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CHAPTER

Idioms and Proverbs

DIRECTIONS (Qs. 1- 5) : In each of the following sentences, an idiomatic expression or a proverb is highlighted. Select the alternative which best describes its use in the sentence.

(SBI Clerk 2010)

- The team put their plan **into execution** the very next day.
(a) proposed a plan.
(b) discussed their plan.
(c) started thinking about a plan
(d) started carrying out their plan.
(e) None of these
- Mrs. Nayak **opened the discussion** on the “alarming rate of poverty in India”.
(a) started the discussion.
(b) gave her opinion in the discussion.
(c) did not agree on the discussion.
(d) welcomed the people to the discussion.
(e) None of these
- The **course of events** made it necessary for Joseph to start working.
(a) events that were planned.
(b) long list of future events.
(c) The way things happened
(d) nature of events that followed after Joseph joined work.
(e) None of these
- The new law on “Right to Food Safety” **will come into force next month**.
(a) be forced upon the people.
(b) be associated from next month onwards.
(c) be implemented next month.
(d) be withdrawn next month.
(e) be widely rejected next month.
- When the girl wanted to stay out past midnight, her father **put his foot down**.
(a) gave in to her request
(b) walked away disapprovingly.
(c) obstructed her from leaving the house.
(d) requested her to be home on time.
(e) None of these

DIRECTIONS (Qs. 6-15): In each of the following sentences, an idiomatic expression or a proverb is highlighted. Select the alternative which best describes its use in the sentence.

(SBI Clerk 2011)

- In all likelihood**, the missing boy has run away to the forest
(a) with good intentions (b) there's no chance
(c) without doubt (d) in most probability
(e) None of these

- The parents were completely **in the dark** concerning their daughter's plans.
(a) ignorant about
(b) ashamed of
(c) pretending to be unaware
(d) unhappy about
(e) None of these
- I am **in touch with** the police, and they will be here in ten minutes.
(a) in communication with
(b) in close proximity with
(c) in good terms with
(d) familiar with
(e) None of these
- I **stumbled upon** some interesting old letters in my Grandfather's desk.
(a) deliberately went through
(b) surveyed
(c) tripped over
(d) discovered by chance
(e) None of these
- The secretary **made an entry** of the arrangement.
(a) initiated discussion (b) made a record
(c) brought notice (d) showed approval
(e) None of these
- Hornet's nest**
(a) A bee's house (b) A violent situation
(c) A busy house (d) A dangerous place
(e) None of these
- Never-never land**
(a) An ideal place (b) Dream land
(c) A worthless place (d) A useless situation
(e) None of these
- Cap it all**
(a) To cover everything (b) To seize everything
(c) To finish (d) To occur
(e) None of these
- Like a sitting duck**
(a) Lazy (b) Fat
(c) Sleepy (d) Ignorant
(e) None of these
- Pull your socks up**
(a) To get ready (b) To improve
(c) To start (d) To finish
(e) None of these

DIRECTIONS (Qs. 16-20) : In each of the following sentences, an idiomatic expression or a proverb is highlighted. Select the alternative which best describes its use in the sentence.

(IBPS Clerk 2012)

16. The stunt that I recently attempted was a **piece of cake**
- (a) The stunt that I recently attempted was enjoyable to watch
 - (b) The stunt that I recently attempted was very challenging
 - (c) The stunt that I recently attempted was celebrated by all
 - (d) The stunt that I recently attempted turned out to be a failure
 - (e) The stunt that I recently attempted was a simple task
17. The boy broke the window and **took to his heels**.
- (a) The boy broke the window and fell on his heels
 - (b) The boy broke the window and ran away
 - (c) The boy broke the window with his heels
 - (d) The boy ran into the window
 - (e) The boy broke the window and robbed a pair of heels
18. **I pledged myself** to serve the king faithfully.
- (a) I made a mistake by promising to serve the king faithfully
 - (b) I made a fool of myself in order to serve the king
 - (c) I boasted about serving the king faithfully
 - (d) I was forcibly made to serve the king
 - (e) I made a solemn and formal promise to serve the king faithfully
19. There is a **crying need** for improvements to our public transport system.
- (a) There is an obvious need for improvements to our public transport system
 - (b) There is a well documented need for improvements to our public transport system.
 - (c) There is a minor need for improvements to our public transport system.
 - (d) There is a serious need for improvements to our public transport system.
 - (e) There is no urgency for improvements to our public transport system.
20. In an old bookshop, I happened to **light upon** a volume that belonged to my grandfather.
- (a) In an old bookshop I happened to discard a volume that belonged to my grandfather.
 - (b) In an old bookshop I happened to purchase a volume that belonged to my grandfather.
 - (c) In an old bookshop I happened to look for a volume that belonged to my grandfather.
 - (d) In an old bookshop I happened to discover by chance a volume that belonged to my grandfather
 - (e) In an old bookshop I happened to reveal a volume that belonged to my grandfather.

