

## The Understudy

It was almost time for the play to begin, but the lead actress had not arrived. When the door opened, everyone looked up, expecting to see Beth.

1. What clues does the title give you about what will happen in this passage? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Who was the lead actress? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What problem is introduced in the paragraph? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What do you think will happen next? \_\_\_\_\_

"I hate to put a damper on things, but Beth has a fever and will not make it tonight," explained her mom.

"Well, I never put all of my eggs in one basket," responded Ms. King. "Amanda has been our understudy for that part and knows it well. Amanda, put on Beth's costume."

1. An idiom is an expression that means something different from what it actually says. List any idioms in this selection. \_\_\_\_\_
2. How did Ms. King respond to the problem? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Had Amanda worked hard as the understudy? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What clues from the paragraph helped you answer question 3? \_\_\_\_\_

Amanda was on cloud nine after the performance. She greeted her family who were waiting at the back of the auditorium.

"You were terrific. You are the apple of my eye," said Dad, as he gave Amanda a hug. Amanda was speechless as everyone complimented her.

1. List any idioms in this selection. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Was Amanda pleased with her performance? How do you know? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Why do you think Amanda was speechless after the performance? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How would you have reacted in Amanda's position? \_\_\_\_\_

Dad said, "It's raining cats and dogs outside. Grandpa, keep an eye on everyone while I run and get the car."

Finally, Dad returned. "Sorry it took so long. The traffic is slower than molasses in January. I avoided an accident by the skin of my teeth."

1. What members of Amanda's family were at the performance? \_\_\_\_\_
2. List any idioms in this selection. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Replace one of the idioms with another idiom. \_\_\_\_\_
4. What could someone learn from this story? \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### I Should Have Bitten My Tongue

My friends and I were having a good time when, out of the blue, Jayla asked me about my trip to Jamaica. I wanted to fly the coop! A couple of days before, I had lied about going to Jamaica. Jayla is always bragging about her fantastic vacations. For once, I wanted to hold a candle to her, but now I was caught with my foot in my mouth.

"What's wrong? Cat got your tongue?" Jayla teased. She smiled roguishly at me. She knew she had me over a barrel.

I asked her to drop it, but she had a one-track mind. I was a sitting duck to her verbal jabs. Then, she started bragging about all of her trips around the world. Everyone was all ears. If you ask me, Jayla is too big for her britches!

1. An idiom is an expression that means something different from what it actually says. Underline all of the idioms in this selection.
  
2. Match the idioms in paragraph 1 with the literal meaning below.
  - A. Be compared equally to \_\_\_\_\_
  - B. Without warning \_\_\_\_\_
  - C. Escape \_\_\_\_\_
  - D. Having said something you wish you could take back \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Write a literal meaning for one of the idioms in paragraph 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. What is the bigger problem in this selection—the lie or the bragging? Explain. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_