

Summative Evaluation of the Reusable Learning Object:  
*Why Americans Say It That Way:  
Understanding Idioms in Cultural Context*

By: Cindy Richard  
November 22, 2025

### **Purpose of the Evaluation Session**

The purpose of the “Evaluate” phase in an instructional design project is, according to Branch (2009, p.151), “to assess the quality of the instructional products and processes, both before and after implementation... Upon completion of the Evaluate phase, you should be able to identify your successes, [and] recommend improvements for subsequent projects that are similar in scope,” in addition to taking steps for closing out the current project. Kirkpatrick’s Levels of Evaluation, commonly used in the Learning and Development industry, aim to measure the impact of a learning asset in terms of the learners’ reactions, the degree of learning achieved, the degree to which learners can apply what they learned, and the results or business impact of learners’ participation (Kadakia & Owens, 2020, p.100).

My purpose in evaluating this Reusable Learning Object is to assess whether my lesson was engaging and effective – Kirkpatrick Levels 1 and 2 – with my sample group of target learners who piloted the lesson, thus identifying my successes, discovering revision needs for the current project, and developing recommendations for subsequent similar projects. My evaluation will ask whether my sample learners achieved the performance objective and whether they felt positively about the experience.

- Project Description: This multimedia-rich Reusable Learning Object (RLO) introduces English language learners to the cultural and historical origins of common American idioms still used in everyday conversation. Learners will explore twelve idioms organized into four thematic clusters – Frontier & Exploration, Conflict & Resolution, Sports & Teamwork, and Expression & Emotion – through narrated visuals, captions, and examples. A drag-and-drop matching practice activity and a Google Form quiz with automated feedback will reinforce comprehension and application.
- Performance Objective: Given an interactive, multimedia lesson presenting twelve American idioms through images, narration, and contextual examples (CN), learners will correctly apply the idioms in the context of conversational dialogue snippets (B), with at least 85% accuracy on the formative assessment (CR).

## **Evaluation Session User Profiles**

I connected with Yulia Pleshchynska (Юля Плещинська) through the [ENGIN program](#), a global nonprofit that partners volunteers who are native English speakers with Ukrainians who are English language learners. One arm of the program partners educators, specifically. For the last eight months, I've met online weekly with Yulia, a young lecturer of philology at King Danylo University in Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine. I created the RLO on idioms for a target audience of level B2 upper-intermediate English learners at Yulia's request, so that she could pilot my lesson with her students.

Twenty Ukrainian undergraduates aged 18-20 participated in the lesson, although fewer submitted the Google Form quiz and survey at the end of the lesson. All students are level B2, although Yulia reports that there are ability differences within that level, as you would find in any group of students. None of the students in the sample group have special needs or accommodations. I met online with the students a week after they completed the RLO, although the topic of our conversation was unrelated to the RLO. From my observations, I would describe the students as attentive and motivated; ethnically homogeneous; and highly capable of conversational English with clear pronunciation.

## **Evaluation Session Location**

The evaluation session took place in a classroom at King Danylo University in Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine. The lecturer displayed the RLO's video lesson on the front screen and gave students the Google Site link so that they could use their smartphones for the practice activity, Google Form quiz, and Google Form survey – as well as to re-watch the video if needed. I was not present for the evaluation session, even virtually, as the idea of a reusable learning object is to be serviceable to learners in the absence of the designer or instructor.

## **Evaluation Methods**

The evaluation methods address Kirkpatrick Levels 1 and 2 as follows:

Level 1: Reaction. A Google Form survey was embedded at the end of the RLO. (See Appendix B, p.8.) It includes nine Likert scale items and an open-ended item eliciting additional comments. The survey explores whether students found the lesson engaging, effective, well-paced, and leveled appropriately for their ability. I also briefly

interviewed Yulia a few days after her students completed the lesson to elicit her overall impression of the lesson. (See Appendix A, p.7).

Level 2: Learning. A Google Form quiz assessed whether students could insert the featured idioms correctly into snippets of conversational dialogue. (See Appendix D, pp.14-20.) The quiz determined the extent to which students achieved the performance objective as stated above. While the degree of learning is best measured by comparing pre- and post-tests, I decided that the brief nature of the RLO and absence of an instructor justified the omission of a pre-test. In a more formal evaluation setting or in the event of a need to measure business impact, I would recommend including a pre-test.

## **Evaluation Results**

### Level 2: Learning.

Only nine of the participating twenty students submitted the Google Form quiz. This could be the result of technical difficulties (discussed below,) limited time allotted for the RLO during class, and lack of urgency since the RLO was not connected to a grade or mandatory benchmark but rather was introduced as supplementary content.

Of the nine quizzes submitted (see Appendix E, pp.21-27), the median score was 9/12, or 75%. One outlier scored 1/12, which likely indicates haste and a lack of motivation. The remaining scores were 7/12 or higher. Excluding the outlier, the average of the remaining eight scores is 9.75/12, or 81%. This approaches but does not meet the 85% accuracy benchmark stated in the performance objective. Three students scored 12/12 (100%,) and one scored 10/12 (83.3%,) suggesting that the performance objective, as written, is achievable by approximately 50% of learners attempting the quiz. That percentage may or may not increase under different conditions, such as (1) more time allotted for the lesson, (2) rewards/ consequences, e.g. grades, for completing the lesson, and (3) different devices used for the lesson, e.g. laptops instead of phones.

Two frequently missed questions indicate students' confusion between the idioms "bury the hatchet" and "mend fences." I anticipated this confusion because the meanings are close but not synonymous. However, results show that I need to do more to clarify and differentiate between those idioms, or replace one or both of them with alternate idioms in the lesson. This revision could also positively impact the percentage of students able to achieve the performance objective.

### Level 1: Reaction.

Fourteen students submitted the Google Form survey. (See Appendix C, pp.9-13.) Likert scale items offered a range of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree.)

In lieu of a pre-test, I included the survey item: “I already knew most of those idioms. I could have passed the quiz before watching the video.” Seven students disagreed with that statement – three strongly – and seven students were neutral.

I used a few items to gauge the lesson’s effectiveness, as follows:

- “I feel that this lesson was effective in teaching the meanings and contexts of the featured idioms.” All 14 students agreed, 11 strongly.
- “I feel confident that I will understand the featured idioms when I hear them in the future.” 10 students agreed, 5 strongly. Three were neutral. One disagreed.
- “I feel confident that I could use the featured idioms correctly when conversing in English.” 10 students agreed, 3 strongly. Three were neutral. One disagreed.

In response to the item, “I feel that this lesson was appropriate for my level of English,” all 14 students agreed, 9 strongly. In a follow-up, open-ended item, students indicated that the lesson was either easy or appropriate.

In response to the item, “I found the pace of the video easy to follow,” 13 students agreed (7 strongly,) and one disagreed.

