AILET

Idioms and Phrases for CLAT: Introduction, Strategies and More

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Introduction

Idioms and phrases are important for CLAT and other entrance examinations. One or two questions are guaranteed from this part in English. Thus it becomes important for the aspirants to learn the capability of answering them correctly.

It also improves one's command over English altogether making it easy to solve other sections of the exam as well as do well in law school.

Scope of idioms and phrases for CLAT?

Idioms and phrases are **group words which have a figurative meaning** i.e. their literal meaning cannot be inferred from the individual words used but they have an **indicative meaning** .

They are **used to decorate the speech and beautify your language**. Usage of idioms in a sentence makes it more eye-catching to the reader.

Idioms and phrases form a part of the vocabulary, and it is impossible to memorize all idioms and phrases but using the following tricks one can try to derive the meaning:

- Try to devise its visual meaning by putting it in a sentence. Eg. cut a sorry figure it means 'to give a poor show'. Now when you read this idiom you get an impression that it is talking about some mistake or something in negative. Thus choose an option which is adverse in its spirit and reflects such related meaning
- Read the idiom again and again and try to draw a connection between the words used. Eg. to cry for the moon,it means 'to aspire for an impossible thing'. Now if you draw a connection between 'cry' and 'moon' so why will someone actually cry for a moon as a rational man knows one cannot have the moon, thus moon here relates to something which one cannot have. Hence it can be derived that you are crying for something which you cannot get.

- While reading the idioms try to understand the context for which they are used, this will help you in memorizing them.

Here is a list of a few important idioms and phrases for CLAT

1. Idiom – Grease the palm

Meaning – (to bribe)

Sentence – Kabir had to grease the palm of the officer in order to get a driving license.

1. Idiom – Nip in the bud

Meaning – (to destroy in the very beginning)

Sentence – The bad habits of a child should be nipped in the bud.

1. Idiom – Turn a deaf ear

Meaning – (to not to pay attention)

Sentence – All the students turned a deaf ear to the teacher during a moral science lecture.

1. Idiom – Knit the brow

Meaning – (to frown)

Sentence – Employer always knits his brow at everything the employees do.

1. Idiom – In a flutter

Meaning – (excited)

Sentence – Abhinav is in a flutter today because it is his first day at school

1. Idiom – Fabian policy

Meaning – (policy of delaying decisions)

Sentence – It gets harmful for the management to follow fabian policy in every matter

1. Idiom – By fits and starts

Meaning – (irregularly)

Sentence – Ram was penalised because he used to perform his job by fits and starts

1. Idiom – At a loose end

Meaning – (unoccupied)

Sentence – Nowadays Rachel is at a loose end because she has left her job

1. Idiom – Hang fire

Meaning – (remain unsolved)

Sentence – Most of the criminal cases remain hanging on fire for many years

1. Idiom – Windfall

Meaning – (sudden gain)

Sentence – Reshma got a windfall when her uncle died

1. Idiom -ABC

Meaning – (very common knowledge)

Sentence – Meera does not know ABC of law.

1. Idiom – Blow hot and cold

Meaning – (having no stand)

Sentence – Sunil cannot be relied upon because he blows hot and cold in every matter.

1. Idiom – Cock and bull story

Meaning – (untrue story)

Sentence – All the explanations given by Sita seem to be a cock and bull story.

1. Idiom – Gall and wormwood

Meaning – (source of irritation)

Sentence – The acts of the children were gall and wormwood for her.

1. Idiom – Herculean task

Meaning – (a tedious job)

Sentence – To clear judiciary examination is a herculean task for the aspirants.

1. Idiom – Kith and kin

Meaning – (blood relatives)

Sentence – In the gloomy days, we all seek the support of our kith and kins.

1. Idiom – Open and above board

Meaning – (very clear)

Sentence – He prefers to record open and above board point of view on every matter.

1. Idiom – Queer fish

Meaning – (strange person)

Sentence – Ramesh is a queer fish, he cannot be trusted in confidential issues.

1. Idiom – Rhyme or reason

Meaning – (rational cause)

Sentence – He was suspended from the job without any rhyme and reason

1. Idiom – Between Scylla and Charybdis

Meaning – (choice between two unpleasant alternatives)

Sentence – Make the wise decision so that you don’t fall between Scylla and Charybdis.

1. Idiom – At dagger’s drawn

Meaning – (to have bitter enmity)

Sentence – Once who were best friends are now at dagger’s drawn.

