

APC English

Introduction to English Expressions

Advanced Placement Program
for Chinese Students 2

week 1 lesson 3

Expressions

Chinese proverbs

万事开头难

Everything is difficult in the beginning

失败是成功之母

Failure is the mother of success

只要功夫深，铁杵磨成针

If you work hard enough at it, you can grind even an iron rod down to a needle

Chinese proverbs

人不可貌相

Never judge people by their appearance

English expression: Don't judge a book by its cover

冰冻三尺，非一日之寒

It takes more than one cold day for the river to freeze three feet deep.

English expression: Rome was not built in a day

Chinese proverbs

吃得苦中苦，方为人上人

By enduring deep pain, people can ascend.

English expression: No pain, no gain

耳听为虚，眼见为实

What you hear may be false, what you see is true.

English expression: Seeing is believing

Chinese proverbs

吃一堑，长一智

What does this mean?

Chinese proverbs

千里之行，始於足下

What does this mean?

Chinese proverbs

不怕慢，就怕站

What does this mean?

proverbs

- a group of words
- when together have a special meaning
- these are called expressions
- and there are other types of expressions

we will explore many types of expressions

In pairs: explain these to your partner

千里之行，始于足下

In English

有志者事竟成

一鸟在手胜过双鸟在林

授人以鱼，
不如授人以渔

In English

千里之行，始于足下

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step

有志者事竟成

Where there's a will, there's a way

一鸟在手胜过双鸟在林

A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush

**授人以鱼，
不如授人以渔**

*Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day;
teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime*

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of purple, ranging from light lavender to dark, almost black tones. These shapes are primarily located on the right side of the frame, creating a modern, layered effect.

variety of word groups in English

groups of words

In this lesson we look at the varieties of groups of words in English.

- parts of speech
- phrases and clauses
- expressions beyond literal meanings
- figures of speech
- expressions of wisdom
- language varieties

parts of speech

In English grammar words are categorized into different types based on their function in a sentence. The parts of speech are:

- **nouns:** A noun is a name of a person, place, thing, or idea [\(learn about nouns\)](#)
 - America, John, table, joy
- **verbs:** A verb is a word used to express an action, a feeling or a state of being [\(learn about verbs\)](#)
 - to eat, played, swimming
- **adjectives:** Adjectives describe or modify a noun [\(learn about adjectives\)](#)
 - happy, big, red
- **adverbs:** Adverbs describe or modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverb [\(learn about adverbs\)](#)
 - quickly, very, quietly

parts of speech

- **pronouns:** A pronoun is a word used to replace a noun [\(learn about pronouns\)](#)
 - I, you, he, she, it
- **prepositions:** A preposition is a word used with a noun or pronoun. It shows how that noun/pronoun relates to something else. [\(learn about prepositions\)](#)
 - in, at, before
- **conjunctions:** A conjunction is a word used to join words, parts of a sentence, or sentences [\(learn about conjunctions\)](#)
 - and, but
- **interjections:** An interjection is a word used to express a sudden feeling [\(learn about interjections\)](#)
 - **Oh!** Sorry, ouch!
- **determiners:** A determiner introduces or modifies a noun [\(learn about determiners\)](#)
 - this, that, a, the, an

phrases and clauses

Phrases are groups of words that function as a single unit in a sentence.

Any group of words that is often repeated could be considered a phrase but the term phrase has a specific meaning in grammar.