Three items gauged students’ interest and engagement, as follows:

- “I found the lesson interesting and engaging.” All 14 students agreed, 11 strongly.
- “I am interested in learning more about the historical context of American idioms that have been around for a long time.” (This was the topic of the RLO.) 11 students agreed, 4 strongly, and 3 were neutral.
- “I am interested in learning more about current American idioms that are fairly new in pop culture.” (This suggests a similar lesson but with a different lens for selecting the featured idioms.) 12 students agreed, 9 strongly, and 2 were neutral.

Seven students added a comment under the open-ended last item, with five saying “thank you” or complimenting the lesson, one indicating they had no further comments, and one that said, “The information is interesting, but I think it’s too difficult to learn such a large number of idioms in just one viewing and with the tests.” While this last comment looks like an outlier, it is worth observing that some classmates may have agreed, considering only nine of twenty participants submitted the quiz.

Yulia reported an overall positive reaction to the lesson content. Unfortunately she said there were technical difficulties. When she navigated to the Google Site on the classroom screen, the embedded YouTube video would not play directly in the site. Clicking a link opened another tab, allowing the class to watch the video on YouTube. Then students had to deal with the internet lagging on their phones as they attempted to work through the practice activity, quiz, and survey. This impacted their ability to re-watch the video as needed. They also reported that the drag-and-drop practice activity did not display conveniently on their phones and likely would have been easier to interact with on a laptop or desktop computer.

### **Reaction to Evaluation Results**

I was very curious to see these results. I taught English Language Arts for over 18 years, but never taught English language learners, with the exception of a couple of exchange students. My knowledge of my target audience was very limited and superficial as I designed the RLO, so I wondered – and worried – whether the lesson would be effective and engaging without either stumping learners or insulting their intelligence.

The quiz results – while not entirely reliable due to the variables mentioned above – suggest that my lesson might need some revision before a large majority of learners can achieve 85% accuracy or higher. The clearest step is to replace or more explicitly differentiate between the two similar idioms “Mend fences” and “Bury the hatchet.” I could also reduce the amount of content or rework the practice activity to display correctly on various devices so that learners won’t skip it.

The survey results were gratifying. I was excited to see that students perceived the lesson as interesting, effective, well-paced, and appropriate for their level. However, follow up items reveal that the perceived effectiveness of the lesson is not rock-solid. Ten of fourteen students felt confident (only five strongly confident) that they would understand the featured idioms when hearing them in the future. Ten of fourteen students felt confident (only three strongly confident) that they would be able to use the featured idioms correctly in future conversations. If I expanded my evaluation to include Kirkpatrick’s Level 3, I might discover that learners struggle to apply the newly-learned idioms in real conversation. If revising the RLO, I would consider reducing the number of idioms covered in favor of building stronger context for the remaining idioms. I could also add a role play activity guiding students to use the idioms in an improvised conversation, but this would restrict the RLO’s use to a classroom or group setting and would reduce its value as an asynchronous, independent learning object.

Based on the survey results, I can conclude that idioms are an interesting topic to language learners. If designing further lessons, my sample learners indicated that they would want to learn more about the historical context of idioms that have been around for a long time, but they are even more interested in current idioms that are fairly new in pop culture. Maybe my next RLO could explore the meaning and origin of newer internet slang. In that case, my target audience might stretch beyond language learners to include older Americans who wonder what the heck the kids are saying these days!

### **Action Response and Revisions**

If I modify my RLO in the future, my action steps will include:

- Replace one or both of the idioms “Mend fences” and “Bury the hatchet,” or add more instruction to clearly differentiate between them.
- Consider reducing the number of idioms covered in favor of expanding context for the remaining idioms.
- Work out the technical bugs so that the embedded video will play directly in the Google Site and the interactive practice activity will work on phones as well as larger screens.
- Consider adding a role play activity encouraging learners to apply the idioms in an improvised conversation.

If I design additional RLOs for the same target audience, I will consider:

- Selecting fewer idioms per lesson and expanding on the historical and cultural context around them, as well as offering more “worked examples” of how to apply them in conversation.
- Selecting high value idioms instead of idioms that are merely interesting. For example, including the idiom “touch base” was a stronger choice than “bury the hatchet.” While both idioms have interesting origins that say a lot about American history and culture, “touch base” is used far more frequently today, and thus is of higher value for language learners.
- Selecting newer idioms that are currently circulating in pop culture and on social media. Young learners will find these idioms more appealing and applicable to their own generation.

### **References**

Branch, R. M. (2009). *Instructional design : the addie approach*. Springer.

Kadokia, C., & Owens, L. M. D. (2020). *Designing for Modern Learning : Beyond ADDIE and SAM*. Association For Talent Development.

## Appendix A: Interview/ feedback form for Yulia Pleshchynska

Name: Yulia Pleshchynska

Position: Lecturer at King Danylo University, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine

- ~~Please check~~ that students submitted the ~~Google Form quiz~~ and the ~~Google Form survey~~ embedded in the lesson.
- How many students completed the lesson? approximately 20
- Please provide the following information about your students:
  - What is their age range? 18-20
  - Are they all B2 level, or are any different? All B2, but there are ability differences among them as with any class.
  - Did they complete the lesson in a live class or for homework? live class
  - If in a live class, what type of devices did students use to complete the lesson? (Laptops or phones?) Watched video together on large screen, and then completed the lesson on phones. Approximately how much time did they need? 30 min(depends of the speed of the video)
  - Do any of your students have special needs and accommodations? If so, was the lesson accessible for them, or were there problems? No
- Did you have an overall positive, negative, or neutral impression of the lesson? Did it seem too easy or too difficult? Did your students react positively? Would you use the lesson again in the future, or would you recommend changes?

Overall positive reaction to the content. Technical issues with internet lagging on phones, and the YouTube video would not play directly on the lesson site – had to open another tab and watch in YouTube.

## Appendix B : Google Form survey questions

Survey on *Why Americans Say It That Way: Understanding Idioms in Cultural Context*

Please rate the following items using this scale:

1 = Strongly disagree

2 = Somewhat disagree

3 = Neutral

4 = Somewhat agree

5 = Strongly agree

I feel that this lesson was effective in teaching the meanings and contexts of the featured idioms. (1-5)

I feel that this lesson was appropriate for my level of English. (1-5)

If you disagree that the lesson was appropriate for your English level, did you find it too easy or too difficult? \_\_\_\_\_

I found the pace of the video easy to follow. (1-5)

I found the lesson interesting and engaging. (1-5)

I already knew most of those idioms. I could have passed the quiz before watching the video. (1-5)

I feel confident that I will understand the featured idioms when I hear them in the future. (1-5)

I feel confident that I could use the featured idioms correctly when conversing in English. (1-5)

I am interested in learning more about the historical context of American idioms that have been around for a long time. (1-5)

