

Jamesie's lego – unmixing metaphors

Teacher's notes

Aim

To recognize and understand common metaphors often used in English

What

Mixing and matching sentences

Interaction

Pair work

1:1

Student is given a set of lego bricks and tries to match them and then explain their meaning

When to use

After task 2 on page 121

What you need

One set of lego bricks per pair

Preparation

Enlarge and cut out the lego bricks on the next page.

Here's how

1. Write *to bark up the wrong tree* on the board and ask the class what it means. Tell them that this is a metaphor for being wrong (and accusing someone who is innocent). Ask the class what the corresponding metaphor in German is (*auf dem Holzweg sein*).
2. Divide the class into pairs and tell them that you will give each pair a set of lego bricks. The bricks consist of two halves each containing part of a metaphor that has been mixed up. The pairs need to match all of the bricks. Then they decide what the metaphors mean.
3. Once everybody has finished, check the results in class. Ask each pair to tell the class at least one of their metaphors and what it means. Is there an exact equivalent in German? Ideally they should explain it giving an example of its use in a business context.
4. Ask the students if they have any favourite idioms and have them explain them to the class.

EXTENSION

Tell your students that they can find a list of business idioms at www.idiomconnection.com. Ask them to prepare a similar exercise with business idioms for the beginning of the next lesson.

Key

- *to beat about the bush* – to avoid saying something directly
- *to throw a spanner in the works* – an event that makes the success of something more difficult
- *to wake up and smell the coffee* – to accept the reality of something
- *to know the ropes* – to be experienced in something or know how something is done
- *to look like the cat that got the cream* – being very pleased because of something good that has happened
- *to wait until the cows come home* – to wait for a long time
- *to stop and smell the roses* – to slow down and understand/appreciate what is happening around you
- *to sell like hot cakes* – to sell very quickly

Thanks to James Aldous for the inspiration for this activity.

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| <p>to beat about ...</p> | <p>to throw a spanner in ...</p> | <p>the bush</p> | <p>the works</p> |
| <p>to wake up and smell ...</p> | <p>to know ...</p> | <p>the coffee</p> | <p>the ropes</p> |
| <p>to look like the cat that got the ...</p> | <p>to wait until ...</p> | <p>the cream</p> | <p>the cows come home</p> |
| <p>to stop and smell ...</p> | <p>to sell like ...</p> | <p>the roses</p> | <p>hot cakes</p> |

