



Did you know that teeth are the only part of the skeleton that we can see?

Year 5 English

These activities could be used before or after examining a text for vocabulary.

Show how ideas and points of view in texts are conveyed through the use of vocabulary, including idiomatic expressions, objective and subjective language, and that these can change according to context ACELY1698

Mouth & Teeth Idioms

Latin dens, *dent*- 'tooth'

Idiom: a form of expression natural to a language, person, or group of people
from: *idios* 'own, private'

Some lesson ideas

Students could:

- Draw suitable idioms.
- Match the idiom with the explanation and with the example (a Memory or Concentration Game).
- Given the idiom column only, students write their own meaning and then check with the meaning given in the middle column. (Is theirs the same?).
- Write a narrative using as many of the idioms as they can. Read results to class.
- Write a narrative which ends with one of the idioms.
- Write a description of a pirate (or other stereotype) using suitable idioms.
- Prepare scripts from scenarios given below.

Speaker 1	Speaker 2	Scenario
Principal	Student	Bullying
Teacher	Teacher	A student's progress
Friend 1	Friend 2	Going out
Student 1	Student 2	Discussing a character in a novel
Colonel 1	Colonel 2	Working out the appropriate response to a certain event.

acquire a taste for (something)	- to develop a liking for a particular food or drink or something	Recently, my friend has acquired a taste for expensive neckties.
armed to the teeth	- fully armed, having many weapons	The robbers were armed to the teeth when they robbed the bank.
as scarce as hen's teeth	- very scarce, non-existent	Cheap apartment rentals are as scarce as hen's teeth in our city.
bad-mouth (someone or something)	- to say bad things about someone or something	The football player began to bad-mouth his coach.
a bigmouth	- a noisy or boastful or foolish talker	The man is a bigmouth. He is always talking about his big plans.
bite off more than one can chew	- to try to do more than you can actually do	I am trying not to bite off more than I can chew so that I do not overwork myself.
bite one's tongue	- to try hard not to say something that you want to say	I always bite my tongue when I am talking with my sister so that I do not say the wrong thing.

bite (someone's) head off	- to speak to someone in an angry way	My friend bit my head off when I asked her a question.
a bitter pill to swallow	- an unpleasant fact that you must accept	It was a bitter pill to swallow but the fact is that we lost the legal case.
born with a silver spoon in one's mouth	- born to wealth and comfort, born rich	The boy was born with a silver spoon in his mouth and he has never worked in his life.
button one's lip	- to stop talking, to be quiet	"Please button your lip so we can hear what the speaker is saying."
by the skin of one's teeth	- by a narrow margin, barely	We were able to catch the train but only by the skin of our teeth.
by word of mouth	- orally, from person to person by speaking	I learned about the holiday from work by word of mouth.
cat got your tongue	- one is not willing to talk because of shyness	The cat got the woman's tongue and she was not able to say anything.
cause tongues to wag	- to give people something to gossip or talk about	The actions of our boss are causing tongues to wag.
chew (someone) out or chew out (someone)	- to scold someone	The girl began to chew her boyfriend out in the supermarket.
chew the fat/rag	- to chat or talk informally with one's friends	I stopped to chew the fat with an old friend from high school.
clam up	- to close one's mouth, to shut up	The students clammed up when they saw the teacher.
cough (something)	- to give something	We asked our friend to cough up some

up or cough up (something)	(information or money) to someone that they are trying to force you to give them	money for the restaurant meal.
cut one's eyeteeth on (something)	- to have much experience with something, to have done something since one was very young	My cousin cut his eyeteeth on fixing computers and now he is a computer expert.
cut one's (own) throat	- to experience certain failure	The man cut his own throat when he argued with his boss. Glover St South Melbourne
down in the mouth	- depressed and unhappy	My friend looked down in the mouth after he finished work today.
down the hatch	- something is swallowed	The cough medicine went down the hatch when I gave it to my little boy.
eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth	- a system of punishment where you punish someone in the same way that they hurt you	The citizens wanted an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth when they learned about the child's murder.
fight (someone or something) tooth and nail	- to fight against someone or something with great energy	The citizens fought the government tooth and nail over the government plans for the new airport.
find one's tongue	- to be able to talk, to find the ability to talk after not being able to talk for a short time	The man could not find his tongue when he was asked to speak at the banquet.
foam at the mouth	- to be very angry (a sick dog foams at the mouth)	The girl's father was so angry that he was almost foaming at the mouth.
force (something) down (someone's) throat	- to force someone to do or agree to something that they do not want	I wish that my friend would not force her ideas down my throat.
give one's eye teeth (to do something) or for (something)	- to want to do something very much, to want something very much	The little boy would give his eye teeth to have a little puppy.
give (someone) a tongue-lashing	- to give someone a severe scolding	The mother gave her daughter a tongue-lashing when the daughter