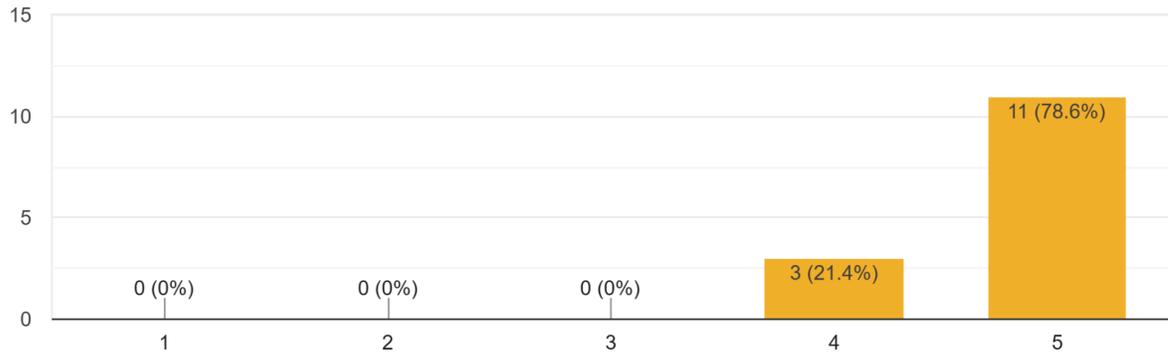
I am interested in learning more about current American idioms that are fairly new in pop culture. (1-5)

Any additional comments? \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C : Google Form survey results

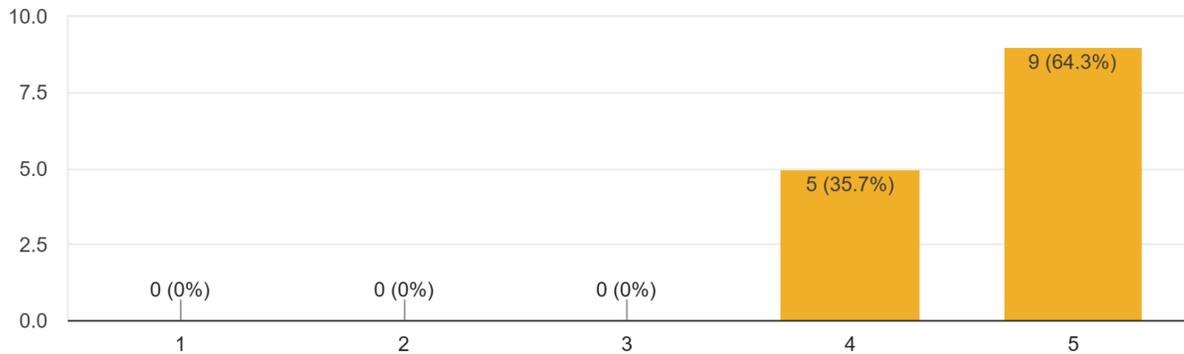
I feel that this lesson was effective in teaching the meanings and contexts of the featured idioms.

14 responses



I feel that this lesson was appropriate for my level of English.

14 responses



If you disagree that the lesson was appropriate for your English level, did you find it too easy or too difficult?

7 responses

it was good

Not applicable, lesson was appropriate

Neutral

That was good enough for me

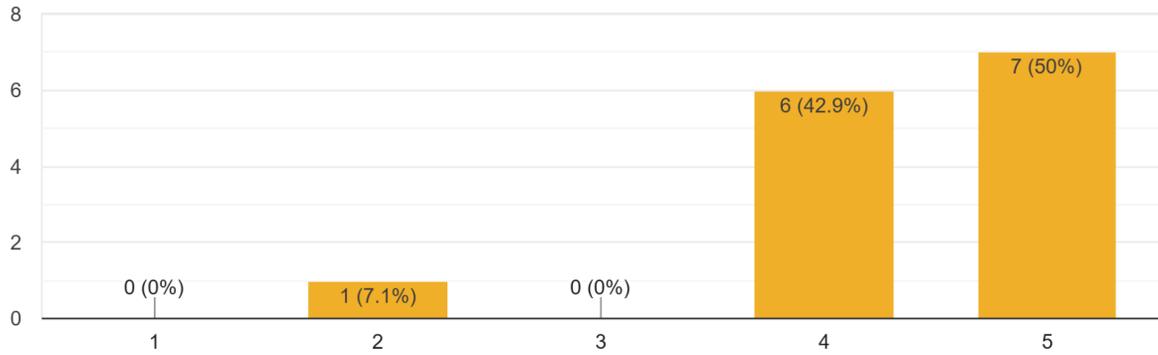
Easy

Easy

Not easy, but not difficult

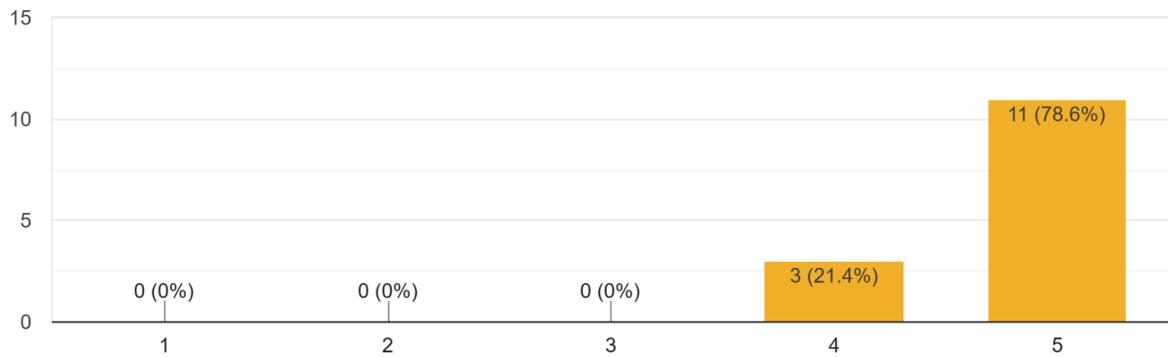
I found the pace of the video easy to follow.

14 responses



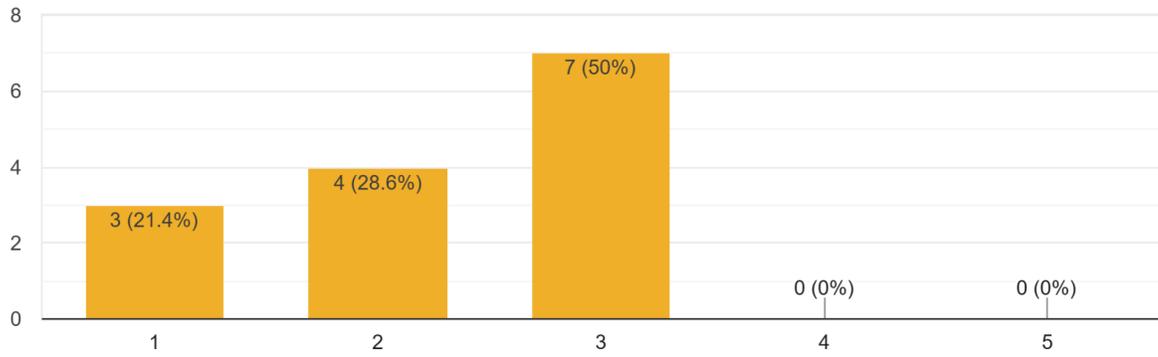
I found the lesson interesting and engaging.

