Literal and Nonliteral Language

Grade 3 Grammar Worksheet - Building Confidence

Name _____ Date _____

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

1. What does “all ears” mean? “Tell me your story. I am all ears!”
   I cannot hear you. I have very big ears. I am ready to listen.

2. What does “on cloud nine” mean? “Theo was on cloud nine after he won the race.”
   He was very happy. He was flying in a plane. He was very tired.

3. What does “copycat” mean? “Stop being a copycat and draw your own picture!”
   a cat that draws someone who is very quiet someone who copies others

4. What does “a piece of cake” mean? “The spelling test was a piece of cake for Lily.”
   It was very easy. It was very hard. It was a dessert.

5. What does “raining cats and dogs” mean? “We stayed inside because it was raining cats and dogs.”
   It was a little cloudy.
   Pets were falling from the sky.
   It was raining very hard.

6. Which sentence is literal?
   Ben has a heart of gold. The cat slept on the rug. My backpack weighs a ton.

7. What does “under the weather” mean? “Kofi stayed home because he felt under the weather.”
   He felt very happy. He stood under a cloud. He felt sick.

8. What does “butterflies in her stomach” mean? “Before the play, Ava had butterflies in her stomach.”
   She felt sleepy.
   She felt nervous.
   Butterflies flew around her.

9. Which sentence is nonliteral?
   My little brother is a chatterbox.
   My little brother is six years old.
   My little brother likes to talk.

10. Rewrite the sentence with an idiom that means going to sleep. Then tell what it means.
    Draft: It was late, so I went to bed.

Literal and Nonliteral Language

Answer Key - Grade 3 Grammar Worksheet - Building Confidence

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

1. What does “all ears” mean? “Tell me your story. I am all ears!”
   I cannot hear you. I have very big ears. **I am ready to listen.**

2. What does “on cloud nine” mean? “Theo was on cloud nine after he won the race.”
   He was very happy. He was flying in a plane. He was very tired.

3. What does “copycat” mean? “Stop being a copycat and draw your own picture!”
   a cat that draws someone who is very quiet **someone who copies others**

4. What does “a piece of cake” mean? “The spelling test was a piece of cake for Lily.”
   It was very easy. It was very hard. It was a dessert.

5. What does “raining cats and dogs” mean? “We stayed inside because it was raining cats and dogs.”
   It was a little cloudy.
   Pets were falling from the sky.
   It was raining very hard.

6. Which sentence is literal?
   Ben has a heart of gold. **The cat slept on the rug.** My backpack weighs a ton.

7. What does “under the weather” mean? “Kofi stayed home because he felt under the weather.”
   He felt very happy. He stood under a cloud. **He felt sick.**

8. What does “butterflies in her stomach” mean? “Before the play, Ava had butterflies in her stomach.”
   She felt sleepy.
   She felt nervous.
   Butterflies flew around her.

9. Which sentence is nonliteral?
   My little brother is a chatterbox.
   My little brother is six years old.
   My little brother likes to talk.

10. Rewrite the sentence with an idiom that means going to sleep. Then tell what it means.
    Draft: It was late, so I went to bed.

Example: It was late, so I hit the hay. It means I went to sleep.