

Don't Take Me Literally

This Really Good Stuff® product includes:

- 66 Don't Take Me Literally Cards
- 1 Example of Literal vs. Nonliteral Meanings Reference Card
- 1 Sorting Mat Folder
- 1 Task Card
- This Really Good Stuff Instructional Guide

Thank you for your purchase of this Really Good Stuff® **Don't Take Me Literally**—a fun game that provides practice in distinguishing literal phrases from nonliteral phrases.

Learning to distinguish literal and nonliteral, or figurative, language opens doors for young readers. With **Don't Take Me Literally**, students play a game that helps them identify, understand, and use common idiomatic expressions, the most common type of nonliteral language. Especially helpful for English language learners, the low-stress and repetitive nature of this matching and sorting game is beneficial for all students.

Introducing **Don't Take Me Literally**

Make sure students understand the difference between literal and nonliteral language. Often, nonliteral language creatively evokes a sensory experience. Idioms are one type of nonliteral language, the most common type encountered at this reading level. Idiomatic expressions have meanings that do not rely on the literal meanings of their individual words.

Idiomatic expressions are frequently encountered in both spoken and written discourse. Some are used so often (for example, "Catch you later") that it's easy to forget they are nonliteral language. Because idioms often compare unlikely things and are not intended to be interpreted literally, they challenge students to use their imagination and expand their way of thinking.

The **Don't Take Me Literally Cards** feature 22 common idiomatic expressions. For each idiomatic expression, there are three cards: the idiom and definition, the pictorial representation of its literal meaning along with a sample sentence, and the pictorial representation of its nonliteral meaning.

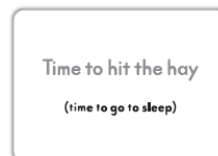
By using these cards in a matching and sorting game, students become familiar with the idiomatic expressions and begin to recognize and use them independently.



Literal meaning



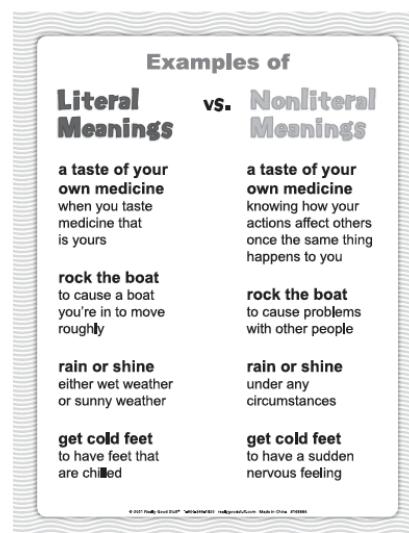
Nonliteral meaning



Idiom with definition

Model the Activity

Before having students play the game, look at examples of nonliteral language with them, and make sure they understand the difference. Refer students to the *Examples of Literal vs. Nonliteral Meanings Card*.



Sample discussion questions and responses for the idiom "rock the boat":

- What is the nonliteral meaning of this phrase? (To cause problems)
- What is the literal meaning of this phrase? (To cause a boat you're in to move roughly)
- What sense or senses would you use to experience a rocking boat? (Feeling, sight)
- Why compare these two things? (They are both examples of something that can turn out badly for a group of people.)
- Let's talk about the literal meaning of this phrase. What happens when you rock a boat in which you're riding? (It moves side to side, and water can get in it.)
- What happens if water gets in the boat? (The people in

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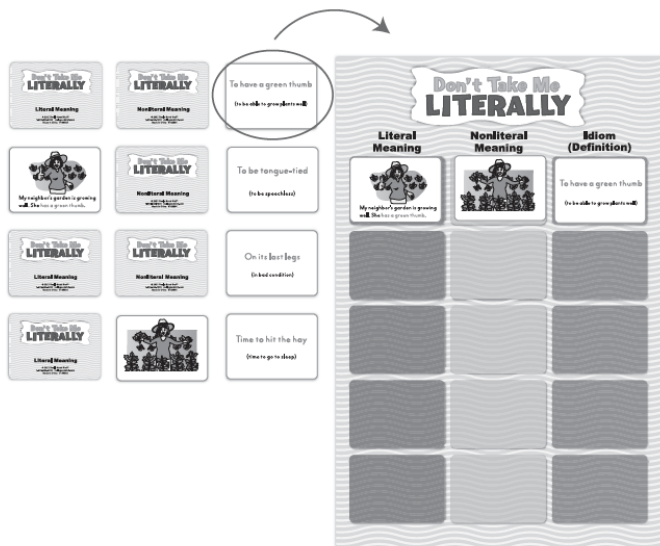
the boat might get wet. The boat might even tip over.)

