

## Idiom Web Trek Answer Key

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### ETYMOLOGY:

[http://www.fun-with-words.com/etym\\_phrases.html](http://www.fun-with-words.com/etym_phrases.html)

1. From Lord Byron's "Don Juan":  
*"And your cold people [the British] are beyond all price,  
When once you've broken their confounded ice."*
2. To be without any apparent reason. It dates back in England to the 16th century.
3. When making soup, it was better not to include bones so that people would not have any difficulty swallowing the soup. It means "to have no difficulty" and dates to 1459.
4. No. They refer to deceit.
5. The legend is that crocodiles would lure victims by crying like humans, then shed tears once they had devoured them.
6. The first known written record is by Johnathan Swift in his 1873 work, "Polite Conversation".
7. To give someone the maximum punishment.
8. It means to take advantage of advantageous situations while one can.
9. It originates in haying terms, where the sun needs to dry the grass in order to turn it into hay. Thus one had to make haste and take advantage of time.
10. It's thought that the mercury involved in felt hat production would poison hatters. One of the symptoms of mercury poisoning is insanity.

### EXTENSIONS:

- Ask students what their favorite sayings are, then ask them to write their own theories on the origins of those sayings. When finished, ask them to research the actual etymologies and present them to the class; can be used as a homework assignment.
- Ask students to share family sayings and proverbs, and discuss their meanings.
- Consider proverbs and idioms from around the world, and discuss their meanings and origins.
- Ask students to create their own sayings and share them with the class.