

Name: _____ Date: _____

Wrangle Real-World Rhetoric: Your 10th Grade Idiom Challenge

Sophomores analyze linguistic nuances and dismantle complex metaphors to interpret how cultural context shifts the meaning of contemporary and classic expressions.

1. In a political debate, a candidate claims their opponent is 'moving the goalposts.' Based on the context of logical fallacies, what is the candidate accusing their opponent of doing?

- A. Changing the criteria of a process while it is still happening to prevent success.
- B. Forgetting the original purpose of the debate during a heated exchange.
- C. Using sports metaphors to appeal to a younger, more active demographic.
- D. Admitting defeat before the final results have been officially tallied.

2. The expression 'throwing the baby out with the bathwater' suggests that an individual is being overly cautious by preserving every detail of a failed project.

- A. True
- B. False

3. When a CEO mentions that the company needs to 'trim the fat,' she is utilizing a corporate idiom to suggest that the organization will ____.

- A. Increase the health insurance benefits for all employees.
- B. Eliminate unnecessary costs or reduce the number of staff members.
- C. Invest more capital into research and development for new products.
- D. Lower the physical weight of the products they manufacture.

4. Analyze the nuance: How does 'playing devil's advocate' differ from simply 'disagreeing'?

- A. It implies the person is actually angry with the speaker's ideas.
- B. It suggests the person is being stubborn and refuses to see reason.
- C. It indicates the person is taking a contrary position solely for the sake of debate or testing an argument.
- D. It means the person is attempting to convince others to join a religious cause.

5. If a diplomat says a negotiation has become a 'Pandora's box,' they are implying that the situation ____.

- A. Is full of delightful surprises and unexpected rewards.
- B. Has reached a peaceful and predictable conclusion.
- C. Will require a small, locked container to keep documents safe.
- D. Has triggered many unforeseen and uncontrollable problems.

6. The phrase 'the elephant in the room' refers to an obvious major problem or issue that everyone is present is avoiding discussing.

- A. True

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B. False

7. Consider the expression 'crossing the Rubicon.' In a modern narrative, which scenario best illustrates this idiom?

- A. A student decides to skip lunch to finish a homework assignment.
- B. A whistleblower leaks classified data, knowing they can never return to their job.
- C. A traveler takes a bridge instead of a ferry to cross a local river.
- D. An athlete wins a race they have practiced for over several years.

8. To describe a person as having 'feet of clay' is to suggest that despite their outward appearance of strength or greatness, they ____.

- A. Are physically unable to move quickly in a crisis.
- B. Have a hidden, fundamental character flaw or weakness.
- C. Work as an artisan or sculptor in their spare time.
- D. Are humble and deeply connected to their local community.

9. Which of the following is the most accurate synonym for the idiom 'jumping the shark' in the context of a long-running television series?

- A. Reaching a peak of popularity and critical acclaim.
- B. Introducing a new, exciting character to boost viewership.
- C. Employing a desperate gimmick that signals a decline in quality.
- D. Successfully transitioning from a scripted show to a reality format.

10. If a writer is 'beating a dead horse,' they are effectively introducing a brand new topic that has never been discussed before.

- A. True
- B. False