

## LESSON 12

# BOB'S BIG COOKIE ORDER

*The family is gathered around the dinner table. Bob tells them about his deal with the Village Market. He asks his kids for help baking the cookies.*

**Bob:** I know I've been **down in the dumps** since I got fired, but **things are looking up** now. The Village Market wants to sell our cookies.

**Nicole:** That's great news, Dad!

**Bob:** We're going to have to bake **like crazy** over the weekend. They want 2,000 cookies by Monday.

**Nicole:** Two thousand cookies in three days? Don't you think you've **bitten off more than you can chew**?

**Ted:** Yeah, you're going to be **running around like a chicken with its head cut off**!

**Susan:** Fortunately, there are four of us here. You kids will have to **pitch in** too.

**Nicole:** Sorry, but I can't. I have to finish Ted's chemistry homework and then I've got to **get going** on my election speech.

**Bob:** What's that about doing Ted's chemistry homework?

**Ted:** **Never mind!** Amber will **help out** with the cookies instead of Nicole.

**Susan:** **For heaven's sake,** Nicole! It's **like pulling teeth** getting you to do any work around here.



## IDIOMS – LESSON 12

**(to) bite off more than one can chew** – to take on more than one is capable of; to take on too much

EXAMPLE 1: Jennifer is having a dinner party for 50 people, and she can't even cook. I think she's **bitten off more than she can chew**.

EXAMPLE 2: You agreed to host 50 exchange students from Korea? Aren't you afraid you've **bitten off more than you can chew**?

SYNONYM: to be *or* to get in over one's head. Example: Jennifer is in **over her head** with this dinner party!

**(to be) down in the dumps** – *see Lesson 5*

**for heaven's sake!** – A way of expressing emotions such as surprise, outrage, or impatience

EXAMPLE 1: Hurry up, **for heaven's sake!** You're going to be late for school.

EXAMPLE 2: Oh, **for heaven's sake!** Yesterday, I made three dozen chocolate chip cookies, and today there's only one cookie left!

SYNONYMS: for God's sake, for goodness sake, for Pete's sake

**(to) get going** – to get started on something; to set off for a destination; to leave

EXAMPLE 1: If you don't **get going** on your homework soon, you're going to be up all night.

EXAMPLE 2: We'd better **get going** to the restaurant now. Otherwise, we'll be late for our seven o'clock reservation.

SYNONYMS: to get a move on; to get the show on the road

**(to) help out** – to give assistance; to help

EXAMPLE 1: Amber offered to **help out** in the kitchen by chopping nuts.

EXAMPLE 2: I'd be happy to **help out** by baking cookies for the picnic.

SYNONYM: to lend a hand

**like a chicken with its head cut off** – in a hysterical manner; in a frenzy; in a very nervous way

EXAMPLE 1: Ken was late for work, and he couldn't find his car keys. He was running around his apartment **like a chicken with its head cut off**.

EXAMPLE 2: Patricia ran around the school looking for her lost backpack **like a chicken with its head cut off**.

NOTE: This idiom is usually used with the phrase "to run around" as in the above examples.

**like crazy** – with great speed or enthusiasm

EXAMPLE 1: When Pete Sampras won the tennis match, the crowd started cheering **like crazy**.

EXAMPLE 2: Ann ran **like crazy**, but she still didn't manage to catch the bus.

**like pulling teeth** – very difficult

EXAMPLE 1: It's **like pulling teeth** getting Max to talk about his girlfriend.

EXAMPLE 2: Kyle hates to study. It's **like pulling teeth** getting him to do his homework every night.

**never mind** – don't worry about something; forget it; it doesn't matter

EXAMPLE 1: You forgot to pick up eggs at the supermarket? **Never mind**. I'll get them tomorrow morning.

EXAMPLE 2: **Never mind** what your friends say. You need to do what you think is right.

**(to) pitch in** – to help

EXAMPLE 1: Nicole offered to **pitch in** and clean up her neighborhood beach. She picked up five plastic cups and an old towel.

EXAMPLE 2: If you need my help, just ask. I'd be happy to **pitch in**.

SYNONYMS: to lend a hand, to lend a helping hand; to help out

**(to) run around** – to move about quickly

EXAMPLE 1: I've been **running around** all day making final arrangements for our trip to Costa Rica tomorrow.

EXAMPLE 2: Debbie is exhausted. She **ran around** town all day today.

**things are looking up** – things are improving

EXAMPLE 1: Elizabeth found a wonderful new job and just moved into a beautiful new apartment. **Things are looking up** for her.

EXAMPLE 2: **Things are looking up** with the economy.

## PRACTICE THE IDIOMS

**Fill in the blank with the missing word:**

- 1) When the sun doesn't shine all winter, it's easy to start feeling down in the \_\_\_\_\_.  
a) dumps                      b) crazy                      c) luck
- 2) Things were so busy at work, I spent the entire week running around like a chicken with its \_\_\_\_\_ cut off.  
a) beak                      b) head                      c) neck
- 3) According to today's newspaper, the economy is improving. Things are looking \_\_\_\_\_.  
a) up                      b) down                      c) forward
- 4) I thought you could help me with my new project. But if you're too busy, never \_\_\_\_\_. I'll find somebody else.  
a) bother                      b) mind                      c) worry
- 5) For heaven's \_\_\_\_\_! If you don't stop playing those video games, you'll never get your homework done.  
a) angels                      b) sake                      c) benefit
- 6) When the school asked Susan to bring cookies to the bake sale, she said she'd be happy to help \_\_\_\_\_.  
a) in                      b) about                      c) out
- 7) When my friend John told me how busy he was preparing for his Halloween party, I offered to pitch \_\_\_\_\_.  
a) in                      b) out                      c) him
- 8) It's like pulling \_\_\_\_\_ getting Nicole to help out in the kitchen.  
a) hair                      b) nails                      c) teeth

## ★ BONUS PRACTICE

Choose the best substitute for the phrase in bold:

- 1) Janice is doing all the cooking for her daughter's wedding. I think she's **bitten off more than she can chew**.
  - a) accepted too little responsibility
  - b) taken too much food into her mouth
  - c) taken on more than she can handle
- 2) If Nicole is going to cover her entire school with election posters, she'd better **get going on** them immediately.
  - a) start working on
  - b) stop working on
  - c) start destroying
- 3) If you get tired of mowing the lawn, I'd be happy to **help out**.
  - a) confuse you
  - b) do nothing
  - c) assist you
- 4) Last year, Bill opened a store selling gourmet pet food. This year, he'll open 10 more stores. His business is growing **like crazy!**
  - a) very quickly
  - b) very slowly
  - c) despite being a crazy idea
- 5) Ever since receiving his rejection letter from Princeton University, Jason has been **down in the dumps**.
  - a) happy
  - b) sad
  - c) encouraged
- 6) For a long time, Michelle couldn't find a boyfriend. But now **things are looking up**. She met a nice guy last weekend.
  - a) her love life is getting even worse
  - b) her love life is improving
  - c) her love life couldn't get much worse

ANSWERS TO LESSON 12, p. 163

Blue hair's  
all the rage  
this season.

I see that  
tattoos are  
popular too.