- Let's talk about the nonliteral meaning, the idiom, now. Can you think of an example in which someone is "rocking the boat"? (A person breaks a rule in a game.)

Introduce the parts of the game. Model the game using the instructions to the right until students are familiar with it. Students may need help finding the first match and filling the first row of the sorting mat. This serves as a guide as they make subsequent matches. For additional practice and fun, students can select an idiom and complete the *Illustrate an Idiom Reproducible*.

Task Card

Post this at the literacy center in a visible position. A student or a helper can refer to the Task Card for instructions. Refer to the shaded section at the top of the card for center preparation, including needed materials.



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1 or 2 students

Object: Distinguish literal from nonliteral language

Materials: Cards, Sorting Mat Folder, Examples of Literal vs. Nonliteral Meanings Reference Card, Answer Key Reproducible

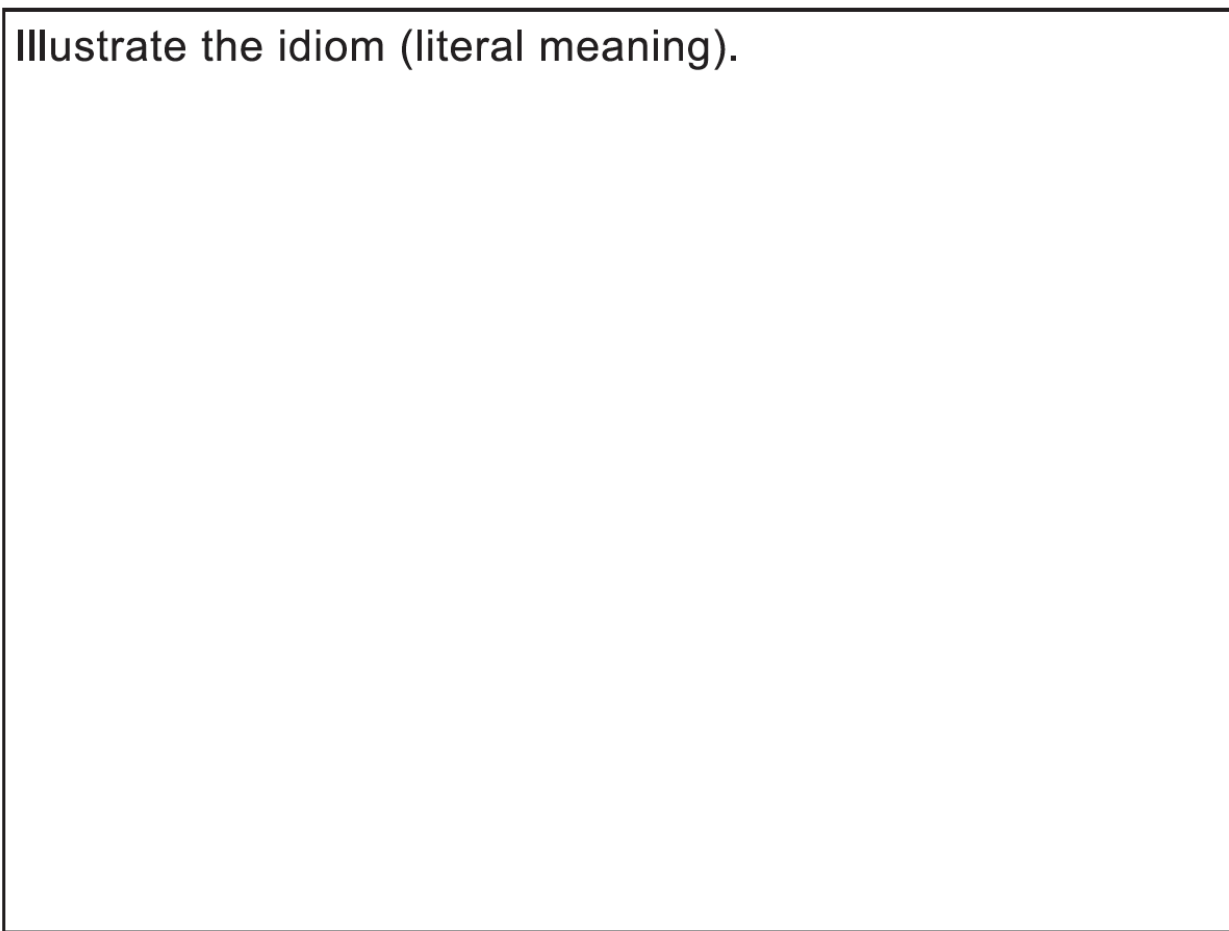
Directions:

