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ENGLISH

FOR EVERYONE

ENGLISH IDIOMS



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LEARN AND PRACTISE MORE THAN 1,000 COMMON IDIOMS

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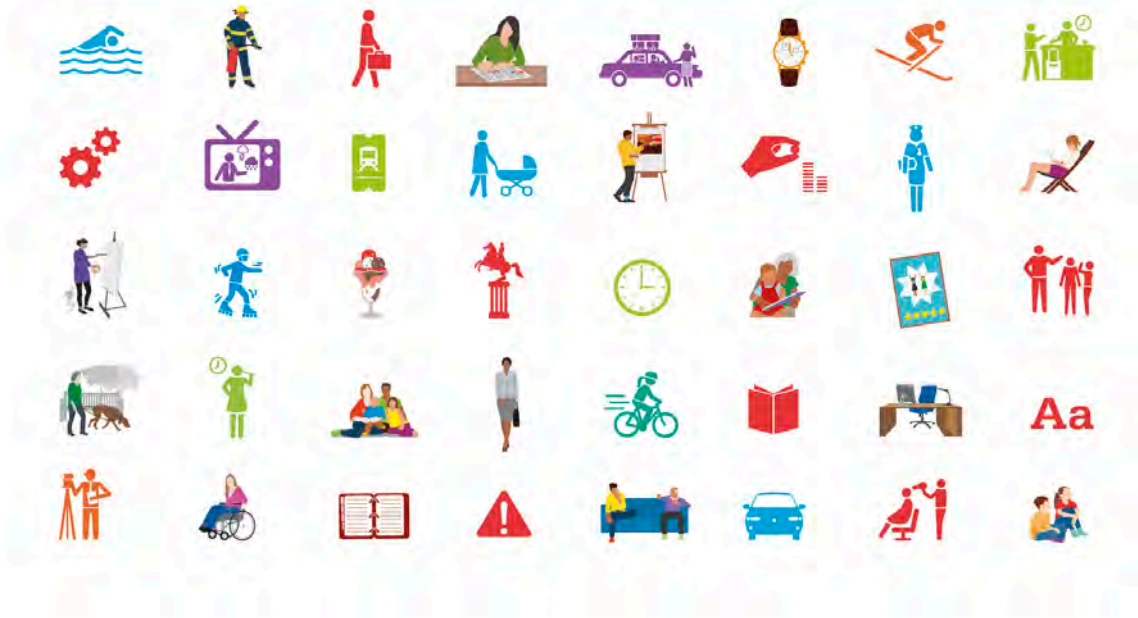
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ENGLISH

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ENGLISH IDIOMS





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First published in Great Britain in 2019 by
Dorling Kindersley Limited
80 Strand, London, WC2R 0RL

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10 8 6 4 2 1 3 5 7 9
001-309818-Mar/2019

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A CIP catalogue record for this book
is available from the British Library.
ISBN: 978-0-2413-3588-8
Printed in China

All images © Dorling Kindersley Limited
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A WORLD OF IDEAS:
SEE ALL THERE IS TO KNOW

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How to use this book

English for Everyone: English Idioms will help you learn, understand, and remember the most common English idioms and expressions. Each of the 54 units in the book consists of a teaching spread on a subject or theme, with illustrated sentences to place the idiom in context, and then a practice spread with exercises to reinforce what you have learned. Listen to the free audio and repeat each expression and sentence. The answers to all the exercises are at the back of the book, along with comprehensive indexes.

Unit number The book is divided into units. The unit number helps you keep track of your progress.

Modules Many teaching spreads are broken into modules covering different categories of idioms.

Module number Every module is identified with a unique number, so you can easily locate the related audio.

Sample sentences English idioms are shown in the context of a sample sentence.

Definitions Idiomatic English expressions are accompanied by definitions.

Supporting graphics Visual cues help you understand and remember new idioms.

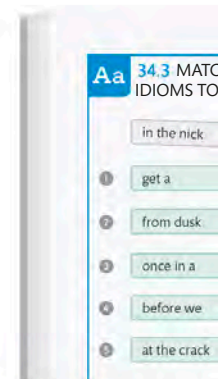
Write-on lines You are encouraged to write your own translations of English idioms to create your own reference pages.

