

Don't let the cat out...

Reading

Before you read...



PART 1

Vocabulary

You are going to read a story from the newspaper. Before you read match the vocabulary on the left with a meaning on the right.

Vocabulary	Meanings
appeal (noun)	fat
humane (adj.)	A belief that cannot be explained by science.
plump (adj.)	a person who lives in a particular place
superstition(n)	being kind and treating with respect
inhabitant (n)	describes a cat or dog living on the street without an owner
stray (adj.)	a serious or urgent request

Scroll to the answer key and check your answers

What do you think?

The story you are going to read is about a festival in Peru. It has the following vocabulary.

appeal	humane	plump
superstition	inhabitant	stray

The Headline is **Peruvian Cat Feast**

What kind of festival do you think it is?

Do you know about any festivals that celebrate animals?

Why do you think some people may disapprove of what happens at this festival?

Do you know of any superstitions about cats? What?

READING 1

Quickly read the text and check your answers to the questions above.

Peruvian Cat Feast

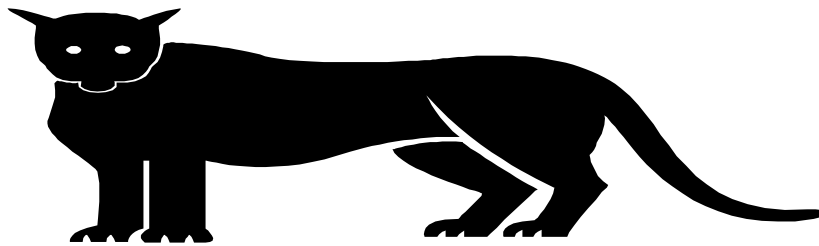
A last-minute appeal from the humane society persuaded organizers near Peru's southern coastal town of Canete to cancel a festival of cat cookery intended to celebrate a local saint's day. Just as the highly advertised festival began amid crates of chilled beer and about 50 plump cats ready for the grill, health authorities arrived to cancel the event. The tradition of cat-eating in the area goes back to the 18th century. "Some people eat them today for superstitious reasons," said Lima folklore specialist Manuel Acosta. "Because cats are supposed to have nine lives, some believe it will make them live longer." One Canete inhabitant identified as "Jaime" explained to a local television station that stray cats are the best, "because they have more flavour."

Were your answers to the questions correct?

READING 2

Read the text again and answer these questions.

1. Why was the festival canceled?
2. Who canceled the festival?
3. When did cat eating begin?
4. Why do some people normally eat cat?
5. Which cats taste better?



Scroll to the answer key to check your answers

Language Focus **Animal Idioms**

In English there are a lot of idioms based on common animals.

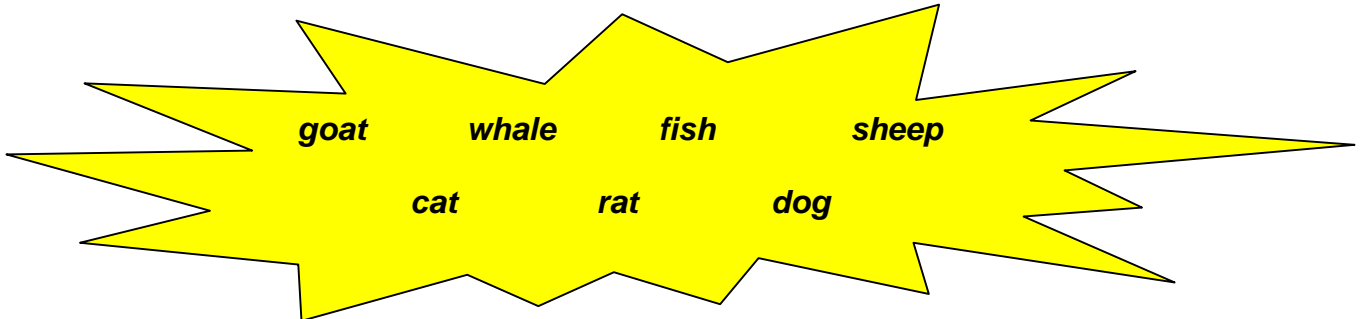
For example, if a person said that *their business had gone to the dogs*, would you know what they were talking about?

In this case they would be telling you that their business had become unsuccessful and they had probably lost a lot of money.

Your Turn

TASK 1

Below are ten common examples of animal idioms. Choose one of the following animals to complete the idioms below.



1. to be a big _____ in a small pond.
2. to have a _____ of a time.
3. to feel like a _____ out of water.
4. to let the _____ out of the bag.
5. to sort out the _____ from the _____(s).
6. He looks like the _____ that ate the canary.
7. the _____ race.
8. to be _____ eat _____.
9. to be the black _____ .
10. There are plenty more _____ in the sea.

What do you think these idioms mean?

Do you have any similar idioms in your language?

In what situation could you use these idioms?

Scroll down to the answer key to check your answers.

TASK 2

Below are ten situations where you could use one of the ten idioms above. Try to match a situation with one of the idioms.

Situation 1: You see some children at the beach and they seem to be having a really good time, so you say they _____.

Situation 2: Your friend went to a party last night, but she didn't know anyone and felt really uncomfortable. She said "Last night I _____."

Situation 3: Your brother is living in a large city, but wants to move to a quiet country town. He tells you that he wants to escape the _____.

Situation 4: You start a new job as a business consultant and soon realize that everyone is competing to get ahead. You tell your friend that the world of business is _____.

Situation 5: You break up with your boyfriend/girlfriend and are really upset. Your friend says, "Don't worry _____."

Situation 6: Your teacher prepares a test because he/she is interested to find out which students need to do more homework and need to work harder. She/He says, "This test will _____."

Situation 7: Every member of a family is very successful except for one person who is always in trouble with the police. He is _____ of the family.

Situation 8: You have a very good reputation and have worked with a lot of success for very large companies, but you decide to reduce your stress levels and join a small unknown company. You are now _____.

Situation 9: You are organizing a surprise birthday party for a friend and you say to all the guests "Don't _____."

Situation 10: Your friend looks very pleased and happy about something. You say to him/her that he/she _____.

Study Note: If you hear an idiom and are unsure of the meaning you can try to guess the meaning from the context of the dialogue or conversation, ask a native-speaker the meaning, or look up the meaning in a dictionary. If you look up a key word, such as the animal, a good dictionary should have a list of some of the more common idioms.

Answer Key

Vocabulary

appeal (n) – a serious or urgent request

humane (adj.) – being kind and treating with respect

plumb (adj.) – fat

superstition (n) – a belief that cannot be explained by science

inhabitant (n) – a person who lives in a particular place

stray (adj.) – describes a cat or dog living on the street without an owner

Reading 2

1. The festival was canceled because the humane society persuaded the organizers with a last-minute appeal.
2. Health Authorities canceled the event.
3. It began in the 18th century
4. For superstitious reasons. They believe by eating cats they will live longer.
6. Stray cats have more flavour.

Idioms

- | | | | | |
|---------|----------|-------------|----------|-----------------|
| 1. fish | 2. whale | 3. fish | 4. cat | 5. sheep, goats |
| 6. cat | 7. rat | 8. dog, dog | 9. sheep | 10. fish |

Situations

1. are having a whale of a time
2. felt like a fish out of water
3. rat race
4. dog eat dog
5. there are plenty more fish in the sea
6. sort out the sheep from the goats
7. a big fish in a small pond
8. the black sheep
9. let the cat out of the bag
10. looks like the cat that ate the canary