- **noun phrases:** A noun phrase contains a noun and other words that describe or modify it
 - the brand new car
- **verb phrases:** A verb phrase contains a verb and other words that express action or state
 - was walking quickly
- **prepositional phrase:** A prepositional phrase consists of a preposition, its object, and any modifiers
 - on the table, in the park

phrases and clauses

Clauses are also used in English grammar, they are groups of words that act like small sentences either by themselves or following from a main clause. These can be categorized into:

- **independent clauses:** A clause that can act by itself as a sentence
 - She walked to the park
- **dependent clauses:** A clause that cannot be used by itself as a sentence and it is depend on an main clause for meaning
 - because it was raining
 - dependent clauses include:
 - adjective clauses
 - adverbial clauses
 - noun clauses
 - relative clauses

expressions (with different meanings)

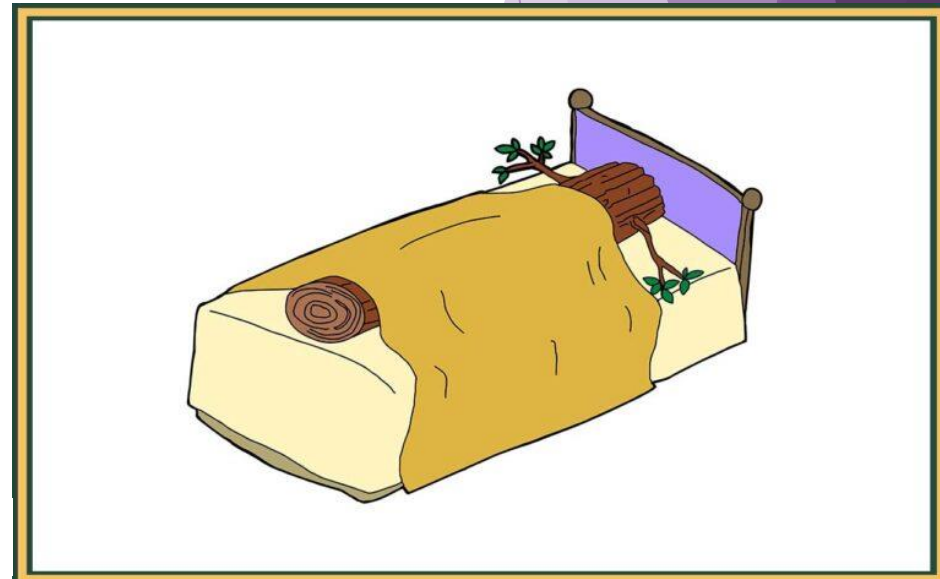
These are phrases that have a particular meaning beyond the words used, and include:

- **Idioms:** An expression with a meaning that is different from the literal meaning of its individual words
 - under the weather, a storm in a teacup
- **Clichés:** An expression or idea that is used commonly, perhaps too much
 - spill the beans, time flies
- **Truisms:** A statement that is true and again used commonly
 - practice makes perfect

figures of speech

Native English speakers say things is a group of words commonly known to others, and figures of speech are these types of expressions. They include:

- **Simile:** A comparison between two things using “like” or “as”
 - sleep like a log, as busy as a bee
- **Metaphor:** A comparison between two things without using “like” or “as”
 - time is a thief, in a nutshell



figures of speech

- **Pun:** A play on words that uses the different meanings of words with similar sounds
 - I'm reading a book on anti-gravity. It's impossible to put down!
- **Personification:** Giving human characteristics to non-human objects or animals
 - the flowers whispered to the trees
- **Hyperbole:** Exaggerated statements or claims not meant to be taken literally
 - I'm so hungry I could eat a horse

figures of speech

- **Understatement:** A statement that intentionally downplays the significance of something
 - it's just a scratch
- **Paradox:** A statement that uses terms that have the opposite meaning but may be true in reality
 - less is more, love hate relationship
- **Oxymoron:** A combination of terms that have opposite meanings
 - deafening silence, virtual reality

expressions of wisdom

Expressions that contain wise words that English speakers say include:

