Literal and Nonliteral Language

Grade 3 Grammar Worksheet

Name _____ Date _____

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

1. What does “drop everything” mean? “When the alarm rang, we had to drop everything.”

   Clean the room quickly.

   Stop what we were doing right away.

   Let go of what was in our hands.

   Throw our books on the floor.

2. What does “on thin ice” mean? “After forgetting his homework twice, Omar was on thin ice.”

   He did a great job.

   He was skating on a pond.

   He felt very cold.

   He was close to getting in trouble.

3. What does “keep your chin up” mean? “Keep your chin up. You will do better next time.”

   Look at the sky. Stop talking. Stay hopeful. Sit up straight.

4. 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 cracked some ice.

   She ended the class early.

   She helped everyone feel relaxed.

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

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

   Don't forget the party.

6. Which sentence is nonliteral?

Jamal carried his books home.

Jamal put books on the shelf.

Jamal read three books all weekend.

Jamal hit the books all weekend.

7. 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.”

an arm so Dad saved money for months The new bike

8. 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 told the secret. She packed for the trip.

She found a lost cat.

9. Which sentence is literal?

Diego broke a glass in the kitchen.

Diego was all thumbs.

Diego broke the ice at the party.

Diego is a night owl.

10. Rewrite the sentence with an idiom that means being in trouble. Then tell what it means. Draft: Theo was in trouble for being late.

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Answer Key - Grade 3 Grammar Worksheet

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Example: Theo was on thin ice for being late. It means he was close to bigger trouble.