14 responses



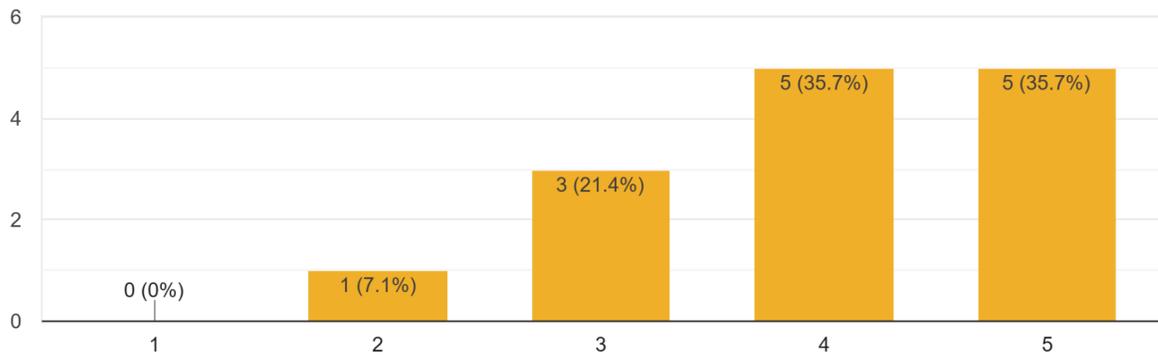
I already knew most of those idioms. I could have passed the quiz before watching the video.

14 responses



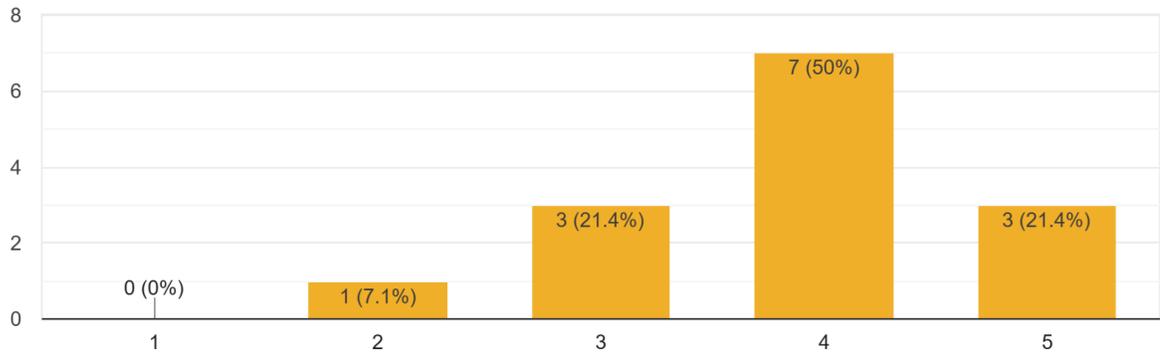
I feel confident that I will understand the featured idioms when I hear them in the future.

14 responses



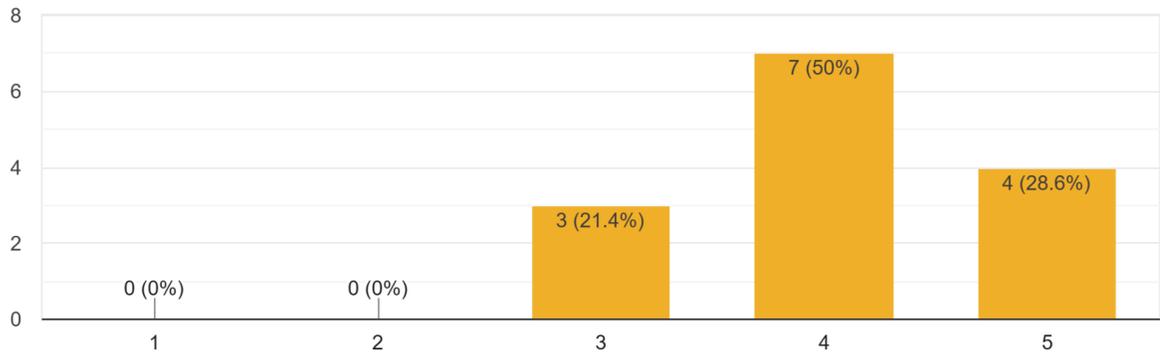
I feel confident that I could use the featured idioms correctly when conversing in English.

14 responses



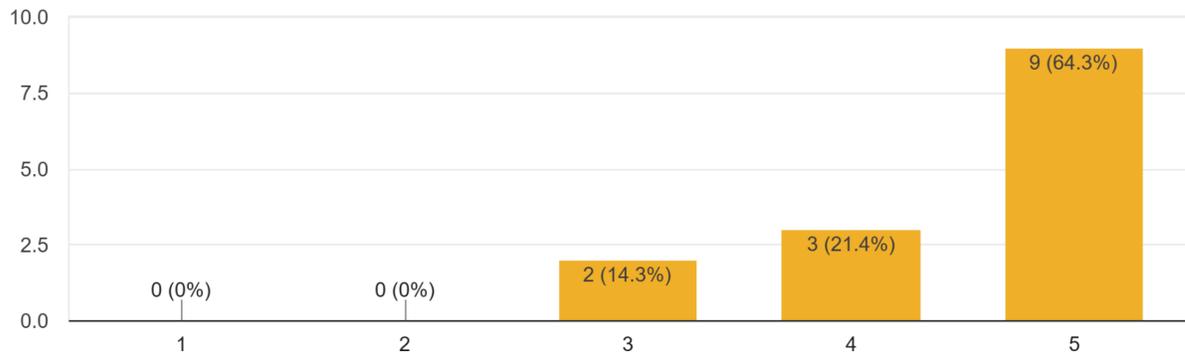
I am interested in learning more about the historical context of American idioms that have been around for a long time.

14 responses



I am interested in learning more about current American idioms that are fairly new in pop culture.

14 responses



Any additional comments?

7 responses

thank you!

good lesson, thank you!

The information is interesting, but I think it's too difficult to learn such a large number of idioms in just one viewing and with the tests.

I think it was a nice lesson.

Great quiz!

No

It's great and useful

## Appendix D: Google Form quiz

### Quiz on *Why Americans Say It That Way: Understanding Idioms in Cultural Context*

For each snippet of dialogue below, fill in the blank with the idiom that fits contextually.

