

## Standards Focus: Idioms and Expressions

### Part One

#### Chapters 1-2

1. **take a broad view**: look at the situation in a larger sense; include all the details looking back
2. **made a pile**: made a lot of money
3. **established a line**: had several children who had their own children, creating several generations of family
4. **high spirits**: a good mood
5. **mind his own business**: pay attention to his own life, not anyone else's concerns
6. **wear us out**: give a spanking to
7. **heard a sound out of us**: heard us make noise
8. **my stars**: an expression of surprise like "Oh, my goodness!"
9. **followed on his heels**: followed directly behind
10. **imagination run away with us**: to let your "imagination run away with you" means to create more and more stories in your mind so that the story becomes bigger
11. **having your tail in a crack**: to be put in a bad or difficult position
12. **starting off on the wrong foot**: getting off to a bad start

#### Chapters 3-4

1. **half-cocked**: to go off half-cocked means that you start something without being fully prepared
2. **high and mighty**: better than everyone else
3. **I'd fix her**: I'd show her the truth; I'll prove it
4. **deep into the quick**: into the depths
5. **done my time**: completed my required term of stay, like a prisoner who does "time" (his required sentence)
6. **turns 'em loose**: lets the children out of school
7. **finders keepers**: a slang term meaning "whoever finds something gets to keep it as their own"
8. **in a pig's ear**: a saying meaning "no way"; a variation of the more popular "in a pig's eye"
9. **out of good graces**: out of favor with
10. **tan you**: spank you

#### Chapters 5-6

1. **chameleon lady**: a lady who has many talents and interests; a chameleon changes its colors to adapt to any situation
2. **reaped the benefits**: enjoyed the rewards of
3. **get (her) goat**: to make a person angry or irritated
4. **acid tongue in her head**: someone who speaks harshly or bluntly

5. **grain of sense**: someone who doesn't have a grain of sense is someone who is not very bright or sensible
6. **game of cat-and-mouse**: like a cat chases after a mouse, to try to outmaneuver someone in order to win
7. **raveling a thread**: telling a story
8. **sit a spell**: sit down for a while
9. **keep on tellin' 'em**: keep telling your lies
10. **not a soul**: no one
11. **abandoned (my) post**: stopped doing what I was supposed to be doing, like a soldier who leaves his post (position), leaving everything unguarded
12. **dried up**: stopped talking
13. **the likes of us**: people like us

#### Chapters 7-8

1. **climb into (his) skin**: try to realize what a person sees from his point of view
2. **trotting in our orbit**: keeping to ourselves
3. **do the honors**: to be the one to do something, usually something important
4. **slipped (his) memory**: forgot all about
5. **walked on eggs**: to act very carefully, so as to not upset anyone
6. **working himself into a bad humor**: putting himself in a bad mood
7. **caused hardly a ripple**: wasn't anything important; did not cause a stir
8. **merely a twitch**: just a minor interest; a twitch is a jerky movement that does not last long
9. **died of fright**: was very scared
10. **my hind foot**: harsh opposition and disbelief, similar to "you're joking!"
11. **jim-dandy job**: a really good job
12. **stove up**: stove is the past tense of the colloquial "stave" meaning to crush or destroy a barrel, wooden box, or other wood fixture; "stove up" means that someone is sore, tired, and achy like they have been crushed or destroyed
13. **got another think coming**: often changed to "got another thing coming"; an expression that means "If that is what you think, you'd better think about that again"

#### Chapters 9-11

1. **take that back**: an expression meaning "withdraw what you said or did as if it never happened" or "apologize for what you said or did"

2. **dose of it:** a small experience; a “dose” is a prescribed amount of medication; similar to “getting a dose of your own medicine”
3. **worrying another bone:** thinking about something else; had other things on her mind
4. **running a still:** a still is another word for distillery, a place in which alcohol is made; during the 1920s, Prohibition made the manufacture and consumption of alcohol a crime
5. **hold my head up:** be proud of who I am
6. **drew a bead on him:** from the shooting term for taking aim at a target, to draw a bead on someone is to focus all attention on that person
7. **trying you out:** “testing” you
8. **growing out of your pants:** growing up quickly
9. **bowed to the inevitable:** realized the facts of a situation and no longer fought it
10. **drive him nuts:** upset and/or irritate him
11. **ray of sunshine:** something to be proud of; a very good thing; a ray of sunshine breaking through the clouds makes the day brighter and is said to bring happiness and give hope of a better day
12. **set my teeth permanently on edge:** made me feel annoyed and irritated
13. **as sure as eggs:** a sure thing; bound to happen, just as chickens lay eggs
14. **hold it against me:** hold a grudge towards me
15. **had it coming:** deserved it
16. **lit right into:** spanked or yelled at
17. **I’ve a good mind:** an expression meaning “I think I will” or “I am going to”
18. **on tenterhooks:** filled with suspense or anxiety; tenter hooks are used when making cloth; tenters are used to stretch the cotton or other fabric so that it doesn’t crease or wrinkle; tenter hooks hold the fabric in place so that the fabric doesn’t slip
19. **keep her head:** to keep calm
20. **prince of a fellow:** a gentleman
21. **tribal curse:** a family curse or something that has been passed generation to generation
22. **tooth and nail:** to fight violently (with every tooth in your mouth and every nail on your fingers)
23. **make someone’s will airtight:** will, in this case, means *behavior*; to make someone’s will airtight means to make someone stand up for what they believe in
24. **break camp:** pack up; quit and move on
25. **at a snail’s pace:** very, very slowly; moving like a snail travels
26. **‘druthers:** a contraction of the phrase “I’d rather”; to have my ‘druthers means to have one’s way
27. **singing a different tune:** thinking in a different way
28. **look like a picture:** look pretty, like a portrait
29. **never saw the light of day:** never got out (to see the sun)
30. **stood as much guff:** had enough foolish or rude talk
31. **slow fuse:** someone with a slow fuse is not easily upset or angered
32. **lose his head:** to become unreasonable and foolish
33. **when the chips are down:** the time when things are going badly
34. **scared (us) stiff:** scared us a lot; stiff like someone who is paralyzed with fright
35. **snot-nose:** a little brat
36. **for the life of me:** no matter how hard I try

