There’s a method to one’s madness

Idiom of the month

a cura di Sarah Gudgeon

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1. Divide these tasks into crazy or normal. Write each one under the correct column.

- Eating twenty chocolate doughnuts
- Staying awake all night studying for an exam
- Having pasta for lunch
- Doing 3 hours of homework every day
- Buying presents for all the people in your street
- Buying your best friend a birthday present

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRAZY</th>
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2a. Read

What ARE you doing, Tom?
I am practising for the school play on Saturday.

Really? You look crazy with all those plates on your head!
Don’t worry, there is a method to my madness. After all, I have a special role in the play.

2b. Complete

Julie says there is a……………………………………her…………………………………………………………but
I don't know what it is! She looks like a crazy woman with all those coloured ribbons on her bike.

When someone looks like they’re doing something crazy but really they have a valid reason for doing it, they say there is ‘a method to their madness’.
3. **Read these idioms. Match each idiomatic phrase (a – f) to the correct definition (1 – 6).**

a. I think Sarah is **away with the fairies** – she never seems to follow what we’re saying.
   - 1. …totally crazy…

b. Your mum will **go bananas** when she sees all that dirt and mud on your new shoes!
   - 2. …in her own dream world…

c. You are **off your rocker** … you can’t skateboard off that wall, it’s too high!
   - 3. …gone/become crazy…

d. That is a really **harebrained idea**, it will never work.
   - 4. …stupid/foolish…

e. Matthew says there is **a method to his madness**.
   - 5. …shout and scream like a crazy person…

f. Aunt Jane has **lost her marbles** – she wants to marry that guy she met in Brazil last month.
   - 6. …a good reason for his strange behaviour…

4. **Complete these sentences with an idiom from exercise 3.**

a. My brother Scott has lots of …………………………………………………but they never work. He tried to invent a robot to clean his room last week, but it exploded!

b. My dad will ………………………………………………when he sees my maths test result. I actually failed the test because I didn’t study. I went out with my friends instead.

c. My best friend Judy is……………………………………………………. We have so much fun, but we get into a lot of trouble too.

d. My mum does some strange stuff but she says there is……………………………………………………. Personally, I think she’s just a bit crazy, but I still love her!

e. I think my grandma has…………………………………………………….She wants to do a parachute jump for her 90th birthday! Most people just have a party.

f. My teachers said that I’m always…………………………………………………….in class and that I need to concentrate more. I do daydream a lot, but that’s because Mr Smith, my form teacher, is just so boring!
Teacher’s Notes

1. **CRAZY**
   - Eating 20 chocolate doughnuts
   - Staying awake all night studying for an exam
   - Buying presents for all the people in your street

   **NORMAL**
   - Having pasta for lunch
   - Doing 3 hours of homework every day
   - Buying your best friend a birthday present

2a. (Tom’s role in the school play is that of a clown.)
2b. Complete
   
   Julie says there is a **method to her madness** but I don’t know what it is! She looks like a crazy woman with all those coloured ribbons on her bike.

3. Match each idiomatic phrase to the correct definition.
   
   a 2   b 5   c 1   d 4   e 6   f 3

4. Complete the sentences with an idiom from exercise 3.

   a. My brother Scott has lots of **harebrained ideas** but they never really work…

   b. My dad will **go bananas** when he sees my maths test result…

   c. My best friend Judy is **off her rocker**. We have so much fun…

   d. My mum does some strange stuff but she says there is a **method to her madness**…

   e. I think my grandma has **lost her marbles** – she wants to do a parachute jump for her 90th birthday!..

   f. My teachers said that I’m always **away with the fairies** in class and that I need to concentrate more…

* Sarah Gudgeon

Sarah Gudgeon is a trained journalist and EFL teacher from Manchester, England. She has written numerous books for Pearson over the years and is a regular contributor to the Pearson Portal on pearson.it.