

Idiom of the Month: THROW IN THE TOWEL

By Sarah Gudgeon

1. Tick five things that make you want to stop competing during a sports tournament.

- a. You are tired
- b. You are too hot
- c. You feel sick
- d. You win
- e. You hurt your leg
- f. You are angry

2.

a. Read

This is a very long tennis match.

I know! John looks very tired.

Oh look! I think he wants to throw in the towel.

You're right. He's leaving the court.

b. Complete:

Michela.....at the swimming competition last week. She felt sick and went home.

3. Read these sports idioms and match each one to the correct meaning.

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| a. Louisa was off the hook for the weekend; her parents didn't need her to babysit. Hurray! She was free to see her friends. | 1. to do too much |
| b. Marcus was tired in the middle of the race but then he got a second wind and ran to the finish line. | 2. to find more energy |
| c. Julie didn't think she could win the art competition but she decided to give it her best shot . | 3. when a person has to make a decision |
| d. Joey hurt his hand in the basketball tournament but he didn't throw in the towel , he continued to play and his team won. | 4. give up / surrender |
| e. Jennifer always went overboard at parties – there were too many decorations, they were all over the house and in the garden. | 5. free of responsibility |
| f. The ball was in Beatrice's court now – it was her choice, did she want the new job or not? | 6. do the best you possibly can |

4. Complete the sentences with idioms from exercise 3:

- a. Kelly..... but she didn't win first prize.
- b. Emma..... and ran over the finish line.
- c. Noah didn't have to stay home and clean the car with his dad, he was
.....at the last minute.
- d. Joanne always.....for carnival; her costumes are always really extravagant.
- e. Matthew's friend said sorry. Now....., did he want to accept his friend's apology?
- f. Paul wanted to.....but his coach encouraged him to continue.

Teacher's Notes

1. Tick a, b, c, e, f, but not d.

2b. Complete

Michela **threw in the towel** at the swimming competition last week. She felt sick and went home.

3. Match the sports idioms to their correct meaning.

a. 5 b. 2 c. 6 d. 4 e. 1 f. 3

Ask the students some questions to elicit use of the idioms after they have completed the sentences to enable freer practice. For example:

*Tell your partner about a time that you **threw in the towel**.*

4. Complete using idioms from exercise 3.

- a. Kelly **gave it her best shot**, but she didn't win first prize.
- b. Emma **got a second wind** and ran over the finish line.
- c. Noah didn't have to stay home and clean the car with his dad, he was **off the hook** at the last minute.
- d. Joanne always **goes overboard** for carnival; her costumes are always really extravagant.
- e. Matthew's friend said sorry. Now **the ball was in his court**, did he want to accept his friend's apology?
- f. Paul wanted to **throw in the towel**, but his coach encouraged him to continue.