Literal and Nonliteral Language

Grade 3 Grammar Worksheet

Name _____ Date _____

Circle the answer, or write your answer on the lines.

1. What does “break the ice” mean? “Ms. Ruiz told a joke to break the ice on the first day.”

   She made the room cold.

   She helped everyone feel relaxed.

   She ended the class early.

   She cracked some ice.

2. What does “spill the beans” mean? “Don't spill the beans about Mom's surprise party!”

   Don't drop the beans. Don't tell the secret. Don't cook the beans.

   Don't forget the party.

3. Which sentence is nonliteral?

   Jamal put books on the shelf.

   Jamal carried his books home.

   Jamal hit the books all weekend.

   Jamal read three books all weekend.

4. Which words help show what “cost an arm and a leg” means? “The new bike cost an arm and a leg, so Dad saved money for months.”

   The new bike an arm so Dad saved money for months

5. What does “let the cat out of the bag” mean? “Nora let the cat out of the bag about the class trip.”

   She opened a bag. She packed for the trip. She told the secret.

   She found a lost cat.

6. Which sentence is literal?

Diego broke the ice at the party.

Diego is a night owl.

Diego was all thumbs.

Diego broke a glass in the kitchen.

7. What does “the ball is in your court” mean? “I gave you two ideas. Now the ball is in your court.”

The game is over. The ball rolled to you. It is your turn to decide.

You need to find the ball.

8. What does “once in a blue moon” mean? “We eat at that restaurant once in a blue moon.”

very rarely only when the moon is blue every night every week

9. What does “hit the nail on the head” mean? “Priya hit the nail on the head when she named the problem.”

She used a hammer. She was totally wrong. She hurt her head.

She was exactly right.

10. Rewrite the sentence with an idiom that means telling a secret. Then tell what it means. Draft: Mia told everyone about the surprise.

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Answer Key - Grade 3 Grammar Worksheet

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Draft: Mia told everyone about the surprise.

Example: Mia spilled the beans about the surprise. It means she told the secret.