Joe's face turned red. "Would you stop buying things without discussing it first?!" He \* 1 point  
threw his wallet at Isabel. "Here! Just take all of it! We're almost broke, anyway!" ⌵ Dropdown  
Isabel frowned. "Don't \_\_\_\_\_."

Mark only one oval.

- blaze a trail
- ride shotgun
- hold down the fort
- mend fences
- get your act together
- bury the hatchet
- give me a rain check
- give me a ballpark figure
- touch base
- break the ice
- rain on my parade
- fly off the handle

Sally sat beside Mom at the table. "I have to pick a famous American \_\_\_\_\_ and \* write a report on them for Social Studies class. Can you help me think of someone?" "Can it be someone modern?" Mom asked. "Simone Biles made some incredible achievements in gymnastics, broke racial barriers, and she advocates for mental health."

1 point

Dropdown

Mark only one oval.

- trailblazer
- shotgun rider
- fort holder
- fence mender
- who gets their act together
- hatcher burier
- rain checker
- ballpark figure
- base toucher
- icebreaker
- parade rainer
- who flies off the handle

Andrew's side of the dorm room was a disaster, and he was late to class. He dug through piles of clutter looking for the book he needed. Tony watched him, shaking his head. "Bro, you seriously need to \_\_\_\_\_."

\*

1 point

Dropdown

Mark only one oval.

- blaze a trail
- ride shotgun
- hold down the fort
- mend fences
- get your act together
- bury the hatchet
- take a rain check
- give me a ballpark figure
- touch base
- break the ice
- rain on my parade
- fly off the handle

Jen poked her head into Mary's office. "Hey, is this a good time? I wanted to \_\_\_\_\_ about the presentation."

Mary looked up from her computer. "Sure, come in!"

\* 1 point  
Dropdown

Mark only one oval.

- blaze a trail
- ride shotgun
- hold down the fort
- mend fences
- get our act together
- bury the hatchet
- take a rain check
- give a ballpark figure
- touch base
- break the ice
- rain on the parade
- fly off the handle

Grandpa hugged Chloe. "Good to see you, kid! Any news?"

Chloe beamed. "I got that promotion I wanted!"

"Wonderful!" Grandpa winked. "Not to \_\_\_\_\_, but you know promotions come with a lot of extra work, right?"

\* 1 point  
Dropdown

Mark only one oval.

- blaze a trail
- ride shotgun
- hold down the fort
- mend fences
- get your act together
- bury the hatchet
- take a rain check
- give a ballpark figure
- touch base
- break the ice
- rain on your parade
- fly off the handle

Hannah got into the driver's seat and turned on her car. "Ok, guys, who's navigating? I don't know where this place is."

1 point

Mason and Ryan looked at each other.

"I know how to get there," said Ryan. "I'll \_\_\_\_\_."

⌵ Dropdown

"Ok," Mason agreed, getting into the backseat.

*Mark only one oval.*

- blaze a trail
- ride shotgun
- hold down the fort
- mend fences
- get our act together
- bury the hatchet
- take a rain check
- give a ballpark figure
- touch base
- break the ice
- rain on your parade
- fly off the handle

"Hey, Alan," said Amy. "Do you still want to go to the basketball game tonight?"

\*

1 point

"Can I \_\_\_\_\_?" said Alan. "My grandma asked for some help around the house tonight."

⌵ Dropdown

"Yeah, no problem," said Amy. "They play again on Wednesday."

*Mark only one oval.*

- blaze a trail
- ride shotgun
- hold down the fort
- mend fences
- get my act together
- bury the hatchet
- take a rain check
- give a ballpark figure
- touch base
- break the ice
- rain on your parade
- fly off the handle

"So now you're on the same team as James?" Caroline asked Patrick. "How is *that* going to go? You've been enemies since middle school."  
Patrick shrugged. "I guess we're going to have to \_\_\_\_\_."

\*

1 point

⌵ Dropdown

Mark only one oval.

- blaze a trail
- ride shotgun
- hold down the fort
- mend fences
- get our act together
- bury the hatchet
- take a rain check
- give a ballpark figure
- touch base
- break the ice
- rain on the parade
- fly off the handle

"How are your parents doing?" Isaac asked.  
"Not great," said Mateo. "Mom wants a divorce, but Dad still wants to \_\_\_\_\_ and is talking about getting a marriage counselor."

\*

1 point

⌵ Dropdown

Mark only one oval.

- blaze a trail
- ride shotgun
- hold down the fort
- mend fences
- get their act together
- bury the hatchet
- take a rain check
- give a ballpark figure
- touch base
- break the ice
- rain on their parade
- fly off the handle

"I'm sorry," said Mom. "It's an inconvenient week for my business trip. The kids have sports, church activities, and projects due in school."

\* 1 point  
Dropdown

"Don't worry," said Aunt Rosa. "I'll \_\_\_\_\_ while you're gone."

Mark only one oval.

- blaze a trail
- ride shotgun
- hold down the fort
- mend fences
- get your act together
- bury the hatchet
- take a rain check
- give a ballpark figure
- touch base
- break the ice
- rain on your parade
- fly off the handle

"Hey, Rob," said Jeff. "The client is asking for a \_\_\_\_\_ for the revised product design."

\* 1 point  
Dropdown

"I'm on it," said Rob. "I'll email you the cost estimate before lunch."

Mark only one oval.

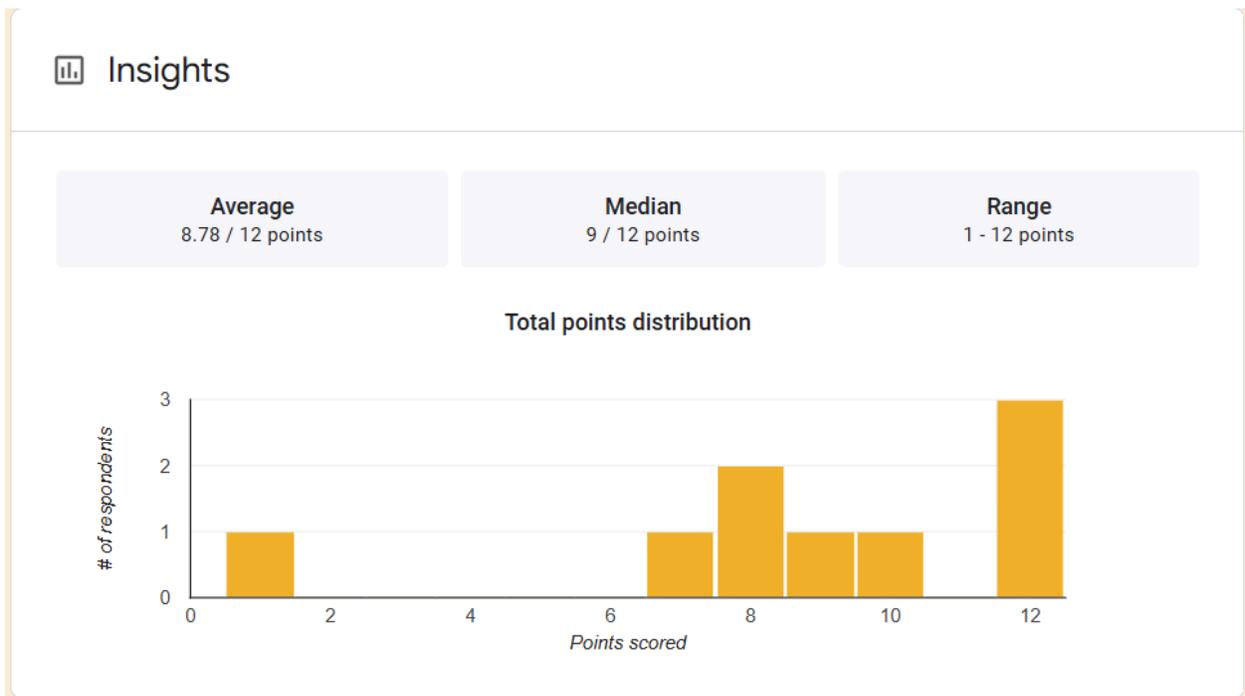
- trailblazer
- shotgun ride
- fort hold-down
- fence mender
- act get-together
- hatchet burier
- rain check
- ballpark figure
- base toucher
- icebreaker
- parade rainer
- handle flier