- **sayings:** A well known expression that gives wisdom or advice
 - actions speak louder than words
- **proverbs:** A traditional saying that offers advice or expresses a common truth
 - the early bird catches the worm

language varieties

- Perhaps the most difficult are expressions used locally or created by a group of people. These are:
- **colloquialism:** Informal expressions used in casual conversation
 - up for grabs, kick the bucket
- **slang:** Informal language specific to a certain group
 - a ‘muppet’, a ‘shark’
- **rhyming slang:** A type of slang in which the expression rhymes with the original meaning
 - apples and pears for stairs

exercise #1

expressions

1. a storm in a teacup
2. actions speak louder than words
3. as busy as a bee
4. I'm so hungry I could eat a horse
5. in a nutshell
6. practice makes perfect
7. sleep like a log
8. spill the beans
9. the early bird catches the worm
10. time flies
11. time is a thief
12. under the weather

listening exercise

1. a storm in a teacup
2. actions speak louder than words
3. as busy as a bee
4. I'm so hungry I could eat a horse
5. in a nutshell
6. practice makes perfect
7. sleep like a log
8. spill the beans
9. the early bird catches the worm
10. time flies
11. time is a thief
12. under the weather

I will ask you to complete all of these expressions next

so listen carefully first

complete each expression

1. a storm in a
2. actions speak louder than
3. as busy as a
4. I'm so hungry I could eat a
5. in a
6. practice makes
7. sleep like a
8. spill the
9. the early bird catches the
10. time
11. time is a
12. under the

expression meanings

1. A storm in a teacup:

A big fuss about something small and not important.

2. Actions speak louder than words:

What you do is more important than what you say.

3. As busy as a bee:

Very busy and working hard.

4. I'm so hungry I could eat a horse:

Very, very hungry.

expression meanings

5. In a nutshell:

A short and simple explanation.

6. Practice makes perfect:

If you practice something a lot, you will get better at it.

7. Sleep like a log:

Sleep very deeply and well.

8. Spill the beans:

To tell a secret or surprise before you should.

expression meanings

9. The early bird catches the worm:

If you start early, you have a better chance to succeed.

10. Time flies:

Time goes by very quickly.

11. Time is a thief:

Time takes away moments from your life, and you can't get them back.

12. Under the weather:

Feeling sick or not well.

exercise #2

speaking exercise

1. a storm in a teacup
2. actions speak louder than words
3. as busy as a bee
4. I'm so hungry I could eat a horse
5. in a nutshell
6. practice makes perfect
7. sleep like a log
8. spill the beans
9. the early bird catches the worm
10. time flies
11. time is a thief
12. under the weather

I will give you 12 conversations

Enter the correct expression into
each conversation

conversations

#1 A: Did you hear about Sarah and Alex arguing over the seating arrangement for the party?

B: Honestly, it seems like _____. It's such a small issue!

#2 A: Have you seen the new charity initiative Jack started?

B: I have, but I'll wait to see if he follows through. You know, _____.

#3 A: I can't believe how much work you've done today!

B: Yeah, I've been _____ trying to finish everything before the deadline.

#4 A: Lunch is taking forever to arrive.

B: Same here. _____ right now!

conversations

#5 A: Can you explain the project plan to me?

B: Sure. _____: we focus on three key areas—marketing, operations, and customer feedback.

#6 A: I'm struggling with playing the guitar.

B: Don't worry. Keep trying—remember, _____.

#7 A: How did you sleep last night?

B: Like a baby! Actually, I'd say I _____.

#8 A: Did you hear what happened at Emily's party?

B: No! Come on, _____! I need to know.

conversations

#9 A: How do you manage to find great deals on tickets?

B: Well, I always check early because _____.

#10 A: I can't believe it's already the end of the semester!

B: I know. _____ when you're having fun!

#11 A: I miss my teenage years so much.

B: I get it. It feels like _____; you never get those moments back.

#12 A: You don't look well today. Are you okay?

B: Not really, I've been feeling _____ all morning.

exercise #3

comprehension, writing and speaking

groups of 4 students

instructions

1. choose 4 of the conversations
2. write 4 new conversations keeping the expressions
3. swap your conversations with another group
4. Now practice your new conversations

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B: Honestly, it seems like _____. It's such a small issue!

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B: I have, but I'll wait to see if he follows through. You know, _____.

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B: Not really, I've been feeling _____ all morning.



Thank you!
any questions?