

Learning Outcomes

- ✓ Students realise that people with ASD find idioms very difficult (because their meaning is not literal).
- ✓ Students understand that some verbal comments have figurative not literal meaning.
- ✓ Students are able to think about and see the humour in the literal translation of figures of speech.
- ✓ Students learn that idioms are expressions whose meanings cannot be inferred from the meanings of the words that make it up.

Teaching and Learning Opportunity

On the Primary DVD Joshua talks about getting his words mixed up. On the Secondary DVD Chris puts his hand in his homework book, when the teacher says 'hand in your homework'. People with ASD have trouble understanding figures of speech.

The junior idiom worksheet focuses on body part idioms that a child might hear at school. It can be done orally as a class exercise, or individually as a written task.

The middle idiom worksheet focuses on animal idioms. Introduce this by reading the Aesop's fable 'The Boy Who Cried Wolf.'

The senior idiom worksheet focuses on categories of idioms. The examples given include idioms the student might hear at school. Extend this by discussing categories of idiom.

By discussing idioms with students of all levels, they, and the student with ASD, begin to realise that words don't always mean what they say (and that this is OK and some of them are called idioms). This lesson could be extended to colloquialisms, metaphors, spoonerisms etc.

Curriculum links

English - exploring language critically.

Visual art – visual representation of a figurative expression.

Many curriculum areas can involve idioms. There are money, food, occupational, Shakespearean, biblical and sporting idioms.



More information can be found at...

'My Teacher Likes to Say.' by Denise Brennan-Nelson.
<http://www.gale.cengage.com/pdf/TeachersGuides/LikestoSay.pdf>
(Teachers guide)

What Did You Say? What Do You Mean? By Jude Welton.
<http://www.jkp.com/catalogue/book.php/isbn/9781843102076>

Fun With Idioms. <http://www.idiom-magic.com/work2.htm>

Scholastic Dictionary of Idioms. By Marvin Terban. ISBN 0590381571

Even More Parts by Ted Arnold. ISBN 0803729383