

Welcome to Porky Pies !!!

Important: This page explains how the game works. All the other pages are part of the game, so no peeking! (You may need to look at one other page to help you understand the rules).

What to do now:

Take a moment to read this page, print off a few pages and that's it! You're all set to enjoy this great new trivia bluffing game!

Getting Ready:

Each player will need a pen to write with.

Page 2 of this file contains the player scoring pads – you'll need to print one copy of this page for each person playing. After page 2 there are about 90 more pages full of questions – there's no need to print the whole file, you will only need one page of questions per player.

So for example, if you have four people playing you need to print of four copies of page 2 (the player scoring pads) and then the following four pages. This is enough to play the game once. When you want to play again, print another four copies of page 2 and four new pages of questions. A game usually lasts somewhere around 10 –15 minutes so if you want to play for longer, print off enough for more games straight away.

How to play:

Give each player their pen, scoring pad and questions (people must not see each other's questions).

One player chooses a phrase from their question sheet and reads it aloud twice, together with the three possible explanations of the phrase. There are all kinds of phrases but most stem from the UK in the 16th to 18th century. The other players decide whether they think the correct answer is A, B or C and write down the answer on their score pads. When they have all done that, the correct answer is revealed (it's the one written in italics) and everyone who guessed correctly scores a point. Then the next player asks a question and so the game continues. Be sure that each individual reads out an equal number of questions during the game – otherwise the scoring doesn't work! The number of questions depends on how many people you have playing:

If you have 2 people playing, each person reads out 6 questions each.

If you have 3 people playing, each person reads out 4 questions each.

If you have 4 people playing, each person reads out 3 questions each.

If you have 5 people playing, each person reads out 2 questions each (and you disregard rows 11 and 12 on the scoring pads).

If you have 6 people playing, each person reads out 2 questions each.

Some of the questions are very UK oriented (this game was devised in Britain) and if that does not suit you, we suggest that you simply skip over the offending questions!

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Player Scoring Pad

	A	B	C	<i>Score</i>
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
			<i>Total:</i>	

Use row 1 for the first question, row 2 for the second and so on. For each question, decide whether you think answer A, B or C is correct and place an "x" in that box. If you answer correctly, put a "1" in the score column.

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"JACK STRAW"

This phrase was coined in the 16th century and has nothing whatsoever to do with the present day politician of the same name. The phrase would have been used to describe:

- (A) *Somebody who was widely considered to be good for nothing.*
 - (B) Somebody who was as thin as a rake.
 - (C) Somebody who arrogantly bragged about his or her achievements.
-

"BEAUTY SLEEP"

This term originates from:

- (A) The story of Sleeping Beauty where a beautiful Princess slept for many years under the spell of a sorcerer.
 - (B) *The belief that young people who stay up late into the night will not retain their looks as well as others.*
 - (C) The belief that by keeping your daughter at home in the evenings, she was more likely to meet a suitable husband than she would if she was allowed to go out with the local girls and boys.
-

"AESOP'S FABLES"

Aesop's Fables are a well known collection of stories but who was Aesop?

- (A) An eighth century Norwegian scholar and seal hunter.
 - (B) *A deformed slave who lived in the sixth century B.C.*
 - (C) An ancient Greek scholar.
-

"MAID OF HONOUR"

As well as it's usual meaning, this phrase also describes a type of:-

- (A) Beetle
- (B) *Cheesecake*
- (C) Train

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"LIKE A CAT ON HOT BRICKS"

This phrase would refer to somebody who:-

- (A) Was moving very fast indeed
 - (B) Was feeling uncomfortable in a certain situation*
 - (C) Was continually changing their mind about what to do next
-

"APPLE OF THE EYE"

This phrase meaning something or someone that is much loved or sought after, originally referred to:

- (A) The Serpent's apple in the Garden of Eden.
 - (B) A much prized golden apple that Greek gods raced to win.
 - (C) The pupil of the eye.*
-

"THE BACK END"

This is a phrase used in parts of Northern England to mean:

- (A) Scotland
 - (B) Autumn*
 - (C) The weekend
-

"A BOOBY PRIZE"

Is a gift for the loser of a game. It originates from:

- (A) The booby bird which was the victim of an early American army ritual. A booby was set loose in a garrison courtyard and the last five soldiers to pluck a feather from it would have to undertake the menial cleaning chores for the following month.
 - (B) The booby who was the pupil that came lowest in a school class or competition. They would be awarded a prize to make them feel better which was called the booby prize.*
 - (C) The term booby trap meaning an unexpected event. As there was no reason to expect a prize for losing, any such prize became known as a booby.
-

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"THAT RINGS A BELL "

This phrase is thought to originate from:

(A) *A fairground attraction where by thumping a knob with a mallet, you could send a device up a column towards a bell.*

(B) The Houses of Parliament where the chimes of Big Ben dictated the daily routine of the members.

(C) Medieval sailors who struck the ship's bell three times upon returning to their home port.

"GET OUT OF BED ON THE WRONG SIDE"

This phrase, now meaning grumpy, originates from:

(A) *A Roman superstition that it was unlucky to put one's left foot on the ground first when getting out of bed.*

(B) A Victorian habit of storing the chamber pot within close proximity to the bed. Getting out on the wrong side had highly unpleasant connotations.

(C) The British trenches in the First World War. Soldiers on night watch duty were exhausted the next day but had to work on regardless. The fatigue was eventually recognised as leading to fatality rates that were much higher than usual.