20 Ease and difficulty

20.1 EASE

<p>The test was a cinch. I finished it 20 minutes early. <i>extremely easy</i></p> 	<p>Getting around my city is a breeze. Our trains are excellent. <i>easy</i></p> 
<p>Winning that race was like shooting fish in a barrel. Nobody else had trained. <i>very easy (usually about overcoming competition)</i></p> 	<p>It's all too easy to forget to turn off the lights when you go out. <i>very easy (usually about a mistake)</i></p> 
<p>Making a great cup of coffee is not rocket science. <i>not very complicated or difficult</i></p> 	<p>Finding Angela's house was easy peasy. I have a GPS. <i>easy</i></p> 
<p>I already play the violin, so learning the cello was a walk in the park. <i>easy</i></p> 	<p>Unclogging my sink was a piece of cake for Carlita. She's a plumber. <i>extremely easy and straightforward</i></p> 
<p>Alicia's worked in this factory so long she could do her job with her eyes shut. <i>easily, or without thinking</i></p> 	<p>Driving on the left was difficult at first, but soon it was smooth sailing. (US) <i>easy, without major problems</i></p> 

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20.2 DIFFICULTIES AND PROBLEMS

Doing the dishes after a dinner party is **a pain in the neck**.
very annoying or problematic

Don't **make a mountain out of a molehill**. I only asked you help me bake a cake!
make a small task or problem seem bigger than it is

Giving up chocolate is **easier said than done**.
not as easy as it seems

I was **like a fish out of water** at the science fiction convention.
in a difficult or unusual situation

Bashir was **totally out of his depth** on his first day work at the florist.
in a situation that is too difficult

Listening exercise This symbol indicates that you should listen to an audio track in order to answer the questions in the exercise.

CH THE BEGINNINGS OF THE
THE CORRECT ENDINGS

- move on
- blue moon
- of time
- till dawn
- of dawn
- knew it

34.4 LISTEN TO THE AUDIO AND MARK THE IDIOMS YOU HEAR

- A a drag
- B at the crack of dawn
- C bright and early
- D dragged on
- E ages
- F flown by
- G killed time
- H the dead of night

Exercise number Each exercise is identified with a unique number, so you can easily locate answers.

Sample answer The first question of each exercise is answered for you, to help make the task easy to understand.

Exercise instruction Each exercise is introduced with a brief instruction, telling you what you need to do.

Aa 34.6 MATCH THE DEFINITIONS TO THE CORRECT IDIOMS

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| kept busy while waiting | Time's up! |
| unexpectedly soon or quickly | before we knew it |
| very late at night | killed time |
| You have no more time to complete a task. | a drag |
| a boring experience that passes very slowly | the wee hours |
| at the last possible moment | flown by |
| passed very quickly or too quickly | in the nick of time |

Aa 34.7 LOOK AT THE PICTURES AND COMPLETE THE SENTENCES

We must get a move on or we'll miss the start of the play.

Ren arrived _____ for his first day at work.

Júlio _____ finishing his painting. He wanted it to be perfect.

It's nearly midnight. It's _____ we went home.

Victoria is always _____ for her English class.

Huan only cooks at home _____

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PRACTICE SPREAD

PROBLEMS

My home improvements **opened a can of worms**. The builders discovered so many problems.
caused a situation that leads to more difficulties

The team has a **mountain to climb** if it wants to win the game.
a huge amount to do, or problem to overcome

Finishing the building this month is going to be a **tall order**.
very difficult

There have been **teething problems** with the new computer system at work. (UK)
problems at the beginning of a process

I tried to make the politician answer my question, but it was **like getting blood from a stone**. (UK)
extremely difficult, usually because of someone's behavior

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UK/US idioms Some idioms are specific to UK or US English. These are labeled (UK) or (US).

Space for writing You are encouraged to write your answers in the book for future reference.

Audio support All teaching modules are supported by audio recordings to help you recognize and pronounce spoken vocabulary.

Idioms and expressions

Idioms can be one of the most difficult parts of a language for learners to understand and use correctly. *English for Everyone: English Idioms* includes over 1,000 of the most common and useful English idioms, along with set expressions and easily confused words.

IDIOMS

Idioms are expressions that cannot be understood literally. For example, "like two peas in a pod" has nothing to do with peas, but means two people look alike.

