Idiom of the Month: OUT OF THE BLUE

By Sarah Gudgeon

1. Circle the five adjectives you can use to describe how you feel after you receive unexpected news

   surprising shocked exciting scared frightening

   surprised shocking excited scary frightened

2.

a. Read

   Did you know that Lucy’s family is moving to London?

   Really? She didn’t expect that to happen.

   I know, it was totally out of the blue; her parents only decided last week.

b. Complete:

   The news about the wedding was totally _____________________________.

   They only met at a party two months ago.
3. Read these idioms about surprise and match each one to the correct meaning.

a. Sammy did a double take when he saw his cousin from Australia at his birthday party. He thought he was still in Sydney.
   1. Made an unexpected announcement

b. Erin was caught unawares when the teacher asked her a question. She hadn’t been listening to the lesson.
   2. Unprepared and surprised

c. The football scholarship offer was completely out of the blue. Tom didn’t know his school had nominated him.
   3. Looked again

d. John dropped a bombshell at Sunday lunch; he told his mother he had joined the army.
   4. Eyes were open wide in surprise

e. Lenon’s eyes were on stalks: he couldn’t believe the number of presents his friends had bought him for his graduation.
   5. Unexpected

4. Answer these questions:

a. Have you ever dropped a bombshell on your parents?

b. Have you ever been caught unawares in class?

5. Talk to a partner.

Do you like receiving news out of the blue? Do you enjoy the element of surprise or do you fear it will be bad news?
Teacher’s Notes

1. Sample answer:
   a. surprised
   b. shocked
   c. excited
   d. scared
   e. frightened

2b. Complete:
The news about the wedding was totally out of the blue. They only met at a party two months ago.

3. Match these idioms to the correct meaning.
   a3 b2 c5 d1 e4

4 & 5. Answers will vary from student to student.