"ASSASSINS"

This word meaning killers, stems from:

(A) *A group formed in the eleventh century, made up of Moslem extremists who were reputed to get high on drugs before their lethal attacks.*

(B) A medieval band of Celtic mercenaries, known for their vicious savagery and who were hired by the English in an attempt to quash Scottish uprisings.

(C) An elite squad of French soldiers who fled the country during the French revolution but subsequently returned to form the Foreign Legion.

"THE MAFIA"

This phrase has come to refer to a group of gangsters. Originally it was an Arabic phrase that meant:

(A) Freedom Fighters.

(B) Family Strength.

(C) *A Hiding Place.*

"COAT OF ARMS"

A coat of arms was originally:-

- (A) A symbolic coat presented to the British monarch after a major battle.
 - (B) *A coat made of thin material worn by a knight over his armour.*
 - (C) An embroidered evening jacket that displayed the quality of a nobleman's blood line.
-

"ABOVE BOARD"

This phrase meaning proper and correct is believed to come from:-

- (A) *Card players who may be suspected of cheating if they place their cards below the table and out of sight. Therefore playing with cards in full view above the table (or board) was generally thought to be proper.*
 - (B) Sailing crews who were allowed to be more relaxed when below decks but always had to behave well when on the main deck where they might be seen by senior officers.
 - (C) The Corporation of London whose administrative board were caught in a trading scandal in 1908. Eight gentlemen of integrity were selected by Parliament and given powers to act "above the board" to resolve the ensuing crisis.
-

"A BAKER'S DOZEN"

This means thirteen because in olden times:

- (A) *Bakers would throw in an extra loaf to ensure that they were not ripping off their clients. Heavy fines existed for bakers who failed to conform with the regulations.*
 - (B) Bakers would give their favoured clients an extra loaf of bread for free as an incentive for repeat business.
 - (C) Bakers were amongst the least well educated people and were the butt of many jokes. A baker's dozen was one of these jokes, implying that bakers could not count well enough to know the difference between twelve and thirteen.
-

"BACK TO SQUARE ONE"

- (A) The game of hopscotch where squares are marked on the ground and children must hop into them in order. If one is missed out, the child must start again at the first square.
 - (B) A puzzle set by the Italian mathematician Fibonacci. The object was to make a fiendishly complex series of logical deductions in order to arrive at the solution. These deductions were depicted graphically as squares. However if you made a false assumption at any point, you would be forced to go right back to the first square to work out what it was.
 - (C) *Early radio broadcasts where drawings of the pitch were used by listeners to help them to follow the progress of the game. The drawing was divided into squares and so 'going back to square one' came to mean going back to the beginning.*
-

"SPLICING THE MAINBRACE"

This is a nautical term that refers to:-

- (A) *Issuing an extra ration of rum to sailors*
 - (B) Being becalmed in the doldrums where the trade winds meet
 - (C) Suffering from sea sickness
-

"OLD BENDY"

This phrase is another name for:

- (A) Winston Churchill
 - (B) Scotch Whisky
 - (C) *The Devil.*
-

"HOKEY-POKEY PENNY A LUMP"

(A) This was a phrase used by gamblers to set the stakes in a game of cards. Early games used stones as gambling chips and each stone would worth one penny.

(B) Hokey-Pokey was an early type of ice cream which would be sold in lumps by street traders. Typically each lump cost a penny, hence the phrase which was used for selling purposes.

(C) Hokey-Pokey was a cheap form of highly sulphurous coal that was sold to paupers by the lump every week - the only way that they could afford to keep their homes warm in winter.

"TO DRIVE YOUR HOG TO MARKET"

The meaning of this phrase is:

- (A) *To snore in an unusually loud way.*
 - (B) To cash in on something that you have been working very hard to achieve.
 - (C) To eat a pork based meal such as loin, bacon or sausage.
-

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"A KIPPER"

This phrase would be used to describe:

(A) Somebody who is prone to taking short sleeps during the day to keep themselves refreshed and alert.

(B) Somebody who shovels coals into a fire to keep a process going (for example, to keep a steam train running).

(C) Somebody who wears a brightly coloured tie

"A JAPANESE KNIFE TRICK"

This phrase would be used to describe:

(A) Somebody who commits suicide using a knife.

(B) A street mugging where there is violence or the threat of violence.

(C) Somebody who eats their food from their knife rather than from their fork.

"KILLING THE CANARY"

This phrase would be used to describe:

(A) Being desperate for food, literally so hungry that you are thinking about killing the pet canary and eating what little meat it might offer.

(B) Taking extra long tea-breaks at work and generally indulging in other activities that mean you do less work.

(C) Having a personal hygiene problem.

"A CUFUFFLE"

This phrase would have been used in earlier times to describe:

(A) A commotion.

(B) A flowery cravat.

(C) A hug.

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"BLACK DOG"

This was an 18th century term that referred to:

- (A) A highwayman
 - (B) *A forged shilling*
 - (C) Frostbite
-

"AN ALLELUIA LASS"

This phrase refers to:

- (A) *A Salvation Army Girl.*
 - (B) A priggish young girl.
 - (C) A nun.
-

"BARBER"

As well as cutting people's hair, in centuries past barbers also used to:

- (A) Make and mend clothes.
 - (B) *Act as dentists and surgeons.*
 - (C) Cut horses manes and tails to ensure they looked smart when ridden by their owner.
-

"TAKING MEAT FROM THE GRAVES"

This phrase from bygone times means:-

- (A) *Being so poor that you need to stoop to stealing church offerings to feed yourself or your family.*
 - (B) Making a killing in a business venture, the implication being that you are doing so well that there won't be anything left for anybody else.
 - (C) Saying something about a deceased person which is controversial and which cannot be disputed because of the inability of the dead person to talk back.
-

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"ONE'S LONG HOME"

(A) *This phrase was used to refer to the grave, the place where everybody would be spending the longest amount of time.*

(B) This phrase was used by gentlefolk to describe a holiday retreat, deemed to be a long way from their usual residence although perhaps as little as five miles away.

