

to cut a long story short: a phrase used when you want to quickly finish a story

... so, *to cut a long story short*, they fell in love and got married.

to cut corners: to do sth (especially sth connected with building) in the easiest, quickest, cheapest way you can - (often ignoring rules and regulations and often with the result that what is produced is badly made)

I want this to be the best and most impressive building in the city, so do not cut corners.

to cut short: to stop sth (e.g. a holiday) earlier than planned

On hearing that war had broken out, the Prime Minister cut short his holiday and returned home.

to draw sb's attention to sth: (formal) to make sb notice sth

I'd like to draw your attention to clause 34 in the contract.

to draw a crowd: to attract a crowd

The street performers drew a large crowd.

to draw the curtains: to close the curtains

It was dark. She got up and drew the curtains.

to hold a meeting: to have a meeting

Our last staff meeting of the year will be held on December 18.

to hold a number of: (for place/ thing) to have enough space for a number of people

The new Mega cinema can hold up to 700 people.

to hold sb responsible (for) sth: to consider sb responsible for sth

If we don't get this contract, I'll hold you personally responsible.

to jump on the bandwagon: to do what other people are doing because it is fashionable/likely to be successful

Why jump on the bandwagon just because other people dye their hair pink?

to jump the queue: to go to the front of a queue without waiting your turn

He was surprised that no one said anything about the man who had just jumped the queue.

to jump to the conclusion that: to decide that sth is true before you are in possession of all the facts

Don't jump to the conclusion that he is unfriendly, just because he is on the quiet side.

to keep abreast of: to keep informed about the latest ideas/news/developments

I buy the Daily Trader magazine to keep abreast of the latest developments in the stock market.

to keep sth at bay: to keep sth away to stop it from bothering you

Keeping yourself occupied will keep boredom at bay.

to keep sb in the dark: to deliberately not tell sb about sth

I would rather know than be kept in the dark.

to lose touch: to stop visiting/writing/ speaking to sb

We used to see each other fairly regularly, but after he moved we lost touch.

to lose track of time: to forget what time it is

He couldn't believe it was 10 o'clock; he had been so engrossed in the film that he had totally lost track of time.

to lose your way: to get lost

He would never get there on time. He was late when he left home and now he had lost his way.

to meet one's death: to die

He met his death in a duel.

to meet sb's demands: to do what sb wants

I have no intention of meeting such unreasonable demands.

to meet with sb's approval/ disapproval: (formal) to be approved of/disapproved of

[Note: **to meet with little/no success:** to be unsuccessful]

The Minister's plan to abolish the tax met with widespread approval.

to raise the alarm: to warn people about danger/to contact the fire services/the police

An old lady saw the bag, thought it looked suspicious and raised the alarm.

to raise one's voice to sb: to shout at sb because one is angry

Don't raise your voice to me.

to raise public awareness of sth: to improve people's knowledge about/of sth

We must raise public awareness of the problems facing refugees.

to run a temperature: to have a high temperature

You don't look very well. Are you running a temperature?

sth runs in the family: if a particular characteristic, skill, disease, etc runs in a family, many members of that family have it

Asthma runs in our family. My grandfather, my father and both my brothers suffer from it.

to run rings (a)round sb: to beat an opponent very easily

They'll run rings round such a poor team.

to stand empty: to be vacant (for buildings)

The castle stood empty for centuries.

to stand to do sth: to be in a position where you are likely to do sth, (e.g. to win, earn or lose money)

If this deal comes off, we stand to make a lot of money.

to throw a party: to have a party

The college is throwing a party next Friday to mark the end of term.

to throw a punch: to punch (hit) sb

So who threw the first punch, then?

