a schwa or “uh” sound when it comes before a word that starts with a consonant sound, “the.” The schwa sound is short and **unstressed**. You can hear it in the words “above” and “anana.”

Model the schwa for “of” or play the sound file in the program and have the class repeat it:

We need to think out *uh* the box.

## Group practice

Have students work in small groups or with partners to make one sentence for each idiom. Consider having half of the groups work on sentences for the first half of the idioms and the other half of the class work on sentences for the second half.

Note: Advanced level students may want to try to write their own paragraph/story/dialogue using the idioms in context rather than just limiting themselves to sentences.

## Monitor for Grammar/syntax problems

The instructor can monitor results during this time to check for grammar/syntax mistakes in the sentences.

## Groups/Partners share

Groups will take turns sharing their sentences orally with the class. The rest of the class will give them a “thumbs up” if they hear the focus word in each sentence clearly.

## Role Play

The instructor assigns role-plays to pairs of students that require using 4-5 idioms from the story. Here are a couple of scenarios:

**Your teenager wants to stay out later on the weekend.**

*Characters: parent and teenager*

**You are looking for a reasonably priced used car for your commute.**

*Characters: customer and used car salesperson*

Instructors can ask for volunteers to present their role-plays to the class or choose people to present.

Each member of the audience will write down the idioms used in each role-play, and the teacher will elicit the list from individuals at the end of each presentation to check listening comprehension.

## Reflect

Take a moment to reflect on the lesson and share with a partner/the group what you’ve learned. How will you apply it to your communication in English?

## On your own in the lab/Homework

Review all of Chapter Two: Meeting Work Deadlines

- Complete all of the quizzes and practices in this chapter