(C) This phrase was used by early immigrants to describe their country of birth, as opposed to their country of residence.

"HIPPOCRAS"

Hippocras is or was:-

(A) An ancient Greek surgeon who is said to be the father of medicine and after whom the Hippocratic oath is named.

(B) A contest of strength between two or more male hippopotamus that results in the winner being able to mate with the female of his choice.

(C) *A squash like drink that was consumed in the Middle Ages and which was flavoured with wine, spice and sugar.*

"A GERMAN DUCK"

This phrase would be used to describe:

(A) A sausage.

(B) *A bed bug.*

(C) A low doorway.

"F SHARP"

This phrase would be used to mean:

(A) "Do it quickly"

(B) Something that grates with you or annoys you.

(C) *A flea.*

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"KITCHEN MIDDENS"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) An early type of oven glove.
 - (B) A disease that causes violent and involuntary muscular spasms.
 - (C) *Small hillocks that are believed to have been created by prehistoric man.*
-

"GET YOUR EYES CHALKED!"

This phrase would be used to mean:

- (A) Covering something up (i.e. to pretend that you have not done something). If for example, you wanted to pretend that you didn't have a black eyes, you might put chalk over the bruise to try to disguise it.
 - (B) "Get your eyes tested".
 - (C) *"Look where you're going".*
-

"BIILIES AND CHARLIES"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Types of goats.
 - (B) *Fake metal plaques that deceive people into thinking a place is of special interest.*
 - (C) First year undergraduate students at Harvard University.
-

"EEL SKINS"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *Trousers that are very tight fitting.*
- (B) Sheets of sandpaper.
- (C) The barrels of a shotgun.

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"ENGLISH PLUCK"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Somebody who is very brave.
 - (B) Rain.
 - (C) *Money.*
-

"DEVIL'S SMILES"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Lies that are told with a laugh and smile.
- (B) *Weather that changes between scattered showers and patches of sunshine.*
- (C) Diamonds.

"DEW DRINK"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *An early morning drink.*
 - (B) A glass of water.
 - (C) Tears.
-

"DOCTOR JERK"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A vet.
 - (B) An uneducated but highly opinionated person.
 - (C) *A headmaster who uses a cane to punish naughty pupils.*
-

"THE JUMPING CAT SCHOOL"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) People who are very fickle.
- (B) *People who take a long time to make up their minds.*
- (C) People who appear to lead very lucky lives.

"EGG SATURDAY"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *The last Saturday before Lent.*
 - (B) The first Saturday after Christmas.
 - (C) Any day or date that you confuse with another one.
-

"AN ELBOW SHAKER"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A pneumatic drill, so called because of the forceful vibrations emitted by the drill.
 - (B) *A gambler, so called because of the action of throwing dice.*
 - (C) A junior soldier, so called because he had to rise first in the mornings and go and wake up the officers.
-

"AN EGYPTIAN DAY"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A very hot day.
 - (B) *A day that your horoscope tells you will be an unlucky one.*
 - (C) An event which everybody is invited to attend in fancy dress.
-

"THE MOSAIC ECONOMY"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Capitalism. The implication is that the system thrives by countless individuals all endeavouring to do the best for themselves and thereby working together to form a mosaic pattern.
 - (B) *The Old Testament. The phrase refers to the instructions that were given by God to Moses which outlined how religion was to be treated.*
 - (C) The Internet. Mosaic is a name given to some of the software used to access the Internet and the phrase alludes to the future social revolution that will be caused by the Information Superhighway.
-

"TO JUMP ON THE BANDWAGON"

This phrase comes from:

(A) The Gold Rush era when some Americans were selling up everything they owned, buying a wagon and joining the frenzied rush to the west to seek their fortunes.

(B) American elections of yesteryear when candidates would ride the streets in wagons and local dignitaries would ride on the wagon of their favoured candidate to show support.

(C) The American army who, when ambushed by Red Indians, would head to the nearest wagon and use the ammunition it carried to form a defensive position.

"BITES AND BAMS"

This odd sounding phrase means:

(A) Cuts and bruises

(B) Fish and chips (especially cod)

(C) Nonsense and tomfoolery

"A BAPTISM OF FIRE"

This phrase was coined by Napoleon to mean:

(A) A man's initiation into battle

(B) Ambushing the enemy fleet by catapulting red hot coal onto their ships to burn and sink them.

(C) Making an example of cowards and deserters by burning them alive in front of their peers.

"A BAD HAT"

This is an American term that means:

(A) A corrupt policeman, especially one with Mafia links.

