Common Idioms in Academic Settings

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What is an Idiom?

• A combination of words whose meaning is not deducted from the words’ individual definitions.

• A statement that does not have a literal translation

• Also known as a “Figure of Speech”
Examples of Common Idioms

• **Piece of Cake** (A task that can be accomplished easily)

• **In the Same Boat** (everyone faces the same challenges)

• **An Arm and a Leg** (Expensive, costs a lot of money)

• **Bend over Backwards** (Willing to do anything to help)

• **Devil’s Advocate** (To argue a position, without necessarily believing in that side of the argument.)
Idioms vs. Slang

• Slang is informal or colloquial speech, always changing, differs generationally.

• Slang can include idiomatic expressions or figures of speech.
  → For example: What’s up?
Idiom Activity

• Let’s now go over the handout together.
• Which ones were more difficult to understand?
• What would you like explanation on?
Reactions to Activity

• Have you heard any of these idioms previously?

• What do you do when you hear an idiom/expression you don’t understand?

• What sort of idioms are common in your native language? Is there any overlap?
English Idioms in Use Series - Michael McCarthy

From the horse’s mouth
Oxford Dictionary of English Idioms