DIRECTIONS (Qs. 21-25) : In each of the following sentences, an idiomatic expression or proverb is highlighted. Select the alternative which best describes its use in the sentence.

(IBPS Specialist Officer 2012)

21. **Facts spoke louder than words** at the Company meeting where the Director tried to paint a rosy picture of the Company's financial health.
- (a) Too many facts related to the good financial health of the Company were presented during the meeting.
 - (b) The Company was not doing well financially despite the Director saying otherwise.
 - (c) The Director was very loud while presenting the facts about the Company's financial health during the meeting.
 - (d) The facts stated in the meeting supported the Director's claims of good financial health of the Company.
 - (e) The Company was doing exceptionally well financially, despite the Director saying otherwise.
22. By initiating the fight with Sakshi in office, Kajal had **killed the goose that lay the golden egg**.
- (a) By initiating the fight with Sakshi in office, Kajal had left her speechless.
 - (b) Kajal had ruined her chances of success by picking a fight with Sakshi in office.
 - (c) Kajal had exacted her revenge by picking a fight with Sakshi in office.
 - (d) Kajal had hurt Sakshi by picking a fight with her in office.
 - (e) By initiating the fight with Sakshi in office, Kajal had missed getting the golden egg.
23. **I let the chips fall where they may** and do not worry too much about what I want to do next.
- (a) I take calculated risks.
 - (b) I let others do what they want and do not interfere.
 - (c) I am clumsy.
 - (d) I do not try to control my destiny.
 - (e) I prefer chaos to calm.
24. After trying hard to convince Narendra to change his ways, Raman realised that **a leopard cannot change its spots**.
- (a) Raman realised that Narendra would never change his ways.
 - (b) Raman realised that Narendra was helpless.
 - (c) Raman realised that he was not good at convincing others.
 - (d) Raman realised that Narendra would change his ways soon.
 - (e) Raman realised that someone else was forcing Narendra to act in a certain way.
25. Before starting work on our new project, our mentor told us to **not count our chickens before they hatched**.
- (a) Our mentor warned us against being over confident about achieving success.
 - (b) Our mentor asked us to meticulously count the chicken first and then the eggs.
 - (c) Our mentor warned us against being over enthusiastic in implementing the project.
 - (d) Our mentor warned us about all the challenges that lay ahead of us.
 - (e) Our mentor informed us about the prizes that we would get on succeeding.

DIRECTIONS (Qs. 26-30) : In each of the following sentences, an idiomatic expression or a proverb is highlighted. Select the alternative which best describes its use in the sentence.

(SBI Clerk J/A Mains 2018)

26. Although Ravi felt lonely in his fight against the wrong, he decided to **take the bull by the horns**.
- (a) Ravi decided to convince others of his stance
(b) Ravi decided to give up his fight
(c) Ravi decided to put forward all his courage and strength
(d) Ravi decided to apologize for his actions
(e) None of these
27. As the situation got out of control, the speaker of the parliament tried to **put oil over troubled waters**.
- (a) The speaker tried to calm the situation
(b) The speaker tried to take advantage of the situation
(c) The speaker jumped into the fight
(d) The speaker remained indifferent to the situation
(e) None of these
28. The researcher tried his best to explain the importance of his new discovery to the panel members but soon realized that he was **casting pearls before a swine**.
- (a) He realised that the panel members would take his suggestions seriously
(b) He realised that he disclosed the information to a greedy panel
(c) He realised that he had come to the right group of people
(d) He realised that the panel members can not appreciate his findings
(e) None of these
29. The chairman had to **eat a humble pie** after the workers decided to go on strike to protest against the biased promotions.
- (a) The chairman politely refused to take the promotion orders back
(b) The chairman gave up his pride and apologized for the mistake
(c) The chairman had to face defeat by a group of ordinary workers
(d) The chairman's career was tainted due to the allegations of biased promotions
(e) None of these
30. The bankrupt organisation has been handed over to its new owners, **lock, stock and barrels**.
- (a) Only a few departments of the bankrupt organisations have been taken over by the new owners
(b) The new owners have bought the bankrupt organisation for a very nominal amount
(c) The owners have bought the bankrupt organization in a hurry
(d) The new owners have completely taken over the bankrupt organisation
(e) None of these

DIRECTIONS (Qs. 31-35): In each of the questions given below a/an idiom/phrase is given in bold which is then followed by five options which then try to decipher its meaning as used in the sentence. Choose the option which gives the meaning of the phrase most appropriately in context of the given sentence.