(B) An unhappy outcome to an event (i.e. that put a bad hat on it)

(C) A stage actor who is no good at performing

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"BIRD WALKING WEATHER"

This is a flying phrase that means:

- (A) The weather is so perfect that birds could walk down the wings of the aircraft.
 - (B) *There is so much wind that even the birds are not flying.*
 - (C) There is so little work that I am going to have to invent things to keep me busy.
-

"A BLACK DOG FOR A WHITE MONKEY"

This phrase means:

- (A) A trade or barter that seemed like a bargain at the time but which looks pretty foolish with the benefit of hindsight.
 - (B) *A good deal which both parties think is fairly balanced.*
 - (C) A trade where you exchange something mundane and ordinary in return for something new and exotic.
-

"ROARING MEG"

A Roaring Meg is an old fashioned term that refers to:-

- (A) A very hot summer
 - (B) A low flying aircraft that could not be heard until it was virtually overhead. It gained notoriety because people were continually jumping out of their skins when it suddenly appeared out of nowhere and roared overhead.
 - (C) *A big gun used to fire over long distances and which was very noisy when in action.*
-

"RED BIDDY"

This phrase refers to:

- (A) An Irish maid who decided to kill her cruel employer to gain her freedom. However she mistook her lover for her employer and killed him instead. She was so distraught that she then committed suicide. A 'red biddy' now refers to any case of mistaken identity.
 - (B) An old lady of Russian extraction.
 - (C) *A mixture of meths and red wine that is drunk by tramps.*
-

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"BILLY WILLIAMS'S CABBAGE PATCH"

This phrase refers to:

(A) *The England Rugby ground at Twickenham. Billy William's found the site which had formerly been used as a market for fruit and vegetables, hence the cabbage patch.*

(B) The England Football ground at Wembley. The site got it's nickname after its maiden international when Billy Williams, the England Captain, scored five goals against Scotland. Press reports mockingly described the Scottish defenders as being "as quick as growing cabbages."

(C) The England cricket ground at Lords. A groundsman called Billy Williams was fired by the MCC when it was discovered that he was using an area at the side of the pitch to grow winter vegetables.

"THE IDLE BIBLE"

This was:

(A) An Edwardian book detailing socially acceptable pastimes suitable for people who were wealthy enough that they did not need to work.

(B) *An edition of the bible containing an error that refers to the 'idle shepherd' instead of the 'idol shepherd'*

(C) A term given to pubs and the people who chose to frequent them rather than go to church on a Sunday.

"A BENDER"

This is another name for:

(A) An eel

(B) A cricket bat made for a left-handed person

(C) *An old sixpence*

"MAKING DEAD MEN CHEW"

This phrase means:-

(A) *False accounting by naval officers whereby money is drawn illegally to pay sailors that have died or jumped ship.*

(B) Putting prisoners to work, often in appalling conditions, constructing roads or railroads

(C) Obeying traditional superstition and laying a fourteenth place at the dinner table despite having only thirteen people expected at dinner. Thus one avoids setting 13 places which is considered unlucky.

"IF IT WAS A BEAR IT WOULD BITE YOU"

This phrase means:

- (A) *What you are looking for is bang in front of you.*
 - (B) You are using something that the rightful owner would not want you to use.
 - (C) You are using unnecessary force and straining an object or stressing a small animal.
-

"TO HOLD THE BELT"

This phrase means:

- (A) *To be the champion, like a boxer for example.*
 - (B) To keep somebody under control or restrain them.
 - (C) To be the person that holds a certain situation together.
-

"HOLY WATER SPRINKLER"

A holy water sprinkler was:

- (A) A largely ineffective hosepipe invented by Henry VIII's courtiers at Hampton Court to ensure even the furthest areas of garden did not become parched in summer. The inventor was beheaded when the plants wilted and withered away.
 - (B) *A spiked medieval club used in battle and which caused its victims to suffer profuse bleeding, like holy water spilling over the battlefield.*
 - (C) A technique used by NASA to ensure that fuel spilled from rockets during launch is harmlessly dispersed into the atmosphere.
-

"BARON OF BEEF"

This phrase means:

- (A) A prize bull
 - (B) *A large cut of beef*
 - (C) A dairy farmer with a substantial estate
-

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"TO NOT KNOW B FROM A BULL'S FOOT"

This phrase means:

- (A) To not know when somebody is telling you a lie.
 - (B) To be illiterate.*
 - (C) To be unfamiliar with the rural way of life.
-

"BALE FIRES"

These are:

- (A) Fires started deliberately by farmers to burn the stubble from the fields after harvest.
 - (B) Serious mechanical or electrical failures on aircraft that force the pilot has to abandon the plane and eject.
 - (C) Fires lit on the summits of Cornish hills to celebrate Midsummer's' Evening.*
-

"MARKED WITH B.C."

This phrase refers to:

- (A) An archaeological method of dating artefacts by use of Bio-Carbons.
 - (B) A soldier who has been caught breaking the rules. B.C. was an abbreviation of Bad Conduct and his record would be marked with those letters.*
 - (C) Bomb targets. A map would be marked with black crosses to help brief pilots and navigators before take off. 'Marked with BC' entered RAF parlance as a general term indicating trouble ahead.
-

"A FRENCH PIGEON"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A French person who lived in Paris. Parisians were supposed to be more flighty than the rest of their compatriots.
 - (B) A rocking chair.
 - (C) A pheasant that has been shot out of season. The nickname is an attempt to disguise the embarrassment of the deed.*
-

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"A FOUL WEATHER JACK"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) An umbrella.
 - (B) *Somebody who is thought to bring bad luck to a ship.*
 - (C) A barometer.
-

"A DOG TRICK"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *A dirty trick or a double cross.*
 - (B) A prank that is meant in good humour but is taken badly by the victim.
 - (C) Something so simple that a dog could learn to do it.
-

"A CUNNING SHAVER"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Somebody who grew a beard.
 - (B) A barber.
 - (C) *A cunning person.*
-

"DRAFT ON ALDGATE PUMP"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Tap water. London's main water processing plant was at Aldgate.
 - (B) A howling wind.
 - (C) *A counterfeit currency note.*
-

"EATING A SWORD"

This phrase would be used to mean:

- (A) "Whatever will he do next?"
 - (B) Putting yourself into a dangerous situation.
 - (C) *Being wounded by a knife or sword.*
-

"KICKING UP THE DEVIL'S DELIGHT"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *Making a lot of loud noise.*
- (B) Committing a sin.
- (C) Becoming a pirate.

