ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Idiom Origins: Sea, Sport and Shakespeare Idioms, with Quiz

English Vocabulary Tests · 15 questions · Online test and questions PDF:
https://englishtestsonline.com/idiom-origins-sea-sport-and-shakespeare-idioms-with-quiz/

1	**D**	2	**C**	3	**A**	4	**B**	5	**B**	6	**A**	7	**A**	8	**D**	9	**B**	10	**C**
11	**D**	12	**B**	13	**A**	14	**C**	15	**C**										

Explanations

1. The restaurant has a wedding party of 200 tonight, so it's ___.
✔ **D) all hands on deck**
All hands on deck means everyone must help now. On a ship, the sailors were the hands.

2. Which of these idioms comes from boxing?
✔ **C) throw in the towel**
A boxer's trainer throws a towel into the ring to stop the fight. Par is golf, plain sailing is the sea, the wild-goose chase is from Shakespeare.

3. He seemed generous, but when the bill came he ___ and refused to pay his share.
✔ **A) showed his true colours**
Show your true colours means let people see what you are really like. A ship's flags were called its colours.

4. In the idiom "in one fell swoop", the old word fell meant:
✔ **B) cruel**
In Macbeth, fell means cruel: a big bird takes all the chickens at once.

5. The lift is broken again. Sadly, that's ___ in this building.
✔ **B) par for the course**
Par for the course means annoying but normal and expected. Par is the usual score in golf.

6. Sales are falling and a hard winter is coming, so the company has decided to ___.
✔ **A) batten down the hatches**
Batten down the hatches means prepare for a difficult time, as sailors did before a storm.

7. "Our accountant gives the office printer a wide berth." What does he do?
✔ **A) He avoids it.**
Give something a wide berth means stay well away from it, like a ship that keeps its distance.

8. The interview was going badly, but then the fire alarm rang. I was ___.
✔ **D) saved by the bell**
Saved by the bell means rescued just in time, like a boxer at the end of a round. The words never change.

9. Calling her old-fashioned in front of her own students was ___.
✔ **B) below the belt**
Below the belt means unfair and cruel. Boxing rules ban punches there.

10. After months of arguments, the band is finally back ___.
✔ **C) on an even keel**
On an even keel means calm and steady again, like a boat sitting upright.

11. The directions sent us on ___ round the old town.
✔ **D) a wild-goose chase**
A wild-goose chase is a search for something you will never find. Goose stays singular, and it is always a chase.

12. In Othello, the green-eyed monster is a name for which feeling?
✔ **B) jealousy**
Iago warns Othello about jealousy, "the green-eyed monster". Today it is often humorous.

13. Mo cries at adverts and laughs out loud in libraries. He ___.
✔ **A) wears his heart on his sleeve**
Wear your heart on your sleeve means show your feelings openly. The idiom is first recorded in Othello.

14. Money isn't ___ of a job; I want to enjoy my work too.
✔ **C) the be-all and end-all**
The be-all and end-all is the only thing that matters, often used in the negative. The order is fixed.

15. The café's first year wasn't all ___, but I've sent the bank my plan, so now ___.
✔ **C) plain sailing … the ball's in their court**
Plain sailing means easy. The ball's in their court means they must act next: I have already sent my plan.