Practice

1. Complete the sentences using the verbs in the list in the appropriate form.

*stand – draw – hold – jump – lose – keep –
meet – cut – run – raise – throw*

- 1 It is important to abreast of the latest developments in teaching methodology.
- 2 the curtains, will you? It's too bright in here.
- 3 Julius Caesar a violent death at the hands of some of his most trusted friends.
- 4 We're a party next Saturday. Why don't you come?
- 5 He's just as awkward as his father. Being stubborn in the family.
- 6 Anyway, to a long story short, he ended up in Hawaii.
- 7 He lost his temper and started to shout at her. "Don't your voice to me," she said.
- 8 Tomorrow's meeting has been postponed and will now be at ten o'clock on Thursday morning.
- 9 The old lady walked to the front of the line and struck up a conversation with the man nearest the counter. I bet she was trying to the queue!
- 10 She blushed when she said it, so he immediately to the conclusion that she was lying.
- 11 Clearly the company had not wanted us to know about the merger, so we were in the dark until the very last moment.
- 12 We invested heavily in that company, and if it goes bankrupt we to lose a lot of money.
- 13 Glastonbury is Britain's biggest music festival. Every year it crowds well in excess of 100,000.
- 14 When the management said that it had no intention of the union's demands, the union leader called for immediate strike action.
- 15 I used to see Derek fairly regularly, but when he joined the army we touch.
- 16 I didn't start it. He did. He the first punch!

2. Circle the correct item.

- 1 I don't feel at all well. I must be **keeping** / **running** a temperature.
- 2 "I'd like to **draw** / **throw** your attention to rule number 24a, on page six of your booklet," he said.
- 3 I'm sorry I'm late. I was reading this amazing book and I completely **kept** / **lost** track of time.
- 4 The Minister's plan to abolish compulsory military service **met** / **ran** with widespread approval.
- 5 Use this liquid repellent. It will help **stand** / **keep** the mosquitoes at bay.
- 6 Domestic problems forced the President to **keep** / **cut** short his holiday and return home early.
- 7 Why did you say that you would ensure that everything ran smoothly? Now they will **hold** / **keep** you responsible if anything goes wrong.
- 8 They are not interested in the environment. They've just **run** / **jumped** on the environmental bandwagon. They know green issues are popular and they think these policies will win them votes.
- 9 In an attempt to **draw** / **raise** public awareness of the problems facing blind people, the Blind Association launched a massive public information campaign.
- 10 She's a much better player than he is. Of course she'll win, she'll **throw** / **run** rings round him.
- 11 They are the kind of company that don't believe in **jumping** / **cutting** corners. They take their time, they use the best materials available and they make sure that their work is properly done.
- 12 It's a big room. It can **keep** / **hold** up to 3,000 people.
- 13 If his next door neighbours hadn't **raised** / **jumped** the alarm when they did, his house would have burnt to the ground.
- 14 If you had remembered to bring a map, we wouldn't have **lost** / **met** our way.
- 15 If he wins this round, he **keeps** / **stands** to win the competition.
- 16 I don't care who **threw** / **raised** the first punch. I just want you to stop fighting.
- 17 The mansion had **stood** / **kept** empty for many years and was said to be haunted.



to arouse suspicion: to make sb suspicious

What first aroused my suspicion was that every time he came into the shop he was too friendly.

to beat about the bush: to avoid or delay talking about sth embarrassing or unpleasant

Oh, come on, stop beating about the bush and tell me what you think.

to broach the subject: to start talking about sth which the person you are talking to might find embarrassing, offensive or annoying

He decided to broach the subject of promotion.

to damage sb's reputation: to have a bad effect on sb's (good) reputation

A scandal like this is bound to damage his reputation.

to dash sb's hopes: to do or say sth that makes sb feel that they cannot achieve what they were hoping to

Their rejection of his manuscript dashed his hopes of becoming a best-selling novelist.

to declare war on: to officially announce that a war will begin

Negotiations having failed, they declared war on the neighbouring country.

to derive pleasure from/out of sth: to get pleasure from sth

[Note: **to derive (some/any kind of) benefit from sth:** (formal) to get some kind of benefit from sth]

Martin derives a lot of pleasure out of his stamp collection.

The only people who will derive any benefit from this new law are the rich.

to devote one's time/life to sth: to spend most of one's time/life doing sth

She devoted her life to looking after the sick and needy.

to dissolve into tears: to start crying

She looked into his expressionless eyes and dissolved into tears.

to draw the line at sth: to refuse to do sth or to disapprove of sth because it crosses a limit that one thinks should not be crossed

Most people would draw the line at such unethical behaviour.

to draw up a chair: to bring a chair to a table so as to join people already sitting at the table

"Draw up a chair," he said. "We were talking about tomorrow's game."

to drop a hint: to say sth indirectly

I was too embarrassed to say I liked her. Anyway, I've dropped enough hints.

to earn a living: to work and make money in order to live

Before becoming famous, Granger earned a living as a waiter in a burger bar.

to express an interest in sth: to say or show that you are interested in sth

[Note: **to express your concern/your doubts about sth:** (formal) to say that you are concerned/have doubts about]

He suddenly expressed an interest in going on the trip with us.