"DOWN AMONG THE DEAD MEN"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Somebody who was sleeping.
- (B) Somebody who was dead.
- (C) *Somebody who was drunk.*

"A GARDEN RAKE"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Somebody who is extremely thin.
- (B) *A fruit tree that fails to bear any fruit.*
- (C) A comb for brushing your hair.

"DEVIL'S BONES"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Arrows.
- (B) *Dice.*
- (C) Cucumbers.

"A DOG IN A BLANKET"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Something that is very cosy and comfortable.
 - (B) *A roly-poly pudding.*
 - (C) Somebody who is living above their station in life.
-

"THE GENTLEMAN IN BLACK"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A highwayman.
- (B) A clergyman.
- (C) *The Devil.*

"DEVIL'S COLOURS"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *Black and Yellow.*
- (B) Purple and Red.
- (C) Orange and Light Blue.

"A DIPPING BLOKE"

This slang phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *A pickpocket.*
- (B) A fisherman.
- (C) Somebody who limped.

"A GEE GEE DODGE"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Running away to get married at G.G. (which is short for Gretna Green).
- (B) *A butcher who sells horse flesh pretending that is really beef.*
- (C) Any horse competition that involves a combination of skills (as opposed to pure speed). For example, dressage and show jumping are Gee Gee Dodges.

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"AN ETERNITY BOX"

This is a slang phrase that would be used to describe:

- (A) A pulpit.
 - (B) *A coffin.*
 - (C) A safe (for valuables).
-

"A DUMP FENCER"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Somebody who builds stone walls.
 - (B) Somebody who resells goods that have been stolen.
 - (C) *Somebody who scrapes a living from selling buttons.*
-

"DRAIN PIPES"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Chips served in newspaper with the hardened scraps of batter scattered on top.
 - (B) Cannons.
 - (C) *Macaroni.*
-

"AN EGG BOX"

What would you keep in an egg box? (The answer is not eggs!):

- (A) *Table Napkins.*
 - (B) Earrings, bracelets and necklaces.
 - (C) Nuts, bolts and screws.
-

"DOCK WALLOPING"

This 19th century phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Unloading cargo from a ship.
 - (B) Jumping ship (i.e. leaving a ship before it has completed its journey).
 - (C) *Wandering around a port looking at the boats there.*
-

"GADDING THE HOOF"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Somebody who was playing the fool.
- (B) *Somebody who was not wearing shoes.*
- (C) Somebody who was in a hurry.

"FICKLE JOHNNY CROW"

This Caribbean phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *Somebody who keeps changing their mind about things.*
- (B) An employer who treats his workers badly.
- (C) An unreliable friend, particularly one who fails to keep appointments

"HAVING DUST IN YOUR EYES"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Somebody who is suffering from hayfever.
- (B) Somebody who is short-sighted or even blind.
- (C) *Somebody who is feeling tired.*

"DINING WITH DUKE HUMPHREY"

This is a 17th century phrase which would have been used to describe:

- (A) *Going without your dinner.*
- (B) Having a very sumptuous dinner.
- (C) Having dinner alone at a restaurant.

"A FLESH BAG"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A body bag that is used to move dead soldiers from the battlefield.
 - (B) Somebody who is fat.
 - (C) *A shirt or blouse.*
-

"EARTH STOPPERS"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Coffins.
- (B) Harbours.
- (C) *Horses' feet.*

"FISH FOSH"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Tosh or baloney.
- (B) A frying pan.
- (C) *A type of kedgerree.*

"FIGHT DOG, FIGHT BEAR"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Somebody who would take on any challenge that was issued to them.
- (B) *A fight that continues until one person is exhausted.*
- (C) Somebody who has a very quick temper.

"EAGLE HAWKING"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Hunting for rabbits using birds of prey.
- (B) Illegally selling counterfeit goods on street corners and at markets.
- (C) *Pulling the wool from the fleeces of dead sheep.*

"A DEAD BIRD"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Something that is very heavy.
 - (B) Something that is not worth pursuing.
 - (C) *Something that is sure to happen.*
-

"ARCHIES"

This was a nickname given to:

- (A) Street children in Dickensian times who lived in disused railway arches.
- (B) Special forces soldiers who were trained in the use of crossbows. Certain styles of covert operations could be jeopardised by the noise of a gunfire. The crossbow offered a silent and effective alternative.
- (C) *Anti-aircraft gunners in World War One.*

"BUBBLE AND SQUEAK"

This dish of re-heated potatoes and greens is called bubble and squeak because:

- (A) It was named after two comic strip characters who gained special powers from eating the mixture.
- (B) *The potatoes bubbled in the saucepan when originally cooked and then squeaked when later fried.*
- (C) The upper classes viewed it as a delicacy and often served it with champagne at 'Bubbly squeak' parties. The peasants discovered that the dish was a useful way to re-serve leftover food and the name stuck in its present format.

"A MADGE HOWLET"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A mad old woman.
- (B) *An owl.*
- (C) A Persian rug.

"MALLEY'S COW"

This Australian phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *Somebody or something that disappears without trace.*
 - (B) Somebody who is either physically or mentally slow.
 - (C) Something that is much sought after but not shared with others by its owner.
-

"A LOCKSMITH'S DAUGHTER"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A key.
- (B) A girl who is kept at home by her parents.
- (C) An unsolved burglary.