		returned from school.
give voice to (something)	- to put something into words, to express something	The small organization gives voice to many of the concerns of poor people in the city.
gnash one's teeth	- to grind one's teeth	I often gnash my teeth when I am sleeping.
grit one's teeth	- to grind one's teeth together in anger or from stress or determination	I grit my teeth and began to clean up after the students' party.
guard one's tongue	- to be careful of what one says	I always have to guard my tongue when I am speaking with my friend's parents.
have a big mouth	- to be a person who gossips or tells secrets	The woman has a big mouth and she can never keep a secret.
have a say/voice in (something)	- to have a part in making a decision	I want to have a say in the decision of whether or not we must begin to work in the evenings.
have a sweet tooth	- to like to eat sweet foods	The girl has a sweet tooth. She loves chocolate.
hold one`s tongue	- to be silent, to not talk	"Please hold your tongue," the teacher said to the young boy.
keep a civil tongue	- to speak decently and politely	I tried to keep a civil tongue during my argument with the store clerk.
keep a stiff upper lip	- to be brave, to face trouble bravely	We tried to keep a stiff upper lip when the company announced that they would close our office.

keep one`s mouth shut	- to be or stay silent	I tried hard to keep my mouth shut during the boring speech.
laugh out of the other side of one's mouth	- to change from being happy to being sad	The woman was laughing out of the other side of her mouth when she learned that she would not be promoted.
leave a bad taste in one`s mouth	- to leave a bad feeling or memory with someone	The way that the company treated us left a bad taste in our mouth.
lick one's chops	- to show one's eagerness to do something or eat something (by licking one's lips)	The salesman began to lick his chops when he saw the potential customers at the business convention.
lick one's lips	- to show eagerness to do something or eat something	The little boy began to lick his lips when he saw the candy in the window.
lie through one's teeth	- to lie in a bold manner	The man in the restaurant began to lie through his teeth during the criminal investigation.
like pulling teeth	- very difficult to do	It was like pulling teeth to try and get the boy to lend us his bicycle.
lips are sealed	- one will not tell a secret	My lips are sealed and I will not tell anybody the secret.
live from hand to mouth	- to live in poor circumstances, to have little money	The man has been living from hand to mouth for many years now.
long in the tooth	- old	The man was feeling long in the tooth and he did not have much energy.
loosen (someone's) tongue	- to make someone relax and make them say something that they normally would not say	I went to the coffee shop with my friend where I tried to loosen his tongue.
loudmouth	- a noisy or boastful or foolish talker	My friend is a loudmouth and he is always making plans but he never does

		anything about them.
lower one's voice	- to speak more softly	The teacher asked the student to lower his voice.
make one`s mouth water	- to make someone want to eat or drink something that he or she sees or smells	The smell of the food cooking in the restaurant made my mouth water.
melt in one`s mouth	- to taste very good, to be very tender (for meat)	The pasta served at the new restaurant melted in our mouths.
no skin off (someone's) teeth	- of no interest or concern or trouble to someone	It is no skin off my nose whether my friend comes to the restaurant with us or not.
not open one's mouth	- to not say anything at all	The man in the movie theatre was told not to open his mouth.
on everybody's lips	- many people are talking or thinking about the same thing	The wedding scandal with the famous actress is on everybody's lips.
on the tip of one`s tongue	- to be almost able to remember something that you have forgotten	My former teacher's name is on the tip of my tongue and I will soon remember it.
pay lip service to (someone or something)	- to support someone or something by words but not by actions	The politician paid lip service to the proposal to build a new subway system but he did not really want one.
like pulling teeth	- have difficulty getting something from someone	I had trouble getting the truth out of Kim – it was like pulling teeth.
put one`s foot in one`s mouth	- to get into trouble by saying something embarrassing or rude	My colleague put his foot in his mouth when he told everyone that he did not like the new manager.
put one's money where one's mouth	- to stop only saying that you will do something but to	The man always talks about helping other people but he never does

