

**Part One:**

**Teachers:** Turn this part of the lesson over to the students. Let them do the reading and lead the discussion. You should be an observer unless asked for your input.

**Students:** Here are some sentences from the news. Read the statement and explain to your group what is happening in these news items. After you have explained it, read the paragraph below and lead the group in a discussion.

**1. That stock is 28% off its peak.**

A peak is the point at which something is at its strongest. You can have a peak level or a peak value. It can be used as a verb: He peaked soon. A peak is also a mountain top. After an arduous climb, we stood on the peak and surveyed the scene. Ideally, you sell stock at its peak. Do you invest in the stock market in this country or your own?

**2. The armed standoff dragged on for days.**

A standoff is a situation in which neither of two opposing forces will make a move. A stand-in is someone who takes another's place. In a play, if the star gets sick, the stand-in takes over their part so that the show can go on. If you standby, you wait. You can fly standby. You wait until everyone else is on the plane, then if there are seats empty, you can fly. Have you ever flown standby? Have you and your spouse ever been involved in a standoff?

**3. A man barricaded himself and his five year old hostage into a bunker.**

A bunker is an underground shelter that is very strong and designed to survive strong winds or gunfire. A barricade is a barrier that prevents someone from getting in or getting by. Used as a verb it means to set up a barrier that prevents someone from getting in. Sometimes police set up barricades to prevent protestors from getting out of a certain area. Have you ever been involved in a protest? Have you ever been inside a bunker? A bunk is a bed fixed to the wall or a bed that stacks one on top of the other. My children had bunk beds when they were small. Do you have bunk beds in your house? Are they common in your country?

**4. Police have been tight-lipped about his possible motive.**

If your lips are tightly closed, you can't talk. A motive is your reason for doing something. What motivates you? money, fame, success... Another expression is closemouthed. It means virtually the same thing. Are you a closed mouth individual or do you usually "spill the beans" (tell secrets)?

**Part Two: HEALTH**

**The intermediate classes are studying health. Discuss these questions in your group.**

- a. Do you diet to lose weight? What kinds of things do you eat when you are dieting?
- b. Are you afraid of injections? Did you have to get more immunizations when you came to the U.S.?
- c. Do you bruise easily?
- d. Do you suffer from really bad headaches? Do you take special medicine for that?
- e. Do you go to the doctor for a checkup every year? When was the last time you visited a doctor? Do you think annual checkups should be free? Are they free in your country?
- f. What are you allergic to?
- g. Do you usually get 8 hours of sleep? Why or why not?
- h. What is one thing that could be done in your country to improve people's health?
- i. Do you suffer from stress? How do you deal with stress?
- j. Are you depressed? Do you have a good support group?
- k. Were you sick a lot as a child? Are your children sick a lot?
- l. Have you ever been hospitalized?
- m. Have you ever broken a bone? Tell about it.

- n. Do you see more than one doctor?
- o. When was the last time you had stitches?
- p. Do you suffer from dizziness frequently?

**Explain the difference between the words on the same line.**

1. symptom      illness              side effect
2. exam          checkup              medical history
3. doctor        nurse                  patient              technician
4. prescription              over the counter              injection              remedy
5. temperature              fever                  aspirin
6. hiccups        depression              stress
7. eye drops     nasal spray     inhaler              cough syrup     cast
8. throat lozenges              ointment              capsule
9. bump          bruise              itch              blister              splinter
10. surgery      exam                  office visit

**Part Three: Using “off” in idioms**

off the record: If something is off the record it is not official or public. Sometimes policeman answer journalists questions, but tell them that is off the record. In other words, the journalist shouldn't print that.

off the charts: too high to measure EX: Oprah's ratings are off the chart.

off the wall: weird and kind of crazy EX: Jim's ideas are off the wall, but you have to admit he is very creative.

off-hand: very casually EX: Lynn made an off-hand comment about her boyfriend that made me think she was not happy with him.

off-chance-unlikely possibility EX: I stopped by her house on the off-chance that she would be home.

off-limits: forbidden territory EX: Bars are off-limits for anyone under the age of 21.

off-color: in very bad taste, frequently applied to comments with a sexual reference. EX: I was embarrassed about Jed's off-color remarks.