Idiomatic expression

Mateo and his brother Lucas are **like two peas in a pod**. I can't tell them apart.



SET EXPRESSIONS

Some of the expressions in this book are not idioms, but particular common combinations of words. Learners often make mistakes when they use these set expressions.

Set expression

Shreya's going to **have a baby** this summer.



EASILY CONFUSED WORDS

This book also includes two units on words that are easily confused by English-language learners, such as "say" and "tell."

When you use "say", you don't have to state who a person is talking to.

"Oh, no," **said** Kayleigh. "I've left my school bag on the bus with all my homework in it."



When you use "tell", you must state who a person is talking to.

Kayleigh had to **tell** her teacher that she had left her homework on the bus.



Audio

English for Everyone: English Idioms features extensive supporting audio resources. Every expression and sentence in the teaching spreads is recorded, and you are encouraged to listen to the audio and repeat the phrases and sentences out loud, until you are confident you understand and can pronounce what has been said.



SUPPORTING AUDIO

This symbol indicates that audio recordings of the idioms and sentences in a module are available for you to listen to.



LISTENING EXERCISES

This symbol indicates that you should listen to an audio track in order to answer the questions in the exercise.



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Answers

The book is designed to make it easy to monitor your progress. Answers are provided for every exercise, so you can see how well you have understood and remembered the idioms and expressions you have learned.

Exercise numbers

Match these numbers to the number at the top-left corner of each exercise.

Answers Find the answers to every exercise printed at the back of the book.

36

36.4

1 B 2 A 3 B 4 C

36.5

1 She's working hard.
2 We rested.
3 Julie tried her best.
4 Carmen is not working.
5 It was hard work.

36.6

1 Leo always goes the extra mile to make his customers happy.
2 Akash usually takes 40 minutes to get to work for his lunch.
3 I'm sorry, I can't talk to you right now, my hands are full.
4 Celia had to put her hands up to meet the deadline.
5 Brandon is a slacker. He always ignores the customers.
6 After a long day working, he decided to put his feet up and watch TV.

Indexes

This book includes two indexes: an index of idioms and expressions, and an index of common words and subjects.

INDEX OF IDIOMS AND EXPRESSIONS

The index of idioms and expressions contains every expression from the teaching spreads, listed in alphabetical order by key word.

M

can't **make** heads or tails of (US) / can't make head or tail of (UK) 31.1

make a beeline for 37.1

make a cake 43.1

make a choice 43.1

make a fresh start 18.1

make a joke 43.1

make a mess 43.1

make a mountain out of a molehill 20.2

make a noise 43.1

make a phone call 43.1

make a pig's ear of something 7.1

make a rod for your own back 22.2

make arrangements 43.1

make a scene 28.1

make ends meet 32.1

make great strides 37.1

make progress 43.1

make some friends 43.1

make someone's blood boil 13.1

make someone's hair stand on end 13.3

make someone's mouth water 29.1

make waves 23.2

keep in **mind** (US) / bear in mind (UK) 14.1

someone's **mind** goes blank 14.1

something slips your **mind** 14.1

speak your **mind** 24.2

spring to **mind** 14.1

great **minds** think alike 31.1

a **minefield** 16.1

a misery guts (UK), see a downer (US)

go **missing** 47.1

break the **mold** 31.3

make a mountain out of a **molehill** 20.2

easy **money** 32.1

money doesn't grow on trees 32.1

throw **money** around 32.1

throw **money** down the drain 32.1

once in a blue **moon** 34.1, 54.1

over the **moon** 12.1

moth-eaten 6.1

set the wheels in **motion** 37.1

a **mountain** to climb 20.2

make a **mountain** out of a molehill 20.2

as quiet as a **mouse** 50.2

be born with a silver spoon in your **mouth** 3.3

by word of **mouth** 25.1

foam at the **mouth** 11.2

UK/US idioms If an idiom has a UK or US equivalent, both versions are listed in the index.

Key words Each entry in the index contains a key word from the expression in bold.

Module number Match the number in the index to the module number on the teaching page.

INDEX OF COMMON WORDS AND SUBJECTS

Use this index to find idioms relating to a subject or expressions using a common word.