## Part Two

### Chapters 12-13

1. **not cold in her grave:** not dead very long
2. **was crushed:** was very disappointed
3. **to scrape a few barnacles off the ship of state:** barnacles are a type of shellfish that attach themselves to ships that have been in the water for a long time; barnacles must be removed in order for a ship to move properly; the ship of state is the state government; in this case, the government got together to take care of important things that had been ignored for a while
4. **left to its own devices:** left alone to take care of itself
5. **dry spell:** a time when nothing happens
6. **threatened to church her:** threatened to lecture her on how to be a good church member
7. **lining:** a technique in which the lead singer sings one line from a song, followed by the rest of the congregation; this continues for the entire song
8. **putting on airs:** acting like you are better than everyone else
9. **traveled in state:** to travel around like someone who is important
10. **so loaded with shinny it made me tight:** contained so much shinny (alcohol) it made me drunk
11. **born in the objective case:** born a stubborn, opinionated person
12. **like a hand into a glove:** fits very well
13. **in for it:** going to be in trouble
14. **the facts of life:** the way things are done; the realities of life; also refers to a discussion about reproduction

**Chapters 14-15**

1. **dry me up**: shut me out from knowing
2. **according to her lights**: according to her inner "light", the way she views as the right way to live
3. **feathers rose**: got upset and irritated
4. **jee crawling hova**: similar to "jumping Jehovah" an expression meaning "Oh, my goodness!"
5. **shinnied up**: drunk
6. **things had come to a pretty pass**: things had turned out alright
7. **he had seen the light**: became newly devout or recently saw the right way
8. **old campaigner**: an old politician or veteran of the way things are done
9. **last-ditch effort**: a final attempt
10. **damn tootin'**: an expression meaning "for sure"
11. **giving him hell**: giving him problems

**Chapters 16-17**

1. **to live down**: to get rid of; to forget about
2. **blind spots**: a prejudice that someone has but is unaware of
3. **bring 'em to their senses**: make them realize the seriousness of the issue
4. **bearing a grudge**: holding resentment towards
5. **cutting his third set of teeth**: growing in a third set of teeth after his adult teeth; this is quite unusual since most people have only their baby teeth, then grow their adult teeth
6. **put a different light on things**: to look at things in a new, different way
7. **stamping grounds**: neighborhood
8. **took advantage of her**: this expression has several meanings; in this case, it means he had sex with her forcefully
9. **made plain**: made very clear
10. **dry as a sermon**: as boring and uneventful as a church sermon
11. **guests of the county**: on public assistance or welfare
12. **had a lean time of it**: found very little to eat
13. **raisin' this holy racket**: "raising a racket" means causing a lot of trouble or making a lot of noise, or both
14. **ruttin' on**: "rutting" means to be sexually aroused
15. **the whole boiling of you**: all of you
16. **false move**: to do or say something wrong or out of place
17. **the time of day**: to not give the "time of day" literally means not to give the time; this has been extended to mean "ignore"
18. **what a card he was**: he was a funny person
19. **gone frog-sticking without a light**: frog-sticking is trying to catch frogs with a small

- pitchfork-like device; to go out without a light would mean you can't see what you are doing in order to catch the frogs; Scout means Atticus doesn't know what he is doing
20. **taking advantage of him**: in this case, Bob feels that Atticus is "taking advantage of him" by tricking him into saying something he doesn't mean
21. **counting his chickens**: the first half of a proverb: "Don't count your chickens before they've hatched" which means "Don't be too sure that something will happen until it actually does."

