ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

More Speak English Like an American Review for Lessons 11-15 Idioms and Expressions MCQ Test

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1	**A**	2	**C**	3	**A**	4	**B**	5	**B**	6	**A**	7	**A**	8	**C**	9	**C**	10	**B**
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Explanations

1. **Fill in the blank with the missing word:**

When Evan found out his company was going to fire him, he beat them to the _____ and quit.
✔ **A) punch**
To **beat someone to the punch** means to act before another person can. Evan quit before the company could fire him. Example: **I wanted the last piece of cake, but my brother beat me to the punch.**

2. Cheryl said she'd never drive a big car, but she changed her _____ after driving in a few heavy snowstorms.
✔ **C) tune**
To **change your tune** means to change your opinion or attitude, often completely. Cheryl said she'd never drive a big car, but the snowstorms made her think differently.

3. Jackie loves to meet people from different countries, so working as an English as a Second Language teacher is right up her _____.
✔ **A) alley**
If something is **right up your alley**, it suits your interests or skills perfectly. Jackie loves meeting people from other countries, so teaching ESL is the ideal job for her. (British English often says **right up your street**.)

4. The computer maker doesn't want to discount its laptops too much. They're afraid people will _____ a rat if they're too cheap.
✔ **B) smell**
To **smell a rat** means to suspect that something is wrong or dishonest. If the laptops are very cheap, buyers may think there is a problem with them. The idiom always uses **smell**, not **sniff** or **suspect**.

5. If you want to bone up _____ investing, I suggest you read Wise Investing Made Simple.
✔ **B) on**
To **bone up on** something means to study it hard, usually to learn a lot quickly. The preposition is always **on**: **I need to bone up on my history before the test.**

6. Tyler's teacher told him she'd throw him out of class if he kept coming late. He promised to turn _____ a new leaf and start coming on time.
✔ **A) over**
To **turn over a new leaf** means to change your behavior and start acting better. Tyler promises to stop coming late and to be on time from now on.

7. Our company is having trouble _____ headway in our efforts to cut expenses.
✔ **A) making**
To **make headway** means to make progress, especially when the task is difficult. The fixed verb is **make**, not **do** or **have**: **We're finally making headway on the project.**

8. Under the hospital's new therapy program, dogs visit the patients for 15 minutes a day. The patients say it's the greatest _____ since sliced bread.
✔ **C) thing**
The greatest thing since sliced bread is an informal way to say that something is excellent or a very good new idea. The fixed phrase uses **thing**, not **invention** or **program**.

9. What do you mean you'd rather stay at home than go to the holiday party? Don't be a couch _____!
✔ **C) potato**
A **couch potato** is a lazy person who spends a lot of time sitting at home, often watching TV. The speaker wants the friend to go out to the party instead of staying home.

10. Alex hasn't called me in three days. I can see the writing on the _____. He'll probably break up with me!
✔ **B) wall**
To **see the writing on the wall** means to see clear signs that something bad is going to happen. Alex hasn't called in three days, so the speaker expects a breakup.

11. It's your fault there were mistakes in the contract. Don't try to pin it _____ your assistant!
✔ **C) on**
To **pin something on someone** means to blame them for it, often unfairly. The preposition is **on**: **Don't try to pin the mistake on me!**

12. I was falling asleep during dinner, but now I'm getting a _____ wind.
✔ **A) second**
To **get a second wind** means to suddenly have new energy after feeling tired. The speaker was falling asleep, but now feels awake again. The idiom always uses **second**.

13. Doug hasn't spoken to his father in years, but now he'd like to patch things _____ with him.
✔ **B) up**
To **patch things up** means to become friends again after an argument or a long period of not speaking. Doug wants to repair his relationship with his father.

14. Andy and I are not always on the _____ wavelength, but we generally get along.
✓ C) same
To be **on the same wavelength** means to think in the same way and understand each other well. The fixed phrase uses **same**, not **similar** or **one**.

15. Reducing the sales tax may be _____ the ticket for improving the state's economy.
✓ A) just
Just the ticket means exactly the right thing that is needed for a situation. Lowering the sales tax may be exactly what the economy needs. The fixed phrase uses **just**.

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