"FOIE GRAS"

The literal translation of this French delicacy is:

- (A) Goose liver
- (B) Fatty Liver
- (C) Liver of Kings

"A LOBLOLLY BOY"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A steward on an ocean going liner.
- (B) A uniformed boy who works in hotels carrying luggage and doing other similarly menial tasks.
- (C) A large employer in a rural area. The employer is literally the person who 'lobs the lolly' which is a slang term for 'issuing pay-packets'.

"THE LOYAL TOAST"

The Loyal Toast takes place at formal British functions and consists of drinking the health of the King or Queen. In the British Royal Navy, the Loyal Toast is:

- (A) Drunk sitting down whereas normally it is drunk standing up.
- (B) Only ever drunk with rum.
- (C) Drunk to both the Queen and the Admiral of the Fleet.

"ARGENTINA"

This South American country was given the name 'Argentina' because:

- (A) It was discovered and claimed by the Spanish explorer Manuel Jose Argentina.
- (B) It was believed that there was an enormous amount of silver there and Argentina literally means the country of 'Silver'.
- (C) It is an anagram of 'Great Inan' who was the most powerful God in Inca culture.

"St. ANTHONY'S FIRE"

This is:

- (A) A fast moving and highly dangerous desert whirlwind.
- (B) A fire started by a lightning strike.
- (C) *A poisoning of the body caused by eating contaminated rye bread.*

"HAVING AN EYE ON THE FISH AND THE LOAVES"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Somebody who was wistfully hoping for a miracle to get them out of a certain predicament.
- (B) Somebody who makes it obvious at the beginning of a meal that they would like to have a large helping.
- (C) *Somebody who is looking to see where there might be a profit to be made in any set of circumstances.*

"A LOVE APPLE"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *A tomato.*
- (B) A peach.
- (C) An Adam's Apple.

"AMAZON"

This word comes from Greek and originally meant:

- (A) A fertile area of land with luscious vegetation.
- (B) *A female warrior.*
- (C) A plainly decorated stone urn typically used for wine storage.

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"HORSESHOE"

Horseshoes are believed to be lucky because:

(A) The horse was a symbol of strength. Having a horseshoe pinned to a wall was believed to bring strength in times of adversity.

(B) Saturn, the God of Witches, could be kept at bay by the God Mars. Mars was identified with iron and therefore an iron horseshoe would keep the witches away.

(C) Their magnetic qualities were believed to draw in the good spirits and repel evil ones. Not all horseshoes had a magnetic charge and those that did were prized possessions.

"ACID TEST"

This phrase meaning a decisive test derives from:

(A) Wine merchants who would decide what grade to give each vineyard according to the levels of acid present in their wine. Once the grade was issued, it could not be changed until the following year's crop of grapes had been harvested.

(B) A particular form of acid that was used to show that a piece of gold was genuine. When mixed with real gold, the acid would cause a reaction which was considered to be the necessary proof.

(C) Torture chambers where a small amount of sulphuric acid would be poured onto the forearm of the victim. This was so painful that victims were considered to be unable to hold out against it.

"PUTTING ON THE LUGS"

This phrase would be used to describe:

(A) *Acting above your station in life.*

(B) Dressing up coldly for cold winter weather.

(C) Feeling down in the dumps.

"A LIFE LINE"

This phrase would be used to describe:

(A) A diagram of evolution which shows the various stages that man went through between the times of Neanderthal man and the current Homo Sapiens.

(B) A line that runs across your hand and which certain people claim foretells the length and happiness of your life.

(C) A one of several lines found in a cross section of a tree trunk. The lines reveal the age of the tree.

"HOT CROSS BUNS"

Hot cross buns are marked with a cross because:

- (A) *Being associated with Good Friday, they were originally made as an offering to the Christian God and so were given the sign of the cross.*
 - (B) They were supposed to last for twelve months before going off and the cross allowed people to differentiate between these and other buns.
 - (C) Bakers started marking them in the 19th century to allow them to sell the hot cross buns at a higher price than ordinary buns.
-

"THE BIRD OF WASHINGTON"

The bird of Washington is:

- (A) America's first lady, the President's wife.
 - (B) The starling. Popular folklore has it that the starlings will fly from Washington when the USA falls to an enemy power. To beat the superstition, a dozen starlings are kept in a cage at the White House.
 - (C) *The bald headed eagle which is the national bird of America and nicknamed the bird of Washington.*
-

"ASCENSION DAY"

Is the day that Christians remember the ascent of Jesus Christ to heaven. It falls:

- (A) *Forty days after Easter*
 - (B) Three days after Easter
 - (C) On Easter day itself.
-

"WET THE DEAL"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *Toasting a deal when it has been agreed.*
 - (B) Increasing the value of a bid for something.
 - (C) Dampening down excitement about a certain subject.
-

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"SHOWING THE WHITE FEATHER"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Showing your true colours.
 - (B) Not having any clothes on.
 - (C) *Doing something that shows you don't have any guts or courage.*
-

"OVER THE FENCE"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Somebody who is getting old. It means the same as "over the hill".
 - (B) *Somebody who is self-oriented and thoughtless.*
 - (C) Somebody who has absconded leaving unfulfilled duties or debts.
-

"A DEATH HUNTER"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Somebody who is depressed to the point of feeling suicidal.
 - (B) *Somebody who writes obituaries for newspapers.*
 - (C) A lawyer who follows ambulances to hospitals to try to drum up litigation business from the patients.
-

"FIMBLE FAMBLE"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *Waffle or insignificant conversation.*
- (B) The harness that is used to control two or more horses when they are pulling a carriage.
- (C) Somebody who is thrown out of an establishment for failing to meet its dress code requirements.

