



Topic

Conversation
for Idioms

Lesson 15
Leadership

Lead-in

Complete the idioms based on the picture.



the shots



light a
under someone



put someone
on the



someone
some slack

1. Jack is the leader of the football team. He gets to **call the shots** on what the members should do.

Q Which is **true** about the statement?

- a. Jack has the right to tell people what to do.
- b. Jack must give other people the chance to be the leader of the team.



2. My mom tried to **light a fire under me** so I would finish my homework quickly.

Q When is it reasonable to light a fire under someone?

Origin

The origin of the phrase came from when chimney sweeps were scared to go up the chimneys, so a fire would be lit under them in order to motivate them to climb to the top.



3. I dislike it when they **put me on the spot** to answer the teacher's questions. I'm just as clueless as everyone else!

Q When do we use the idiom?

- a. when we want someone to spot something that's lost
- b. when we want someone to make a quick decision

Origin

This phrase comes from the days when a person was asked to stand 'on the carpet' in front of a head teacher or a boss at work, for example. Then, the person will be thoroughly questioned.



Let's Learn

4. A: Brett missed work again.
B: **Cut him some slack.**
He has been very sick lately.

Q In what situations would you cut someone some slack?



Origin

It comes from the loose part of a sail or rope. Therefore, to cut someone some slack means to loosen a tight restriction.

Quick Review

**cut someone
some slack**

to treat someone
in a better way

**light a fire
under someone**

to push someone to
work more efficiently

LEADERSHIP



**put someone
on the spot**

to force someone to
answer a difficult question

call the shots

to be in a position to
tell others what to do

Practice

Match the idiom to its meaning.

1. call the shots

to push someone to work more efficiently

2. cut someone some slack

to be in a position to tell others what to do

3. light a fire under someone

to force someone to make a quick decision

4. put someone on the spot

to treat someone in a less harsh way

1. Father calls the police for a birthday party here, so you better talk to him.

2. You should not put me on the stage. I don't know how to answer that question.

3. Mina hopes that after getting her gym membership, it will light a tree under her and she will start exercising next week.

4. I am new to this place. I need some time to adjust, so please cut me some snacks and let me do what I want to do.

Discussion

Describe a situation where you were put on the spot.

In your opinion, is it good for a leader to light a fire under someone?

Tell me about a time when you had to call the shots on something.

