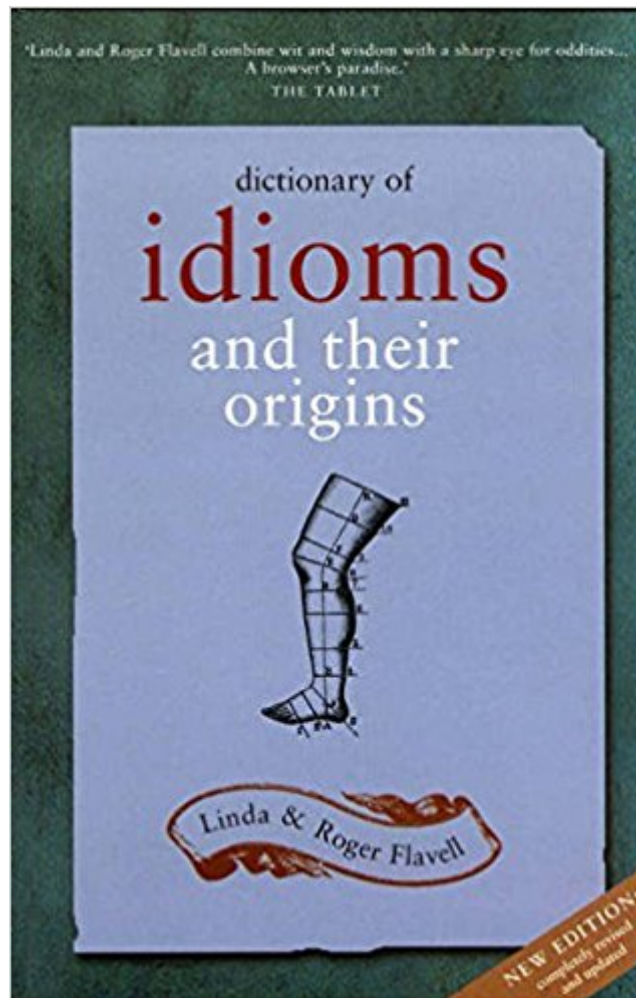


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Dictionary Of Idioms: And Their Origins



Synopsis

The English language contains a vast store of idioms that can be used in creative and forceful ways. This totally revised and greatly expanded edition of Dictionary of Idioms examines over 500 such phrases, tracing each one's source and history through a rich supply of examples. New entries include 'playing fast and loose' (from a 16th-century fairground game), 'head over heels' (a totally illogical variation on the more sensible 'heels over head') and 'knee-high to a grasshopper' (which won out over knee-high to a mosquito and knee-high to a toad). Mini-essays scattered through the book enable the authors to expand on such broader themes as: What is an Idiom?, National Rivalries, and the Old Curiosity Shop of Linguistics. While maintaining scholarly accuracy, Linda and Roger Flavell convey their great love of the curious in language in a way that will be irresistible to anyone who delights in words.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Linda and Roger Flavell have been studying the oddities of English for over 25 years. Linda has a degree in modern languages and subsequent qualifications in secondary and primary teaching. Roger has many years of experience working for London University's Institute of Education.

Here are some brief examples (although the book explains in more detail):* "The Midas Touch" means the ability to make money, to have continuous good fortune, it comes from the story of - Midas the legendary king of Phrygia, was granted a wish by Bacchus in return for a helping hand

extended to one of his followers. Midas wished that everything he touched would turn to gold. The wish dissolved when he washed his hands to eat.* "Pandora's Box" means a seemingly harmless situation fraught with hidden difficulties, it comes from - Zeus giving Pandora a beautiful box that she was told never to open. One day she turned the key and peeped inside. At that moment all the problems of wickedness were loosened upon mankind ever since.* "Three Sheets To The Wind" means very drunk, it comes from - The more sails there are in the wind, the more unstable the ship, like a drunken sailor.* "A thorn in my side" means a person or thing which causes persistent pain or annoyance and it comes from- The Bible book of Numbers 33:55, God commands them to drive out all the inhabitants and if they do not, those who remain will be "barbs in your eyes and thorns in your sides". Some idioms have more than one theory of how they originated, and all theories are listed. There is an index and bibliography.

I bought this as a gift for my Dad and he loved it. I was searching for a book of idioms that actually gave a brief history of the idioms' origins. Many books claimed to do that but upon close review many only listed definitions and the meanings of the idioms. This book however, does a good job of teaching how the idiom came into existence. I gave four stars because several common idioms were not included, and I felt like it could have been a more complete collection.

Product was delivered as described by seller. It is fun to read the origin and usage example of each idiom; I memorize idiom better this way.

Great reference book. Interesting, informative and well researched descriptions. Many of which are pretty funny.

Excellent book for picking up a reading briefly! Enjoyable and educational.

Fascinating things, idioms "and this book is a fun adventure in them

It is meeting what my expectation!

This book explains the origin of lots of the idioms we hear or use daily. Very interesting reading. Another book of idioms that I purchased (Webster's New World American Idioms Handbook) told the meaning of idioms without explaining their origins and was less enjoyable.

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