1. Idiom – Bluestocking

Meaning – (educated but pedantic lady)

Sentence – Her husband avoids her because she is a bluestocking

1. Idiom – Draconian Law

Meaning – (extremely severe law)

Sentence – In Kashmir Draconian Law was imposed in order to subdue terrorist attack.

1. Idiom – Eke out

Meaning – (supplement income)

Sentence – The students do part-time jobs to eke out their income.

1. Idiom – Damp squib

Meaning – (complete failure)

Sentence – Our visit to London for the project was a damp squib.

1. Idiom – Hit below the belt

Meaning – (to strike unfairly)

Sentence – We should never hit the opponents below the belt.

1. Idiom – In the red

Meaning – (suffer a loss)

Sentence – Most of the businesses went in red after demonetization.

1. Idiom – Keep the pot boiling

Meaning – (earn hardly enough for a living)

Sentence – One should earn at least to keep the pot boiling.

1. Idiom – One's Achilles heel

Meaning – (a week point)

Sentence – Her children were her Achilles' heel.

1. Idiom – a Pyrrhic victory

Meaning – (victory at a high cost)

Sentence – India's victory over POK will prove to be a pyrrhic victory.

Editor's Note: Simple reading these idioms and phrases will not be enough for CLAT. Use them in sentences of your own as you read.

1. Idiom – A scarlet woman

Meaning – (a woman with loose morals)

Sentence – A woman working late at night should not be considered as a scarlet woman.

1. Idiom – To set the Thames on fire

Meaning – (to achieve something impossible)

Sentence – To trek on Himalaya's is like to set the Thames on fire.

1. Idiom – Take somebody for a ride

Meaning – (to deceive a person)

Sentence – The shopkeeper took his customers for a ride by selling them fake goods.

1. Idiom – White elephant

Meaning – (anything with less utility and more expenditure)

Sentence – The new BMW car has become a white elephant for the employer.

1. Idiom – Wry face

Meaning – (disappointed look)

Sentence – Anil made a wry face when he learned that he has been disqualified from the match.

1. Idiom – Hush Money

Meaning – (a bribe)

Sentence – Simran managed to escape from the cops by paying hush money.

1. Idiom – Not born yesterday

Meaning – (worldly-wise)

Sentence – I am not going to fall for your lies as I was not born yesterday.

1. Idiom – Speck and span

Meaning – (neat and smart)

Sentence – Students should always be speck and span in their dressing

1. Idiom – Milk and water

Meaning – (weak)

Sentence – The economy of India is milk and water in front of the USA's economy.

1. Idiom – Uphill task

Meaning – (a difficult task)

Sentence – Passing CLAT examination is an uphill task.

1. Idiom – To assume airs

Meaning – (to pretend superiority)

Sentence – She is in the habit of assuming airs in the presence of her cousins.

1. Idiom – to burn the midnight oil

Meaning – (to work up to late hours)

Sentence – Mahesh burnt the midnight oil for several days in order to complete the project before the deadline.

1. Idiom – to bury the hatchet

Meaning – (to make peace forgetting the past enmity)

Sentence – Indians and Pakistanis should bury the hatchet for the development and prosperity of both the nations.

1. Idiom – to buy a pig in a poke

Meaning – (to purchase a thing without knowing its actual worth)

Sentence – One should always value money and never buy a pig in a poke.

1. Idiom – To curry favour

Meaning – (to win favour by gifts or flattery)

Sentence – By giving presents to the officer, Himanshu tried to curry his favour.

1. Idiom – To go on fool's errand

Meaning – (to go on an expedition where only a fool can go)

Sentence – The key was in his pocket and he sent me on a fool's errand to search the same in the movie theatre.

1. Idiom – to have feet of clay

Meaning – (full of faults)

Sentence – The answer sheets of the students had feet of clay.

1. Idiom – To keep abreast of

Meaning – (not to fall behind)

Sentence – In this world of competition, it is very important to keep abreast of others.

1. Idiom – to pour oil on troubled water

Meaning – (to rectify the matter)

Sentence – In the quarrel between the brothers, their mother poured oil on troubled water.

1. Idiom – To show the white feather

Meaning – (to act with cowardice)

Sentence – Anita showed a white feather in the playground.

Confident about idioms and phrases for CLAT? Yes? Next topic then…

Click here to read about analogies in English vocabulary.

Click here to read about the tricks to know the meaning of words.