

►►► contains ten papers. Some of them are theoretical discussions of best practice; others are more evaluative in nature, and some describe particular methodologies, courses and projects. The contributors all start from their own area of interest and professional expertise. However, whatever the starting point, two questions come through very clearly in the collection as a whole. The first is *How can change be managed so that its objectives are not only met but sustained in the longer term?* The second is *How can we be sure that changes (innovations) actually result in more efficient and effective learning?* It is the nature of such questions that definitive answers are hard to come by, and the book has the feel of being part of the debate, not the conclusion. However, one message is clear. We live in a changing world from which ELT is not cocooned and we must be prepared to adapt. We must also be able to judge whether innovations lead to measurable benefits, or represent change for change's sake. Any book which encourages teachers and managers both to analyse and evaluate their existing mindset, and to consider the implications of new approaches, is surely welcome.

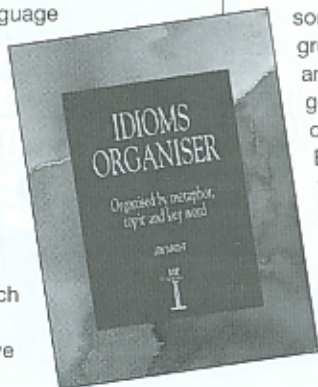
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Idioms Organiser

by Jon Wright
Language Teaching Publications 1999
ISBN 1-899-39606-3

This book is primarily for use by students, either in class or self-study, though it makes for an excellent teaching tool. For First Certificate in English students, it is a wonderful introduction into understanding English culture (or put another way, having their worst fears about the English language confirmed). It will enable more advanced students to have an enjoyable time fine-tuning their already extensive language skills.

This helpful book has a straightforward and practical approach to the idiomatic language that is native



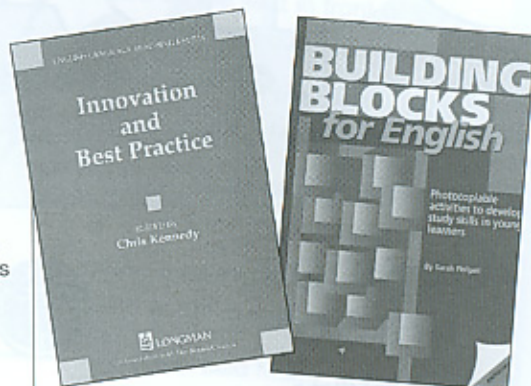
English. The explanatory page is clear and concise, as is the introductory unit, which gives a clear and simple explanation of idioms as whole expressions and idiomatic language. I particularly liked the 'mind picture' approach. The introductory tasks also help give substance to the explanations.

The book is divided into four sections – Areas of Metaphor, Individual Metaphors, Topics and Key Words – backed up by cross-referencing in the index. Each section has a preparatory note helping the reader to find the connection. The individual, two-page units within each section follow a clear pattern. There are gap-fill exercises to encourage students, where necessary, to think literally at first, and then metaphorically, with short revision exercises at the end to consolidate their learning. The majority of the units have wonderful cartoons by Bill Stott, which add humorous and pertinent visual aids; his pictures, as always, speak volumes. Appropriate news reports, culled from various national newspapers, constantly remind us that idiomatic English is written as well as spoken, and the individual components are enlivened by the use of idiomatic headings.

From a teaching point of view, I particularly liked Section 1, which deals with Areas of Metaphor. The author sets up 12 important metaphors, eg *time is money*, *people are liquid*, *the office is a battlefield*, and then proceeds to have fun pulling together the vocabulary and the mind images to help us understand how, why and when these expressions are used. This approach really appeals to students, particularly to the majority of those studying for FCE who are often on the intermediate 'plateau' and need a boost to their sense of achievement.

Jon Wright's book is a useful tool for student and teacher alike. There is something here to enliven discussion groups for more advanced students and plenty to enlighten those just getting to grips with the complexities of native-speaker English. I found myself constantly flicking through the book, stopping to read and being at once amused and inspired, not to mention having my own learning curve advanced!

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Building Blocks for English

by Sarah Philpot
DELTA Publishing 2000
1-900783-39-8

This is a collection of photocopiable activities aimed at the 9–11 age range and designed to build vocabulary and develop study skills. The activities divide into eight sections:

- alphabet skills
- lexical sets
- word partners
- everyday words and phrases
- word pairs and patterns
- word-building
- making word records
- basic dictionary skills.

Activities are varied and inviting, and include Kim's game, snakes and ladders, word square, crossword, dice games, battleships, bingo, 'find someone who', time dominoes, and many more, both well-known games and new ones. Most can be used by individuals, or by pairs or small groups, which gives the teacher a good choice for varying class interaction. The vocabulary covered is what you would expect for the age group: families, classroom language, the time, shapes, etc. The design of the photocopiable pages is uncluttered and attractive, while the teacher's page gives clear instructions, answers and possible follow-up and extension activities.

Obviously some of the activities appeal more than others, but of the 39 activities, there are at least 30 I will happily use with this age group (and with older students too). Of these, there are several which can be used more than once, and lots which have given me ideas for making up my own versions with different language. Definitely to be recommended.

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