Activities

Say What You Mean, Please

Grades: PreK–K, 1–2, 3–5

About the Book
Don’t you ever wonder how idioms came to be? Who would think a phrase like keep your chin up would mean to be cheerful, even when things aren’t so great. This is a hilarious book chock-full of idioms, all about body parts. And when the main character takes these literally, he goes to pieces-literally!

Set the Stage
Discuss the cover of the book. Talk about the picture on the cover, read the title and the author’s name. Have the children make predictions about the book. Record their predictions. Have a picture
walk of the books pictures. Without reading the words, talk about each picture and make predictions before turning the page. Then read the book and check the predictions.

**Review**
Introduce the word "idiom" with the class. Talk about the figurative and literal meanings of idioms. With younger students, you can talk about each picture and what the author’s picture says the idiom is. Many students will pick up on the fact that the literal meaning is what it says but it is not what it really means. That would be the figurative meaning. Give some other examples that they may have heard before such as, raining cats and dogs or I've got a frog in my throat. Explain that there is a reason for each idiom and why we use it, and then find a resource that explains the origins. Many sources are available online by searching for "idiom meanings." Talk about the author’s purpose for writing this book. Why did the author write *Even More Parts?* What do you think he had in mind for the reader?

**Student Activity**
Students will be *Eager Beavers* to find the correct meaning of some common idioms on this reproducible activity sheet.

**Related Activities**
To extend students enjoyment of the book, try these:
- **Get to Know Idioms Inside Out:** Allow the students to pick an idiom from the book, a list of common idioms from a Web site or another source and write the idiom, write its figurative meaning, and then illustrate its literal meaning. Allow the students to share their creations with the class and then hang them up around the classroom.
- **What Does It Mean?:** Talk about the trouble an English language learner would have with idioms. Let the students come up with some situations where it would be difficult at school, at home, shopping, or at work.
- **Who is Tedd Arnold?:** Check out more books by Tedd Arnold. Read them to the class or have them for the students to read themselves. After reading some, choose two and lead the students through a comparison/contrast lesson using the two you chose.

- **Rhyme Time:** This book has some rhyming words in parts of the story. Find the words that rhyme and list them on the board or a piece of chart paper. Notice that the words that rhyme with each other are not necessarily spelled the same way (heard and word). With older students, this is a good opportunity to study sounds for better spelling and vocabulary skills.

- **Find that Idiom:** Allow the children to write to a prompt. Tell them to try to include an idiom or two in their narrative or expository. Let them exchange their finished products with a partner and see if the other child can find the idiom and circle it.

- **Subjects:**
  
  Human Body, Vocabulary, Writing, Language
Say What You Mean, Please!

An idiom is a sentence or a phrase whose meaning cannot be understood by breaking the words apart. For example, "to have someone's skin" does not mean that a doctor is stitching up someone's cut skin, but it means to make someone laugh very hard.

Directions: Read the idiom and choose the correct figurative meaning.

1. "Wet my head" a. Get a haircut b. Clean up your hair c. Get my hair wet
2. "Hold your horses" a. Be patient and wait b. Take the reins and make the horse stop c. Give the horse some food
3. "Stake a flag" a. Show your flag b. Be brave c. Put a flag in the ground
4. "Under the weather" a. Someone is not feeling well b. The boat has a hole in it and the rain comes in c. Standing under an umbrella
5. "Sleep tight" a. Wrap someone up in a sheet tightly b. Close your eyes tightly to sleep c. Touch someone very good, sound asleep
7. "I've got a fly in my throat" a. An amphibian is lodged in your neck b. You have a cold c. You are having difficulty talking and you need to clear your throat.