A

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amount 17.1

anger 13.2

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appearance 3

arts, the 28

"as" 50.1

authority 38

B

background 3.3

bad things 6

"beat" 52.4

beginning 18.1

behavior 10

body, the 11.1, 15, 38.2

"borrow" 52.5

business 40, 41

01 Age

1.1 IDIOMS ABOUT AGE

After climbing the hill, I realized I'm **no spring chicken!**

no longer young



My assistant is a bit **wet behind the ears**. He still has a lot to learn.

young and inexperienced



Becky's worried she's **getting on in years** after spotting more gray hairs. (US)

getting old



Sanjay feels **as old as the hills** when his kids talk about technology.

extremely old



These **bright young things** have just started college.

young, enthusiastic, fashionable, or ambitious people



This TV show **bridges the generation gap**. The whole family loves it.

appeals to people of all ages



1.2 EXPRESSIONS WITH "AGE"

My grandpa got married again at the **ripe old age** of 92.

very old age



Brendan's teacher told him to start **acting his age**.

behaving in a way appropriate to his age



Sally first sang on stage at the **tender age** of 7.

very young age



I **feel my age** when I go shopping with my children.

am conscious of being older



I've just turned 40, and I'm **in the prime of my life**. I always go to the gym after work.

at my best; healthy and successful



Katie started learning piano when she was **knee-high to a grasshopper**.

very young



I'm too **long in the tooth** to try out skydiving.

old



Derek and Joan spent their **twilight years** traveling the world.

the last years of someone's life



I can't come to that nightclub with you! I'm **over the hill**.

old; past my best years



Angela might be 84, but she is **still young at heart**.

youthful, despite being old



Damien's at **that awkward age** and finds it hard to talk to people.

the period of adolescence when people feel very self-conscious



In many countries, there is a big celebration when young people **come of age**.

reach maturity, or have the same legal rights as adults



Many singers' voices **improve with age**.

get better as they get older



Stephen has reached the **great age** of 100.

very old age



Aa

1.3 WRITE THE IDIOMS FROM THE PANEL IN THE CORRECT GROUPS

YOUNG

bright young things

OLD

no spring chicken
over the hill

~~bright young things~~
knee-high to a grasshopper

tender age
great age



1.4 LISTEN TO THE AUDIO AND COMPLETE THE SENTENCES THAT DESCRIBE EACH PICTURE



I've just turned 40, and I'm in the prime of my life. I always go to the gym after work.



3 My grandpa got married again at the _____ of 92.



1 Becky's worried she's _____ after spotting more gray hairs.



4 This TV show _____ . The whole family loves it.



2 Damien's at _____ and finds it hard to talk to people.



5 I _____ when I go shopping with my children.

Aa**1.5** REWRITE THE SENTENCES, CORRECTING THE ERRORS

Brendan's teacher told him to start **playing his age**.

Brendan's teacher told him to start acting his age.



1 I'm too **long in the mouth** to try out skydiving.



2 My assistant is a bit **wet behind the neck**. He still has a lot to learn.



3 Derek and Joan spent their **midnight years** traveling the world.



4 In many countries, there is a big celebration when young people **arrive of age**.



5 Angela might be 84, but she is still **young at mind**.



6 Sanjay feels **as old as the mountains** when his kids talk about technology.

**Aa****1.6** WRITE THE CORRECT IDIOM NEXT TO ITS DEFINITION, FILLING IN THE MISSING LETTERS

no longer young

= no spring chicken

1 get better as they get older

= i _____ w _____ a _____

2 old; past my best years

= o _____ t _____ h _____

3 very old age

= g _____ a _____

4 the last years of someone's life

= t _____ y _____

5 youthful, despite being old

= y _____ a _____ h _____

6 very young age

= t _____ a _____

02 Friends and family

2.1 FRIENDSHIP

Harper regrets **losing touch with** all her old school friends.

no longer being in contact with



I think Claire's found a **soulmate**. Both she and Dan love reading.

the perfect person to be a friend or partner



I've **kept in touch with** Lin since we left college 25 years ago.

continued to be in contact with



Marie and Pierre met through Isaac, a **mutual friend** of theirs.

a shared friend of two people



Ramón and Tara **get on like a house on fire**. They're always talking and laughing.