"My new students are coming from different schools and don't know each other yet," \* 1 point  
Mrs. Hernandez said to Ms. Houston. "I want to start the first class with a fun activity to \_\_\_\_\_." Any ideas?"  Dropdown

*Mark only one oval.*

- blaze a trail
- ride shotgun
- hold down the fort
- mend fences
- get our act together
- bury the hatchet
- give us a rain check
- give us a ballpark figure
- touch base
- break the ice
- rain on your parade
- fly off the handle

## Appendix E: Google Form quiz results



### Frequently missed questions ?

Question

Correct responses

"So now you're on the same team as James?" Caroline asked Patrick. "How is *that* going to go? You've been enemies since middle school."  
Patrick shrugged. "I guess we're going to have to \_\_\_\_\_."

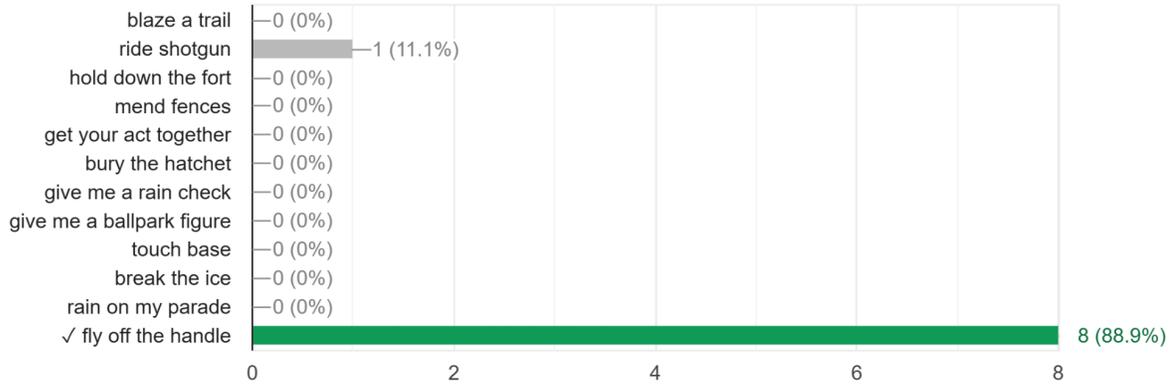
4 / 9

"How are your parents doing?" Isaac asked.  
"Not great," said Mateo. "Mom wants a divorce, but Dad still wants to \_\_\_\_\_ and is talking about getting a marriage counselor."

4 / 9

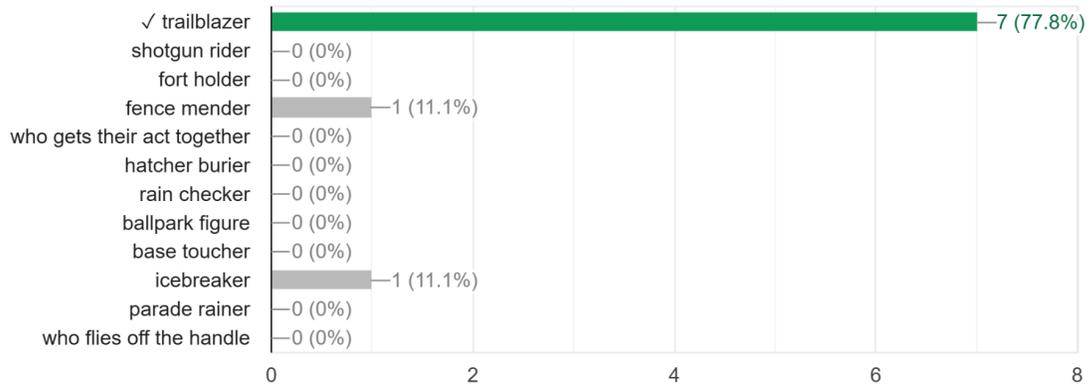
Joe's face turned red. "Would you stop buying things without discussing it first?!" He threw his wallet at Isabel. "Here! Just take all of it! We're ...oke, anyway!" Isabel frowned. "Don't \_\_\_\_\_."

8 / 9 correct responses



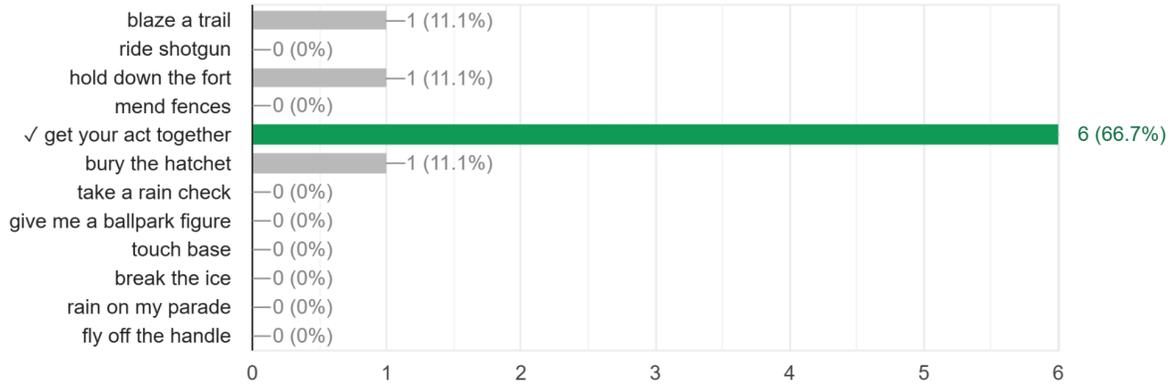
Sally sat beside Mom at the table. "I have to pick a famous American \_\_\_\_\_ and write a report on them for Social Studies class. Can you he...ial barriers, and she advocates for mental health."