They expressed their concern about whether planning permission would be granted.

to fight back the tears: to try and stop yourself from crying

Determined to be strong, she fought back the tears.

to find fault with sb/sth: to criticise sb/sth

What is it with you, Sarah? Why is it that you have to find fault with everything I say and do?

to follow in sb's footsteps: to do the same job as sb (e.g. a parent/grandparent, an elder brother or sister)

My father was a doctor, as was my grandfather before him. Both my brother and I were expected to follow in their footsteps.

Practice

1. Complete the gaps in the text with a verb from the box in the appropriate form. There are some extra verbs that you do not need to use.

fight - damage - draw - express - declare - devote -
draw - beat - earn - dissolve - follow - drop -
dash - derive - arouse - broach - find

The parlour door creaked as I pushed it open and walked into the uncomfortable silence. Mother sat, stony-faced, at a large, bulky desk and peered disapprovingly over her glasses as I 1) up a chair to face her. She said

nothing. I smiled and searched for a few empty words that might bring some warmth to the proceedings. Warmth, however, was never my mother's strong suit so I stopped after 'hello'.

"I'm sure you 2) some kind of bizarre pleasure out of this," she said. She knew. How did she know? "There are rules, Giles", she continued. "Strict rules. Our rules." She paused. She shook her head and fumbled for a handkerchief. She was struggling to 3) back the tears. "You will 4) this family's reputation beyond repair." She allowed the words to hang in the air. An inner voice told me to deny everything.

"What are you talking about, mother?" I asked.

"You know full well."

I'd **been** keeping odd hours, because of rehearsals. I knew it would 5) suspicion. I'd obviously been seen. I'd probably been followed.

"Your father, poor man, is devastated. Shocked. Thirteen generations, Giles. Thirteen! Each Babbington son 6) in his father's footsteps ... until now. All of them accountants. Then you become ... you become" - she could hardly find the words to say it - "an actor!"

She 7) into tears. I had never seen my mother cry before but I knew that these were not tears of sadness, grief or disappointment. They were tears of indignation. Something stirred in me. Not pity, not contrition. It was resolve. My silence spoke volumes. "You don't deny it then?" she asked.

The blood drained from my mother's face. The one hope that she had been clinging to - that her informant had somehow misheard or misunderstood - had been 8) It was as if I had 9) war on thirteen generations of Babbingtons.

"This shouldn't come as a surprise," I said. "I may not have said it in as many words, but goodness knows I've 10) enough hints." I was lying. I hadn't said anything, directly or indirectly. The truth was that I had been far too frightened to 11) the subject. The consequences didn't bear thinking about. My mother stood up and, brushing past me, left without saying a word.



2. The words in bold have been used incorrectly. Replace each word with a correct one to make reasonable combinations.

- 1 The man in the mac and dark glasses immediately **expressed** my suspicion.
- 2 True or not, these accusations are bound to **beat** about his reputation.
- 3 I had hurt her feelings and I could see that she was trying to **express** the tears.
- 4 All hopes of finding survivors were **earned** by the news.
- 5 It's cold outside, so **drop** a chair and come and sit by the fire.
- 6 Our boss **declares war on** everything we do.

3. Complete the sentences using the verbs from the box in exercise 1. You may have to change the form of some of the verbs.

- 1 The sports injury all Keith's hopes of a career in the armed forces.
- 2 An overcritical individual fault with whatever other people do.
- 3 In the novel, Scotland war on Wales.
- 4 Is sitting there with your coat on your way of a hint that it's cold?
- 5 Clara all her spare time to helping charitable organisations.
- 6 Clive tried to the subject of a pay rise but was unable to.
- 7 He his concern about the proposed bypass.
- 8 In times of recession, it is difficult to a decent living.
- 9 I don't mind high spirits, but I the line at this kind of behaviour.
- 10 I won't about the bush. I'll come straight to the point.



4. Make up appropriate questions for these responses.

- 1 A: ?
B: He didn't want to arouse suspicion.
- 2 A: ?
B: No, I think he would draw the line at fraud.
- 3 A: ?
B: Well, she dropped a hint.
- 4 A: ?
B: You don't like beating about the bush, eh?
- 5 A: ?
B: She simply dissolved into tears.