get along extremely well; have a very good relationship



Mia and I have **drifted apart** since she left our choir and started boxing instead.

slowly become less friendly or close to each other



I **struck up a friendship with** Pete while we were in cooking class last year.

became friends with



My wife and I **hit it off** immediately when we first met at a country music concert.

became friends very quickly



Donna was a **fair-weather friend**. She wouldn't help when my house flooded.

a friend who deserts you when you have difficulties



Cy and I **got off on the wrong foot** on our date. He was an hour late and forgot my name.

started our relationship badly



2.2 FAMILY

Bob reminds me so much of his father.
He is a **chip off the old block**.

very similar to someone in his family



We're moving to a bigger house
because we're hoping to
start a family soon.

have children



Jade is a **family friend**. She grew up on
the same street as us.

*someone who has known your
family for some time*



I am close to my **immediate family**,
but rarely see my other relatives.

*close family, such as parents, sons,
daughters, brothers, and sisters*



Uncle Tony is **the black sheep of the family**.
He's been to prison three times.

*someone who brings shame to the family
or is the odd one in the family*



We're **bringing up** our children to
be kind to animals.

teaching a child how to behave



That vase is a **family heirloom**.
Lou's grandfather bought it in
China in 1893.

*an object that has been passed down
through the generations of a family*



Boris often asks members of
his **extended family** to help
with childcare.

*wider family, such as grandparents,
cousins, nephews, and nieces*



We're a **close-knit family**. We
always meet up for birthdays
and holidays.

a loyal and supportive family



Curly hair **runs in our family**,
and my daughter, mom, and
I all have it.

is a common feature in our family



Aa

2.3 MATCH THE DEFINITIONS TO THE CORRECT IDIOMS

close family, such as parents, sons, daughters, brothers, and sisters

a fair-weather friend

1 an object that has been passed down through the generations of a family

immediate family

2 a friend who deserts you when you have difficulties

losing touch with

3 no longer being in contact with

a family heirloom

4 the perfect person to be a friend or partner

a soulmate

5 slowly become less friendly or close to each other

extended family

6 wider family, such as grandparents, cousins, nephews, and nieces

drifted apart



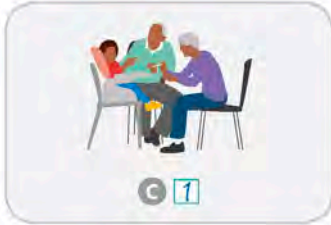
2.4 LISTEN TO THE AUDIO, THEN NUMBER THE PICTURES IN THE ORDER YOU HEAR THEM



A



B



C 1



D



E



F



G



H

Aa

2.5 CROSS OUT THE INCORRECT WORDS IN EACH SENTENCE

Bob reminds me so much of his father. He is a chip off the old ~~brick~~ / ~~block~~ / ~~leg~~.

- 1 We're moving to a bigger house because we're hoping to ~~begin~~ / ~~start~~ / ~~have~~ a family soon.
- 2 My wife and I ~~struck~~ / ~~hit~~ / ~~beat~~ it off immediately when we first met at a country music concert.
- 3 Uncle Tony is the black ~~sheep~~ / ~~horse~~ / ~~cow~~ of the family. He's been to prison three times.
- 4 Cy and I got off on the wrong ~~hand~~ / ~~leg~~ / ~~foot~~ on our date. He was an hour late and forgot my name.
- 5 Ramón and Tara get on like a ~~house~~ / ~~barn~~ / ~~home~~ on fire. They're always talking and laughing.

Aa

2.6 LOOK AT THE PICTURES AND COMPLETE THE SENTENCES



My wife and I hit it off immediately when we first met at a country music concert.