7 / 9 correct responses



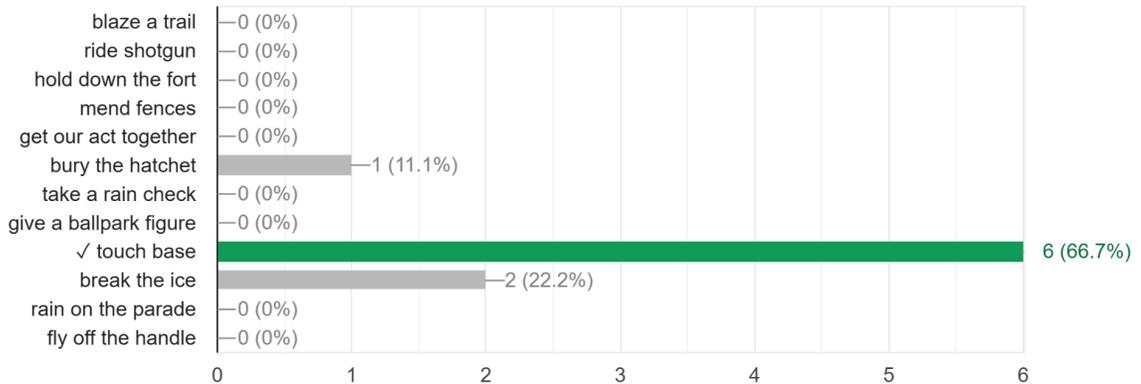
Andrew's side of the dorm room was a disaster, and he was late to class. He dug through piles of clutter looking for the book he needed. Tony watche...you seriously need to \_\_\_\_\_."

6 / 9 correct responses



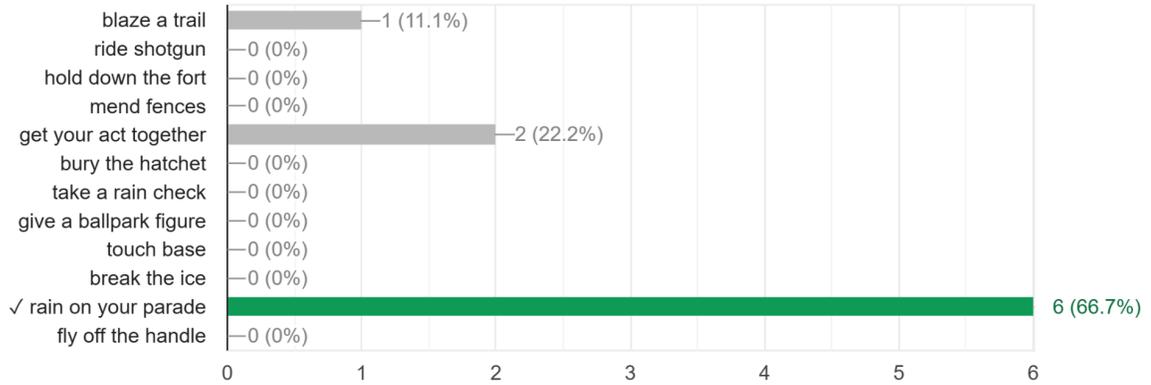
Jen poked her head into Mary's office. "Hey, is this a good time? I wanted to \_\_\_\_\_ about the presentation." Mary looked up from her computer. "Sure, come in!"

6 / 9 correct responses



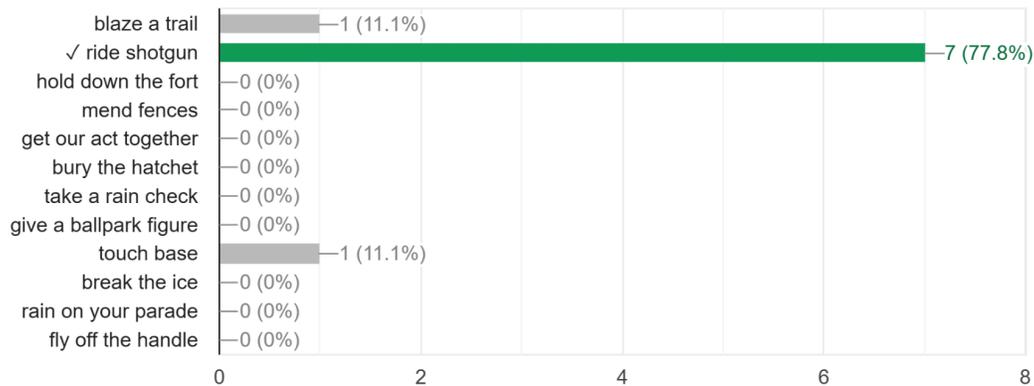
Grandpa hugged Chloe. "Good to see you, kid! Any news?" Chloe beamed. "I got that promotion I wanted!" "Wonderful!" Grandpa winked. "Not to \_\_\_\_... promotions come with a lot of extra work, right?"

6 / 9 correct responses



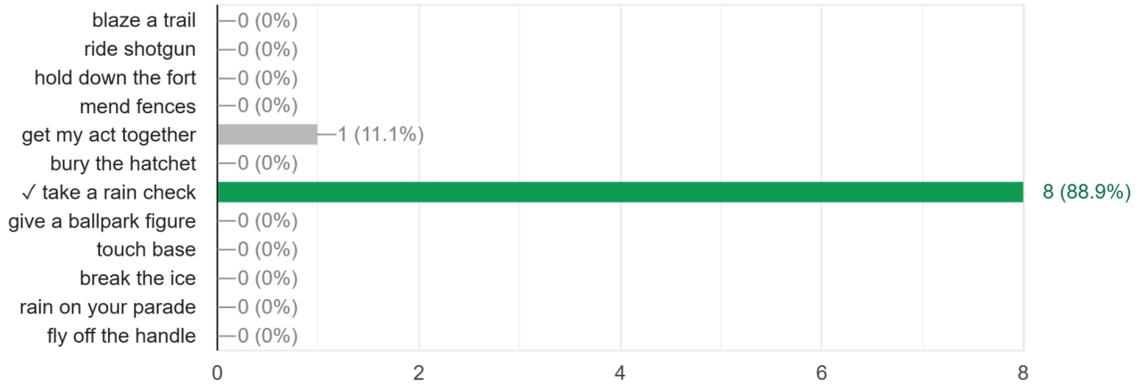
Hannah got into the driver's seat and turned on her car. "Ok, guys, who's navigating? I don't know where this place is." Mason and Ryan looked at each ... "Ok," Mason agreed, getting into the backseat.