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"FAKE PIE"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A pie which is inedible but looks good. Butchers use varnished fake pies for their window displays.
 - (B) Going along with something that you don't fully agree with.
 - (C) *A pie that is made from left over food.*
-

"A DAMSON PIE"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A javelin.
 - (B) *A stream of abuse.*
 - (C) A javelin or spear.
-

"A FLANDERS FORTUNE"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *A fortune that is small.*
 - (B) A large amount of money made overseas, especially in exploration.
 - (C) A large box of chocolates.
-

"FIGGY DOWDY"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *A dessert made from stewed fruit.*
 - (B) Not going to church except at Christmas and Easter.
 - (C) Putting a positive gloss on stories and exaggerating them wildly.
-

"FIT AS A PUDDING"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *Something that is very appropriate.*
 - (B) Somebody who is overweight and unhealthy in appearance.
 - (C) Something that does not fit and is baggy or crumpled.
-

"FEELING YOUR COLLAR"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *Getting too hot.*
 - (B) Having a feeling that there is somebody right behind you when in fact there is nobody there.
 - (C) Being under a lot of stress because you have done something wrong.
-

"A GALLERY NYMPH"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A young girl who frequents classical concerts, art exhibitions and similar occasions.
 - (B) An ice cream vendor at a theatre.
 - (C) *Somebody who does the domestic cleaning.*
-

"A FLY TRAP"

This slang phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *A mouth.*
 - (B) A window.
 - (C) A spider's web.
-

"FLAG OF DISTRESS"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *A shirt tail that has not been properly tucked in.*
 - (B) The sign outside a pawn brokers' shop (which typically consists of several balls mounted upon each other).
 - (C) The Red Cross which is the flag that is flown by medical crews attending people who have been wounded in battle.
-

"A GANDER MONTH"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) April, the month in which migrating geese arrive in England.
- (B) *The month after your have had a baby.*
- (C) December, the month in which many turkeys and geese meet their inevitable fate.

"FLUTTER THE RIBBONS"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Getting dressed up in your best clothes.
- (B) Getting so nervous that you begin to tremble.
- (C) *Riding a horse.*

"THE FOOLERIES"

This is a nickname that would have been used in the nineteenth century to describe:

- (A) The universities of Oxford and Cambridge.
- (B) *April Fool's day pranks.*
- (C) Lunatic asylums.

"A GALLEY NIPPER"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A boy who carries out menial chores on behalf of a ship's skipper.
- (B) *A big midge or mosquito.*
- (C) Somebody who steals art treasures.

"FLY DISPERSER SOUP"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *A soup made of oxtail.*
- (B) A heavy thunderstorm that clears the air after a period of still humid summer weather.
- (C) An insecticide that is sprayed from a manually pumped container.

"A GANDER PARTY"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A party which revolved around a goose being roasted on a spit.
 - (B) *A stag party.*
 - (C) A gathering of your close family only.
-

"A FOUR LEGGED FORTUNE"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A couple who had poor backgrounds but made a lot of money in their own right.
- (B) *A race horse or greyhound that won a lot of races.*
- (C) An amazing bit of good luck.

"A FORTNUM AND MASON"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *A picnic hamper full of tasty food.*
- (B) A member of the upper class.
- (C) Any grocer.

"BY GEORGE"

This is an exclamation of surprise. Who was George?

- (A) Lloyd George.
- (B) *Saint George.*
- (C) King George.

"A DAISY KICKER"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Somebody who is dead and has been buried.
- (B) A lawn mower.
- (C) *A horse.*

"A FRIDAY FACE"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *Somebody who was looking down in the dumps. This has its origins in Friday being a day for fasting, consequently nobody liked Fridays very much.*
 - (B) Somebody who was looking happy. Pay packets were issued on Friday and inevitably there would be a binge in the evening, consequently every was happy on Fridays.
 - (C) Somebody who had not turned up to work was known as a Friday face.
-

"A FUNKSTER"

In the schoolboy slang of yesteryear, this phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A prankster.
- (B) *A coward.*
- (C) A goal keeper.

"TAKING YOUR DANIEL"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *Leaving somewhere.*
- (B) Always keeping your bible close to you.
- (C) Eating your words.

"A GENTLEMAN'S COMPANION"

This phrase would have been used to describe:

- (A) The Holy Bible.
- (B) A lady.
- (C) A louse.

"FROG'S WINE"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Cheap French wine that did not taste very pleasant.
- (B) *Gin.*
- (C) Spring water.

"BUFFALO BILL"

Buffalo Bill got given the 'buffalo' part of his name because:

- (A) He was the most notorious gangster in his home town of Buffalo in New York State.
 - (B) He accidentally invented a popular variety of mozzarella cheese made from buffalo milk.
 - (C) *He shot a large number of buffaloes to feed railway construction workers.*
-

"A BELCHER"

This unattractive word means:

- (A) *A piece of cloth worn around the neck*
 - (B) A cowherder
 - (C) A type of edible toad
-

"ENOUGH TO MAKE A CAT LAUGH"

This phrase would refer to:-

- (A) An incredibly lucky occurrence. The suggestion is that even a cat, which reputedly has nine lives, would be laughing at the amount of luck involved.
 - (B) A room that is very spacious. Perhaps this is associated with the phrase 'having enough room to swing a cat.' If so, then the cat would be laughing because it could be swung without fear of hitting any hard objects.
 - (C) *Something that is daft. The idea here is that cats don't normally laugh so it would have to be something that was really very daft indeed to make a cat laugh.*
-

"HONKY-TONK"

- (A) One of the first plastic children's toys, the Honky-Tonk was a truck with a siren that emitted a fearsome noise. The Honky-Tonk craze swept through British schools nation-wide and a well-known toy company was founded as a result.
 - (B) A free-spirited movement that began in San Francisco in the late fifties. The Honky-Tonk men and women are widely believed to be the original hippies and the foundering fathers of the more widespread hippie phenomenon of the 1960's.
 - (C) *A seedy night club, possibly named after a harsh style of piano music with a rhythm that that was considered raunchy at the time.*
-

"BEGGAR'S BULLETS"

These are:

- (A) The discarded crusty ends of bread loaves.
 - (B) *Small pebbles*
 - (C) Small bottles of strong ale.
-

"A BOBBY DAZZLER"

This late 19th century phrase refers to:

(A) A criminal who flashes very bright lights at policemen thereby temporarily blinding the police and enabling the criminal to escape into the darkness of night.

