

FUMC ESL 4-2-2015 Advanced Lesson

FIGURE

Figure can mean an amount expressed as a number. For example: Figures show that one in every two marriages will end in divorce. Write the figure 3 on your paper. The skater made a figure 8 on the ice. I'd like to pay for the damage I caused to your car. Name a figure and I'll gladly pay it.

Figure can refer to the shape of your body. EX: That woman has a nice figure.

Figure can also mean someone well known. EX: Obama was a key figure in the Democratic party.

Figure can also be used as a verb to mean guess. EX: I figured my wife would like to receive roses for her birthday, and I was right.

A **figurehead** is someone who is a recognized leader without any real power. The Queen of England is a figurehead. Parliament controls the laws of England, but the Queen serves as it's official head.

Now, let's look at the phrasal verb, **FIGURE OUT**. To figure out something is to find a solution to a problem.

EX: Tom figured out all the answers on the math exam except for the last one.

It took us all day to figure out how to put the storage unit together.

Sometimes you may put a noun or pronoun in the middle of the phrasal verb. EX: I tried very hard, but I couldn't figure it out. Paul never really understood Carol. Though they dated for 2 years, Paul could never figure her out. I can't figure my boss out.

FIGURE IN: to include something: EX: I'll paint your door for one hundred dollars, but that doesn't include the cost of the paint. Oh, well that doesn't really help me. I don't know how much the paint will cost. . Please figure it in to the estimate. I see. You want me to figure in all my costs. Is the tax figured in to this bill?

GO FIGURE: means I can't understand it. EX: Beth said she wanted to go on a date, but when I asked her out, she said she didn't have any time for dating right now. Go figure!

A **FIGURE OF SPEECH** is like an idiom. It's a short saying people often that is not meant to be taken literally. EX: Cody will pay for my dinner when pigs fly.

In this sentence, "when pigs fly" is a figure of speech. It is not meant literally. Pigs don't have wings and will never fly, so Cody will never pay for my dinner.

Other figures of speech: Talk about their meaning.

1. I'll just die if I don't get that dress!

2. I'm on the fence about giving her an allowance.

3. She lied to me again. That is the last straw. I'm through with her.

4. He is such a night owl. He stays out til the wee hours of the morning every Friday and Saturday.

5. I'm as blind as a bat without my glasses.

6. I didn't bring any cash, will you take plastic?

7. I get butterflies in my stomach every time I have to speak in front of crowds.

8. That guy smokes like a chimney. I can't imagine that his lungs are in very good shape.

A **BALLPARK FIGURE** is a rough estimate. EX: I don't know exactly what it will cost. Can you just give me a ballpark figure?

FIGURE UP: to add up

EX: How much did you spend? I'm not sure. Let me figure it up.

After I figured up all the money I spent on materials, doing the project myself wasn't that economical.

READ AND DISCUSS:

Sometimes I have a hard time figuring out what to wear. I stand in my closet, which is full of clothes, and can't seem to find the one thing that would be best to wear. Sometimes I try on several choices before selecting one to wear. In a foreign country, it is especially hard to figure out what to wear, because you don't know what the cultural traditions are. For example, one of my students asked me what to wear to an American wedding. She had never been to one and didn't know what people wore. Do you ever have a hard time figuring out what to wear? List some things that are hard for you to figure out?