ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Speak English Like an American Lesson 24: Idioms and Expressions Test

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Explanations

1. I thought I'd lost my keys, but they were in my coat pocket all ___.
✔ **C) along**
All along means during the entire time. The keys were in the pocket while the speaker was searching.

2. Here's a plaster for your knee. There, all ___ now!
✔ **B) better**
All better means completely well again. Adults often say it to small children after a little accident. A plaster is what American speakers call a bandage.

3. I don't mind helping with the move; as a matter of ___, I've already booked the van.
✔ **A) fact**
As a matter of fact means in fact or actually. It often adds a surprising detail that supports what you said.

4. When the teacher asked a question, Ana repeated it slowly to ___ some time while she thought.
✔ **A) buy**
Buy some time means do something to delay a moment so you have longer to think or prepare.

5. You've been revising all day, so put your books away and ___ out for a bit.
✔ **D) chill**
Chill out means relax and stop worrying or working. It is informal.

6. My little brother is ___ about dinosaurs and knows the name of every one in the museum.
✔ **C) crazy**
Be crazy about something means like it very much. It is informal; nuts about and mad about mean the same.

7. "Cut it ___, you two! Stop throwing peas at each other."
✔ **B) out**
You shout Cut it out! at someone who is being annoying: it is an informal order to stop.

8. "Shall we choose the curtains for the new flat?" "First ___ first: we need to sign the contract."
✔ **C) things**
First things first tells people to do the most important job before anything else. Signing comes before choosing curtains.

9. I can't say for ___, but I think the shop opens at nine on Sundays.
✔ **B) sure**
For sure means certainly or definitely. I can't say for sure means I am not completely certain.

10. Mrs Patel is in ___ of the school library, so ask her about borrowing books in the holidays.
✔ **C) charge**
Be in charge of something means be responsible for it and make the decisions about it.

11. "Please be quiet in the corridor: exams are in progress." What does "in progress" mean here?
✔ **B) taking place now**
In progress means happening at this moment and not yet finished. That is why people must be quiet.

12. "Her grandfather made a fortune selling ice cream at the beach every summer." What does "made a fortune" mean here?
✔ **D) earned a lot of money**
Make a fortune means become rich by earning a lot of money. He may also have worked hard, but that is not what the phrase says.

13. "My parents are sick and tired of the noise from the building site next door." What does "sick and tired of" mean here?
✔ **B) very fed up with**
Be sick and tired of something means be annoyed and bored because it has gone on too long. It does not mean ill.

14. "My sister freaked out when a spider ran across her pillow." What does "freaked out" mean here?
✔ **A) became very frightened**
Freak out means suddenly become very upset, frightened or excited. It is informal.

15. "Jo pretended to be surprised by the party, but she had known about it all along." What does "all along" mean here?
✔ **D) the whole time**
All along means from the beginning until now. Jo knew before the party even started.

16. "My daughter had a cold last week, but she's all better now and back at school." What does "all better" mean here?
✔ **D) fully recovered**
All better means completely well again, not just a little better. She is back at school.

17. "'Have you ever been to Scotland?' 'As a matter of fact, I lived in Edinburgh for two years.'" What does "As a matter of fact" mean here?
✔ **C) actually**
As a matter of fact means actually or in fact. It introduces true information, often more than the other person expected.

18. "The restaurant was short of staff, so the manager offered free drinks to buy some time while the food was being cooked." What does "buy some time" mean here?
✔ **A) delay things a little**
Buy some time means create a delay so that you have longer to get something ready.

19. "After a busy week, we just want to stay at home on Saturday and chill out." What does "chill out" mean here?
✔ **D) relax**
Chill out means rest and relax. It is informal.

20. "My grandmother is crazy about gardening and spends hours with her roses." What does "crazy about" mean here?
✔ **A) very keen on**
Be crazy about something means love it or be very keen on it. Here it does not mean mad or ill.

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