



Topic

Conversation
for Idioms

Lesson 21
Knowledge

Lead-in

Complete the idioms based on the picture.



learn the



up on



can't make

or



put on one's thinking

1. You have two months left to **learn the ropes** of your new job so that you won't feel nervous.

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

- a. You are new to the job, so you have to attend an orientation to learn the necessary skills.
- b. You are to attend an orientation on how ropes are tied.



2. I **couldn't make heads or tails of** his handwriting because it was so bad.

Q Was it easy for you to make heads or tails of English grammar when you first started learning the language? Why or why not?

Did you know?

In the Middle Ages, children played a version of the coin toss known as “cross and pile.” What we now know as “heads” was the cross, and what we now refer to as “tails” was the pile.



3. I need to **brush up on** my French before I go to Paris.

- Q** When is the idiom used?
- when one reviews his/her past lessons
 - when one wants to clean up his/her luggage before going to Paris

Did you know?

To brush up simply means to clean up. Imagine that your brain is a storeroom and the information you have learned is all dusty and packed away in there.



4. You might want to **put on your thinking cap** for this exam. Most students failed it last year.



Tick the situations where you would need to put on your thinking cap.

- an important job interview
- doing the laundry
- learning a new language
- answering a math problem



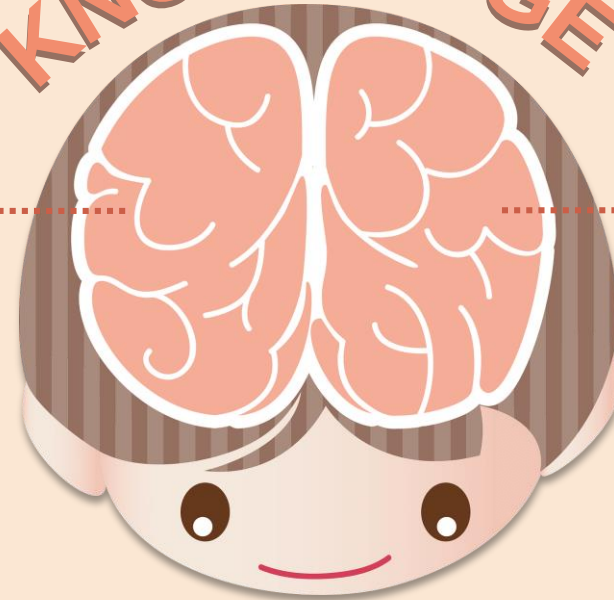
Quick Review

learn the ropes

to learn the basic skills for a job

can't make heads or tails of
can't understand at all

KNOWLEDGE



brush up on

revising or improving knowledge on something

put on one's thinking cap
to think seriously about a problem

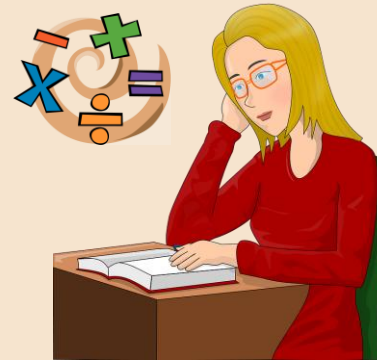
1. It didn't take long for Anna to learn the **(ropes, ladder)** of designing.
2. She needs to **(wash, brush)** up on playing badminton before the competition.
3. James can't make **(heads, tails)** or **(tails, heads)** of the instructions on the test paper.
4. He told her to start putting on her thinking **(cap, hat)** to find solutions immediately.

Practice

Make a sentence using each idiom.



learn the ropes



brush up on



**can't make heads
or tails of**



**put on one's
thinking cap**

- 1. Do you agree that every person must learn the ropes before they get into a job? Why or why not?**
- 2. If you were to brush up on any skill, what would it be and why?**