is	actually do it	anything. We finally told him to put his money where his mouth is and do something.
put some teeth into (something)	- to increase the power of something	The government recently put some teeth into the new law.
put the bite on (someone)	- to try to get money from someone	I will put the bite on my friend in order to get some money for the weekend.
put words into (someone`s) mouth	- to speak for another person without permission	My boss put words into my mouth when he told me what he thought I wanted to say.
ram (something) down (someone's) throat	- to force someone to do or agree to something that they do not want	The professor's idea was rammed down the student's throat.
read (someone's) lips	- to listen carefully and believe what someone is saying	The supervisor told everybody to read his lips and listen carefully to what he was saying.
run off at the mouth	- to talk excessively	The girl is always running off at the mouth when she is with her friends.
say a mouthful	- to say something of great importance, to say a lot	The little boy said a mouthful when he talked about the history material.
set one's teeth on edge	- to be unpleasant and to give one an uncomfortable feeling	The idea that we would have to leave our apartment immediately set my teeth on edge.
set tongues wagging	- to cause people to start gossiping	The things that the woman does during her free time always sets tongues wagging at her office.
a sharp tongue	- a way of talking or speaking to others that is unkind or bad or critical	The woman has a sharp tongue and she says some very unkind things to others.

shoot one's mouth off	- to talk too much, to boast, to tell someone's secrets	The young man began to shoot his mouth off in the supermarket.
shove (something) down (someone's) throat	- to force someone to do or agree to something that they do not want	I do not like my boss because he is always trying to shove his ideas down my throat.
show one's teeth	- to show one's anger or strength in order to warn someone not to argue or fight with you	Our supervisor showed his teeth when I began to argue with him about my job.
Shut your mouth!	- Please be quiet and close your mouth!	"Shut your mouth," I said to the man talking loudly in the library.
sink one's teeth into (something)	- to have something real or solid to think about or struggle with, to take a bite from some kind of food	I was finally able to sink my teeth into the problem and find a solution. I sank my teeth into the apple and took a bite.
slip of the tongue	- a mistake of saying something that one did not want to say, an error of speech	I made a slip of the tongue when I told the woman that we will have a surprise party soon.
speak with a forked tongue	- to tell lies, to try to deceive someone	The man speaks with a forked tongue and you cannot trust him.
straight from the horse's mouth	- direct from a source that has authority and is dependable	I heard about the party straight from the horse's mouth.
take the words out of (someone's) mouth	- to say what someone else was just going to say	My friend took the words out of my mouth when he said that he wanted to get something to eat.
teething problems	- difficulties and problems experienced in the early stages of a project or activity	The project has many teething problems that we must deal with.
throw one's voice	- to project one's voice so that it appears to be coming from some other place	The performer likes to throw his voice when he entertains children.

tongue in cheek	- jokingly, insincerely, mockingly, not really meaning something	The comment by our teacher was tongue in cheek and she did not mean it.
tooth and nail	- fiercely, as hard as possible (when fighting)	We fought tooth and nail to build the new wing of the hospital.
watch one's mouth/tongue	- to not say something, to not be rude	The boy was told by his teacher to watch his tongue.
zip one's lip	- to not talk, to not tell a secret	I told my friend to zip his lip and stop arguing with me.
get/sink (one's) teeth into	To be actively involved in; get a firm grasp of.	I couldn't wait to sink my teeth into my new book.
show/bare (one's) teeth	To express a readiness to fight; threaten defiantly.	She bared her teeth to show her disgust.

These idioms come from:

<http://www.idiomconnection.com/mouth.html#B> online quiz also