- Place the *Idiom Cards* face up in a column.
- Shuffle the rest of the cards.
- Separate the *Literal Meaning Cards* from the *Nonliteral Meaning Cards*. Lay them face down in two columns.
- Play Concentration: Turn over a card in column 1 and a card in column 2. If the cards go together, move them to the first row of the sorting mat. (The cards go together if they show the literal and nonliteral meanings of the same phrase.) Use the *Reference Card* if you need help.
- Find the corresponding *Idiom Card* and move it to the last column of the sorting mat.
- Continue matching and sorting the cards.
- When all the cards are sorted, check your sort using the *Answer Key Reproducible*. Move around any cards that were not matched correctly.

Illustrate an Idiom

















Write the idiom. _____

Illustrate the idiom (literal meaning).



Explain the idiom (nonliteral meaning).

Literal Meaning	Nonliteral Meaning	Idiom
 My neighbor's garden is growing well. She has a green thumb.		To have a green thumb (to be able to grow plants well)
 My friend always gets tongue-tied when he has to speak in front of the class.		To be tongue-tied (to be speechless)
 Our 20-year-old car is finally on its last legs.		On its last legs (in bad condition)
 After the late night movie, it was time to hit the hay.		Time to hit the hay (time to go to sleep)
 Mr. Mills truly appreciates his students. He has a heart of gold.		To have a heart of gold (to be generous/sincere/friendly)
 We had to stay inside because it was raining cats and dogs.		Raining cats and dogs (to rain very hard)
 My new computer was a lemon, so I returned it.		A lemon (defective)
 My brother eats like a horse.		To eat like a horse (to eat a lot)
 My friend came over to chill out with me.		To chill out (to relax)
 The figure skater was as graceful as a swan.		To be as graceful as a swan (to be very graceful)
 You're going to have to shake a leg if we want to arrive on time.		Shake a leg (to go fast)

Literal Meaning	Nonliteral Meaning	Idiom
 Jumping over that puddle will be a piece of cake.		A piece of cake (easy)
 Are you really going to try the high dive or are you pulling my leg?		To pull someone's leg (to trick or fool someone in a playful way)
 They were in the doghouse for breaking that window.		To be in the doghouse (to be in trouble)
 Before getting on an airplane, my mom always gets butterflies in her stomach.		Butterflies in the stomach (to feel nervous)
 Jose had the flu and was as sick as a dog.		To be as sick as a dog (to be very sick)
 My sister's eyes were bigger than her stomach.		Eyes are bigger than one's stomach (to take or want more food than you can eat)
 The boy loves to read and always has his nose in a book.		To have one's nose in a book (be reading a book)
 Those raffle tickets are going to sell like hotcakes.		Sell like hotcakes (to sell quickly)
 Mrs. Rose would bend over backwards for her grandchildren.		To bend over backwards (to try very hard to do something)
 Right before Michelle walked on stage, her best friend told her to break a leg.		Break a leg (good luck)
 To prepare for the test tomorrow, she is going to hit the books tonight.		To hit the books (to study or prepare for class)