

## Shakespeare's Interesting Idioms

An idiom is an everyday expression which says something in an interesting way. Idioms have figurative meanings that cannot be worked out by looking in a dictionary. Shakespeare wrote his plays 400 years ago but his clever use of language means that the imagery he creates in our minds can be just as vivid and interesting today as it was then. Some of the idioms that Shakespeare 'coined' (invented) are listed below; you will probably recognise many of them because we still use them in our everyday language.



All that glitters is not gold

Good riddance

All's well that ends well

Jealousy is the green-eyed monster

Brave new world

It was Greek to me

Break the ice

Heart of gold

Breathed his last

In a pickle

Come what come may ("come what may")

In my mind's eye

Dead as a doornail



It smells to heaven

Eaten me out of house and home

Kill with kindness

Elbow room

Make a virtue of necessity

For goodness' sake

Neither rhyme nor reason

Full circle

Own flesh and blood

The game is up

Send packing

Too much of a good thing



# Language

## Activity 1: Pair the idiom

Can you match these idioms with their meanings?

Idiom (expression)	Meaning
1 I haven't slept a wink	a You have to hurt people sometimes for their own good.
2 Love's blind	b When you love someone you don't see his or her faults.
3 Cruel to be kind	c To eat a lot.
4 In a pickle	d In a difficult or unpleasant situation.
5 He's eaten me out of house and home.	e I couldn't sleep last night.

## Activity 2: Match the idiom

Idiom (expression)	Meaning or definition
1 Lie-low	a Jealousy
2 Good riddance	b Dead beyond any doubt
3 Green-eyed monster	c A life that seems to have been protected by a charm, magic or spell.
4 Night-owl	d To be happy when someone or something is gone.
5 As dead as a doornail	e To hide so you will not be caught by someone.
6 A charmed life	f Keep this a secret; don't tell anybody.
7 Mum's the word	g To tell someone to go away, usually because you are annoyed with them.
8 Send him packing	H A person who stays up and is active late into the night

## Activity 3: Using the idioms

Now can you complete each sentence with the appropriate idiom?

1. My Mum's really cross with me because I broke the vase. I think it's best if I \_\_\_\_\_ for a little while!
2. I have an amazing family, a great job and a beautiful home. I really do lead \_\_\_\_\_!
3. Don't worry I won't tell a soul, \_\_\_\_\_.
4. He acted like an idiot, I think you should \_\_\_\_\_.
5. It was a terrible job anyway, \_\_\_\_\_!
6. Gemma is a \_\_\_\_\_! She's jealous of everyone!
7. I've been a real \_\_\_\_\_ since I started university. It's normal for me to stay awake until 3 o'clock in the morning.
8. 'Are you sure the mouse is dead'? 'Definitely, \_\_\_\_\_'.

