ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Speak English Like an American Lesson 15 Idioms and Expressions MCQ Test

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1	B	2	A	3	C	4	A	5	B	6	B	7	C	8	A				

Explanations

1. **Choose the best substitute for the phrase in bold:**

Ted didn't start studying for his chemistry test until the night before. Then, he had to **pull an all-nighter**.
✓ **B) stay up all night studying**
To **pull an all-nighter** means to **stay up all night** studying or working. Ted started studying very late, so he had to study through the whole night. Not **sleep late**: that means sleeping until late in the morning.

2. After working on it for months, I finally gave my presentation this morning. That was certainly **a load off my mind**!
✓ **A) a relief**
A load off my mind means **a relief**: a worry has gone away. The speaker worked on the presentation for months, so finishing it felt very good. Example: **Passing the test was a load off my mind.**

3. Nicole was **turned off** when Todd, her date, started picking his teeth with a toothpick during dinner.
✓ **C) lost all interest**
To be **turned off** means to **lose all interest** or to feel disgusted by something. Picking his teeth at dinner made Nicole like Todd less. Not **became interested**: that is the opposite, **turned on**.

4. According to **conventional wisdom**, you shouldn't ask about salary on your first interview.
✓ **A) accepted beliefs**
Conventional wisdom means the **accepted beliefs** that most people hold. Here it is the common advice not to ask about salary at a first interview. Not **outdated beliefs**: the phrase does not say the ideas are old or wrong.

5. Ted had to perform his music before one of the most important talent agents in the country. It's not surprising that he was **a nervous wreck**.
✓ **B) very worried**
A nervous wreck is a person who is **very worried** or extremely nervous. Performing for an important talent agent is stressful, so Ted felt very nervous. Not **exhausted**: the idiom is about nerves, not tiredness.

6. Girls cheered and blew kisses whenever Ted performed his music. Amber worried that he'd **get a big head**.
✓ **B) become arrogant**
To **get a big head** means to **become arrogant**, thinking you are better than others. With girls cheering for him, Amber feared Ted would become too proud. Not **get a headache**: the idiom has nothing to do with pain.

7. People keep telling Fred that he looks **like a basket case**. Maybe it's because he hasn't slept in weeks.
✓ **C) terrible**
A **basket case** is someone so tired or stressed that they can hardly function, so **looks like a basket case** means he looks **terrible**. The clue is that Fred hasn't slept in weeks. Not **angry**: the idiom describes stress and exhaustion, not anger.

8. Do you have a headache? Here, take two aspirin. That should **do the trick**.
✓ **A) make you feel better**
To **do the trick** means to work or solve the problem, so here the aspirin should **make you feel better**. Not **perform magic**: the word **trick** in this idiom does not mean real magic.

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