(IBPS Clerk Main-2019)

31. Shyam can't afford to buy that car! **It costs an arm and a leg**.
- (a) something that can be found rarely
(b) something very expensive
(c) something very cheap
(d) something that is easily available
(e) none of the above
32. He found her dream house and has now landed an amazing job. He really does have **the best of both worlds**.
- (a) to have lots of money to make the things done
(b) you can enjoy two different opportunities at the same time
(c) to play tricks in order to achieve targets
(d) to bribe someone
(e) to be honest
33. She might not be the most attractive but you can't **judge a book by its cover**. I'm sure she is a sweetheart.
- (a) to prove someone innocent
(b) to make someone a cheater
(c) to not judge someone or something based solely on appearance
(d) to select a book by seeing its contents
(e) to select a book by its quantity
34. John is just never on time to work, it's really irritating. O wow, **speak of the devil here she come**.
- (a) the person you're talking about actually turns out to be angry
(b) the person you're talking about actually turns out to be happy
(c) the person you're just talking about actually turns up at that moment
(d) the person you're talking about actually turns out to be celebrating
(e) none of the above
35. We missed our flight to Paris because the connecting flight was late and to **add insult to injury** they made us pay for a new ticket as if it was our fault!
- (a) to be compensated (b) to make a situation worse
(c) to be reprimanded (d) to be praised
(e) to be ruined

DIRECTIONS (Qs. 36-40): In the given below questions a sentence is given with an idiom/phrase in bold words and four options are given below it. Choose the right option which is showing the meaning of the given words. If out of four none is correct the answer choose (e) as the right answer.

(SBI Clerk Main-2019)

36. John keeps **drawing on fancy** about the banking job in government sector.
- (a) Use imagination
(b) Do the things beautifully
(c) Make clear conclusion about anything or anyone
(d) Likes government jobs
(e) None of these

37. After reading the story time and again we are finally **reading between the lines**.
 (a) Reading to entertain others
 (b) Understanding the hidden meaning
 (c) Reading only to show someone else about your style of reading.
 (d) Reading to clear the exam
 (e) None of these
38. Failing in exam again and again even after putting all the hard work is **bad blood**.
 (a) Consume time and affects the health
 (b) The aspirants become unhealthy
 (c) The aspirants do not take interest
 (d) Create angry feeling
 (e) None of these
39. Alice is very good at quant, but when she was watching a teacher's video she was **taking it with a grain of salt**.
 (a) She was enjoying the video
 (b) To listen to something with considerable doubt
 (c) She was listening with full attention
 (d) She was not listening with full attention
 (e) None of these
40. The boy broke the window and **took to his heels**.
 (a) The boy ran into the window.
 (b) The boy broke the window and ran away.
 (c) The boy broke the window and fell on his heels.
 (d) The boy broke the window with his heels.
 (e) None of these

Answers & Explanations

1. (d) started carrying out their plan.
 2. (a) started the discussion.
 3. (c) the way things happened
 4. (c) be implemented next month
 5. (b) Idiom **put your foot down** means : to be very strict in opposing what somebody wishes to do.
 6. (d) In most probability
 7. (a) ignorant about
 8. (a) in communication with
 9. (d) discovered by chance
 10. (b) made a record.
 11. (b) A violent situation
 12. (b) Dream land
 13. (c) To finish
 14. (d) Ignorant
 15. (b) To improve
 16. (e) Piece of cake means something easy to do. Therefore, option (e) is the correct choice.
 17. (b) Took to one's heels means to run away. Therefore, option (b) is the correct choice.
 18. (e) To pledged means to make a promise. Therefore, option (e) is the correct choice.
19. (d) Crying need means a definite or desperate need for someone or something.
 Therefore, option (d) is the correct choice.
 20. (d) Light upon means to arrive at something by chance.
 Therefore, option (d) is the correct choice.
 21. (b) Facts spoke louder than the words means that what is suggested by evidence is more credible than what is spoken.
 22. (b) Killing the goose that lay golden eggs means destroying something that will give benefits or profitable returns.
 23. (d) Let the chips fall where they may means to do whatever one wants to without worrying too much about the consequence(s).
 24. (a) A leopard cannot change its spots means one cannot change one's basic nature.
 25. (a) To not count chicken before they hatch means to not plan or expect the outcome or be overconfident about it before it happens.
26. (c) 27. (a) 28. (d) 29. (b) 30. (d)
 31. (b) 32. (b) 33. (c) 34. (c) 35. (b)
 36. (a) 37. (b) 38. (d) 39. (b) 40. (b)