3 Curly hair _____, and my daughter, mom, and I all have it.



1 We're _____ our children to be kind to animals.



4 I've _____ Lin since we left college 25 years ago.



2 Marie and Pierre met through Isaac, _____ of theirs.



5 Jade is _____ She grew up on the same street as us.

03 Appearance and background

3.1 APPEARANCE

Leo **bears a striking resemblance** to his grandfather.

looks extremely similar



Mateo and his brother Lucas are **like two peas in a pod**. I can't tell them apart.

extremely similar to each other



Karen is **the spitting image of** that actor in the new sci-fi film.

almost identical to



You must eat something! You're **all skin and bones**.

too thin



Oscar is only 25, but he's already **getting thin on top**. (US)

going bald



Rita **looked like she'd seen a ghost** after I told her my news.

looked very scared or shocked



Milan returned home with **five o'clock shadow** after a long day at the office.

the beginning of a beard



Rachel **looked like a drowned rat** after she got caught in the rain on her way home.

was very wet



Edie **looks like butter wouldn't melt in her mouth**, but she's actually really naughty.

looks innocent, like she wouldn't do anything bad



My aunt believed in **keeping up appearances** despite having little money.

pretending that things are going well



3.2 STYLE AND DRESS

Domenica **looked the part** for her first day of work at the bank.

was dressed in the right way



George arrived at the restaurant **immaculately groomed** for his date with Cassie.

elegantly dressed and well presented



Clara **looked like a million bucks** when she arrived for her wedding. (US)

looked extremely glamorous



Nalini **never has a hair out of place**. She cares a lot about her appearance.

is extremely neat and well groomed



3.3 BACKGROUND, ADVANTAGE, AND DISADVANTAGE

Rebecca **has blue blood**. Her great-grandmother was a princess.

is descended from important people or aristocracy



Philip **was born with a silver spoon in his mouth**. He grew up in a castle in France.

was born into a wealthy family



My aunt is **a pillar of the community**. She supports charities and attends local events.

an important or well-respected person



Maxine is such **a highflier**. She's been promoted twice this year and is only 23. (US)

a very talented and successful person



Danika's parents don't approve of Bob because he's from **the wrong side of the tracks**.

the wrong social background or part of town



My parents **didn't have two pennies to rub together**, but we still had lots of fun.

were very poor



Aa

3.4 READ THE STATEMENTS AND MARK THE CORRECT MEANING

My parents didn't have two pennies to rub together, but we still had lots of fun.

My parents were rich.

My parents were poor.

1 My aunt is a pillar of the community. She supports charities and attends local events.

My aunt is a well-respected person.

My aunt is a dishonest person.

2 Philip was born with a silver spoon in his mouth. He grew up in a castle in France.

Philip has always been wealthy.

Philip has always been generous.

3 Danika's parents don't approve of Bob because he's from the wrong side of the tracks.

Bob is a train driver.

Bob is from the wrong social background.

4 Clara looked like a million bucks when she arrived for her wedding.

Clara looked extremely nervous.

Clara looked extremely glamorous.

5 Rebecca has blue blood. Her great-grandmother was a princess.

She is descended from important people.

She is a princess.

Aa

3.5 REWRITE THE SENTENCES, CORRECTING THE ERRORS

George arrived at the restaurant **immaculately styled** for his date with Cassie.

George arrived at the restaurant immaculately groomed for his date with Cassie.



1 Edie **looks like ice cream wouldn't melt in her mouth**, but she's actually really naughty.



2 Oscar is only 25, but he's already **getting slim on top**.



3 My aunt believed in **holding up appearances** despite having little money.



4 Nalini **never has a hair out of sight**. She cares a lot about her appearance.



5 Milan returned home with **four o'clock shadow** after a long day at the office.





3.6 LISTEN TO THE AUDIO AND COMPLETE THE SENTENCES THAT DESCRIBE EACH PICTURE



Leo bears a striking resemblance to his grandfather.

1



Domenica _____ for her first day of work at the bank.

2



Clara _____ when she arrived for her wedding.

3



Mateo and his brother Lucas are _____. I can't tell them apart.

4



Karen is _____ that actor in the new sci-fi film.

5



Rita _____ after I told her my news.

6



Rachel _____ after she got caught in the rain on her way home.

Aa

3.7 WRITE THE CORRECT IDIOM NEXT TO ITS DEFINITION, FILLING IN THE MISSING LETTERS

extremely similar to each other

= l i k e t w o p e a s i n a p o d

1 too thin

= a _ _ s _ _ a _ _ b _ _

2 almost identical to

= t _ _ s _ _ i _ _ o _ _

3 going bald

= g _ _ t _ _ o _ _ t _ _

4 the beginning of a beard

= f _ _ o ' _ _ s _ _

5 a very talented and successful person

= a h _ _ f _ _