

# Idiom of the Month: THROW IN THE TOWEL

By Sarah Gudgeon

1. Write two or more things that make you want to give up during a sports tournament.

- a. You injure your hand and it really hurts.
- b. You feel sick and think you're going to vomit.
- c. You are so tired that you have absolutely no energy left.
- d. ....
- e. ....

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 <b>off the hook</b> 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 <b>got a second wind</b> 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 <b>give it her best shot</b> .                              | 3. when a person has to make a decision |
| d. Joey hurt his hand in the basketball tournament but he didn't <b>throw in the towel</b> , he continued to play and his team won.    | 4. give up / surrender                  |
| e. Jennifer always <b>went overboard</b> at parties – there were too many decorations, they were all over the house and in the garden. | 5. free of responsibility               |
| f. <b>The ball was in Beatrice's court</b> 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 loved.....for carnival; her costumes were always so extravagant.
- e. Matthew had....., and he decided to take the opportunity to study in London.
- f. Paul wanted to.....but his coach encouraged him to continue.

**5. Answer these questions:**

a. Have you ever thrown in the towel? Did you regret it later or did you think it was the right decision? If so, why?

b. Do you always give things your best shot or can you be a bit lazy sometimes?

**6. Talk to a partner.**

Think about a time when you went overboard and tell a friend about it.

*I went overboard when...*

## 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

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 loved **going overboard** for carnival; her costumes were always so extravagant.
- e. Matthew had **the ball in his court** and he decided to take the opportunity to study in London.
- f. Paul wanted to **throw in the towel**, but his coach encouraged him to continue.

5 & 6.

Answers will vary from student to student.