**Chapters 18-19**

1. **got good sense**: knows what one should and shouldn't do; "has a clue"
2. **for all I was worth**: with all my effort
3. **getting along**: doing
4. **everybody for himself**: everyone must take care of themselves
5. **in spite of himself**: even though the results may be bad for him
6. **touched a hair o' my head**: touched me (or hurt me) in any way
7. **the lot of you**: all of you
8. **proof of the pudding**: the way to judge something is by looking at the results
9. **gave them the back of its hand**: did not help them to get out of their situation
10. **protesting too much**: similar to Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew* "doth protest too much," meaning denying everything so adamantly that the reality may be the opposite of what they claim
11. **slap year**: an exact year
12. **looked daggers**: a dagger is a type of knife; to look daggers is to look sharply and intensely at someone
13. **the damage was done**: there was nothing more to do to fix or change the situation
14. **in a fix**: in trouble
15. **thin-hided**: a hide is an animal skin; to have a thin hide (thin skin) means that you are highly sensitive or things get to you easily

**Chapters 20-21**

1. **run-of-the-mill**: average; common
2. **in droves**: a drove is a group of animals or people moving together; *in droves* means in a large group
3. **skin...alive**: severely punish
4. **giving (him) down the country**: putting him in his place; chastising him

**Chapters 22-23**

1. **overstepping themselves:** similar to “overstepping their bounds”; to act out of place or do something beyond the acceptable limit
2. **times are too hard:** Atticus is referring to the fact that it is during the Depression; “times are hard” means things are difficult for everyone right now
3. **blue in the face:** angry and upset; emotional
4. **runner:** chicken
5. **take up with:** to discuss with
6. **bat an eye:** to show emotion
7. **wild horses could not bring:** nothing, nobody, could make her do it
8. **shred of credibility:** any believability or trustworthiness he had left
9. **out of his system:** to do something once so that you feel better and can stop thinking about it
10. **pay off a grudge:** get rid of contempt for another person by acting out
11. **have any quarrel:** have no problem with
12. **shadow of a doubt:** any possible doubt at all
13. **do away with:** get rid of
14. **lose their heads:** to get mad about
15. **get a square deal:** to receive a fair trial and reasonable outcome
16. **pay the bill for it:** to suffer the consequences
17. **got many more miles to go:** have a lot to learn
18. **took wearing down:** had to be convinced
19. **on a hunch:** have a feeling about
20. **took a thunderbolt:** took a lot of work
21. **gee minetti:** an expression meaning “Oh, my goodness!” or “Wow!”
22. **put her foot down:** made a strong declaration; won’t change her mind
23. **that is that:** that is the end of the discussion
24. **take up:** learn; pick up as a hobby
25. **worry my head:** worry myself
26. **to spite:** to deliberately do something in order to make someone mad or upset
27. **hipped on:** preoccupied with or obsessed about

**Chapters 24-25**

1. **on the brink:** about to turn into
2. **fighting the good fight:** the missionary ladies’ work to help convert people to Christianity
3. **their time came:** they entered their menstrual cycle
4. **still as a mouse:** very, very still and quiet
5. **sober as a judge:** as sober as a judge who must be clear-headed in order to make good decisions
6. **behind you:** support you

7. **fighting a losing battle:** fighting for something that will not or cannot ever happen
8. **wool:** an expression meaning “head”
9. **tears him to pieces:** makes him really upset
10. **be a lady:** keep calm and be polite
11. **dry up:** shut up and go away
12. **out of mind:** forgotten about
13. **down to the line:** the moment of truth, when all has been said and done and a decision must be made
14. **couldn’t have cared less:** didn’t care at all
15. **breathed a word:** said anything at all

**Chapters 26-28**

1. **right pretty spell:** nice weather
2. **time was playing tricks:** time was going by very quickly
3. **what’s eating you?:** what’s bothering you?
4. **after a fashion:** in a way
5. **holed up:** stayed inside
6. **chunked at her:** yelled obscenities; harassed
7. **one more peep:** one more sound
8. **had his fling:** had a good time doing
9. **walked over my grave:** a superstition that when one gets chills, someone “walked over your grave”
10. **cut it out:** stop it
11. **after ten forevers:** after a very long while
12. **out like a light:** fast asleep

**Chapters 29-31**

1. **wake the dead:** make noises so loud that even the dead in their graves are disturbed
2. **go to bed with the chickens:** go to bed very early
3. **meant business:** was extremely serious about; had a definite goal
4. **say hidy to ‘em:** say hello to them
5. **fit to die:** going to, or ready to die
6. **from the bottom of my heart:** with extreme seriousness or truth
7. **put two and two together:** to make sense of something
8. **clear the air:** make everything better
9. **paid a mint:** spent a lot of money
10. **let the dead bury the dead:** let it all be over and done with
11. **honed it down:** sharpened the knife
12. **bided his time:** waited for the right moment
13. **into the limelight:** to be put in front of the public
14. **suit yourself:** do what you want to do