7 / 9 correct responses



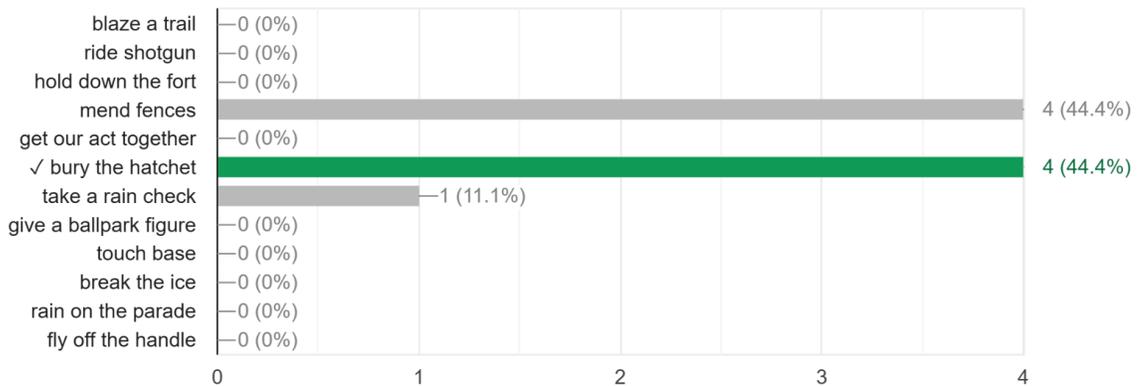
"Hey, Alan," said Amy. "Do you still want to go to the basketball game tonight?" "Can I \_\_\_\_\_?" said Alan. "My grandma asked ...blem," said Amy. "They play again on Wednesday."

8 / 9 correct responses



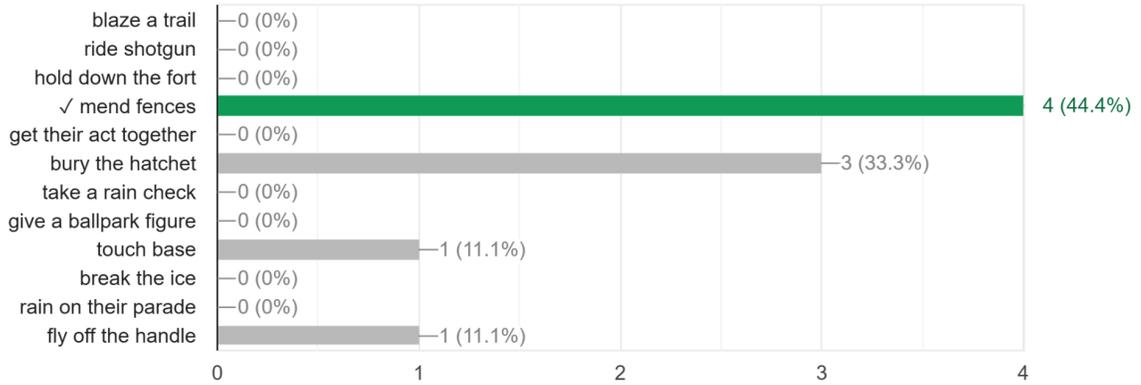
"So now you're on the same team as James?" Caroline asked Patrick. "How is that going to go? You've been enemies since middle school." Patrick s...we're going to have to \_\_\_\_\_."

4 / 9 correct responses



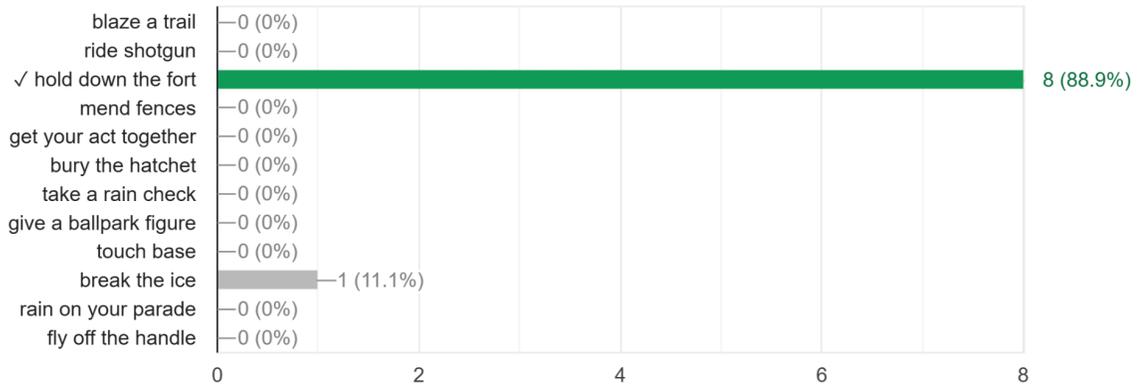
"How are your parents doing?" Isaac asked. "Not great," said Mateo. "Mom wants a divorce, but Dad still wants to \_\_\_\_\_ and is talking about getting a marriage counselor."

4 / 9 correct responses



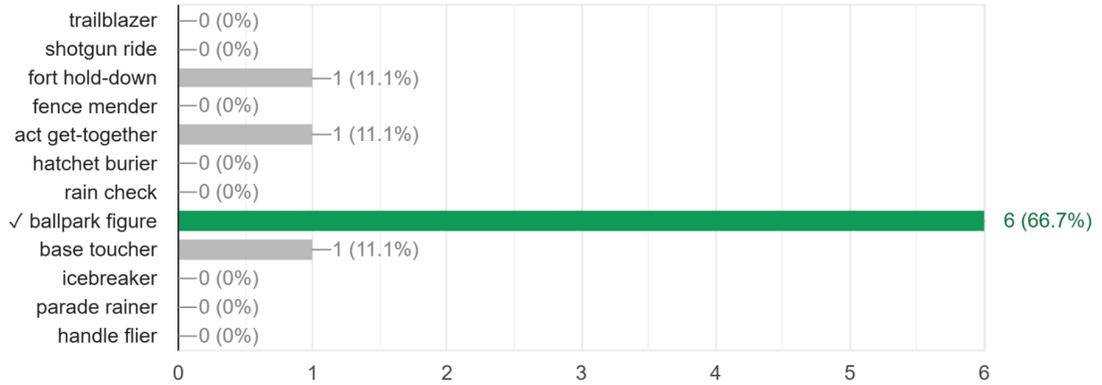
"I'm sorry," said Mom. "It's an inconvenient week for my business trip. The kids have sports, church activities, and projects due in school." "Don't worry," said Aunt Rosa. "I'll \_\_\_\_\_ while you're gone."

8 / 9 correct responses



"Hey, Rob," said Jeff. "The client is asking for a \_\_\_\_\_ for the revised product design." "I'm on it," said Rob. "I'll email you the cost estimate before lunch."

6 / 9 correct responses



"My new students are coming from different schools and don't know each other yet," Mrs. Hernandez said to Ms. Houston. "I want to start the ... with a fun activity to \_\_\_\_\_. Any ideas?"

9 / 9 correct responses