(B) *A person who is dazzling and impressive.*

(C) A torch worn on the helmets on miners and other underground workers.

"BY HOOK OR BY CROOK"

This well known phrase is thought to originate from:

(A) The Billingsgate fish market. Merchants would attempt to buy direct from the boats to secure the freshest fish. When the boats had poor catches, the merchants had to deal with unscrupulous brokers whose fish was several days old.

(B) *Estate tenants whose allowance of firewood was determined by the length of a shepherd's crook. The firewood was cut with a hooked knife. Thus firewood was obtained by a mixture of hook and crook.*

(C) Mariners who would moor their boats by use of an anchor (a hook) or a loop from a dockside (a crook). Thus they would moor by hook or crook.

"MANY A MICKLE MAKES A MUCKEL"

This Scottish phrase means:-

(A) If you don't stop something going wrong at the first opportunity then the chances are that it will go even more wrong and will take more effort to correct in due course.

(B) *A lot of small, insignificant things can add up to something large that's worth having.*

(C) A lot of people who all have similar characteristics (such as members of the same clan all having the same surname for example) will create confusion all round.

"TO HAVE AN OAR IN EVERY BOAT"

This sixteenth century phrase means:

(A) To have a finger in every pie.

(B) *To be an interfering busybody type of person.*

(C) To be well prepared for the future.

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"FLESH EATING HORSES"

(A) According to ancient Greek mythology, a rogue known as Diomedes would feed his horses with the corpses of unsuspecting strangers who happened to stray into his territory.

(B) The flesh eating horses are the horses that pull the chariots of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.

(C) Flesh eating horses were chronicled during the crusades as a terrifying aspect of battle with the infidels. Even the bravest knights were reputed to have been overwhelmed by these horses. The legend endured for several centuries.

"A RUM BUBBER"

In days bygone, this phrase referred to:

(A) An accomplished thief who specialised in pinching silver tankards from pubs and selling them on elsewhere.

(B) A manager or owner of a West Indian plantation. They were so called because they would relax and drink rum in the shade during the hottest part of the day. At the same time their workers would be forced to tend the crops without protection from the sun.

(C) A handsome or particularly effective hunting hound whose puppies would generate a small but prestigious income for its owner.

"A CAMBRIDGE OAK"

This was a nickname given to:

(A) A cane used to impose discipline on schoolboys. At Eton and Winchester the phrase "getting an oaking" meant getting a thrashing.

(B) A willow tree. Perhaps there is some connection with the willow trees that adorn the banks of the River Cam.

(C) A person who is respected for both their intelligence and their integrity.

"TEDDY BEAR"

This soft toy for children is named after:-

(A) Theodore Roosevelt, an American President, who was nicknamed Teddy and had a passion for hunting bears.

(B) Edward Rothschild, a wealthy European trader who had the first known teddy bear made for his oldest son who was dying from influenza.

(C) Edward VII, the King of England in the early 1900's when teddy bears first became widely popular.

"BATMAN"

Apart from a famous superhero, a batman is:

(A) A professional baseball player's assistant. The batman organises the player's diary, training schedule and even parts of his private life.

(B) An executioner who administers the lethal injection to prisoners on America's death rows.

(C) *A person who stands on an airstrip and waves bats at pilots to show them where they should taxi their planes to.*

"A BUM FREEZER"

This refers to:-

(A) Chairlifts in ski resorts. The implication is that having been warmed by the exercise of skiing down the mountain, skiers are then obliged to sit motionless on a cold chairlift to get back up the hill again.

(B) An American fridge-freezer that automatically produces ice cubes in the shape of a half-moon.

(C) *A jacket that is cut unusually short, often at the hips. It offers no protection and therefore no warmth to the lower body.*

"ALL SOULS PARISH MAGAZINE"

This was a 1930's nickname for:

(A) BBC Radio current affairs programmes

(B) The Tatler magazine

(C) *The Times Newspaper.*

"MEASURING SWORDS"

(A) Measuring Swords were pointed devices with notches on that were used by butchers to assure customers that they were getting the right amount of meat for their money.

(B) *Measuring Swords is a phrase that stems from the custom of duelling. Before a duel, the swords were measured to ensure neither man had an unfair advantage. Thus it effectively means ensuring fair play.*

(C) Measuring Swords were sharp edged metal rulers used in the textile trade to measure and cut fabric.

"BLOOD AND THUNDER"

This late 19th century phrase refers to:

(A) *A mixture of port and brandy. Presumably the port represents the blood whilst the brandy, or at least its consequences, represents the thunder.*

(B) A time of violence whether a feud or full scale war. Presumably blood refers to injuries and thunder refers to a violent atmosphere.

(C) A wrestling bout where the winner would only be declared when the loser had given up. These tended to be particularly savage contests and sometimes both combatants would receive quite serious injuries before the bout was over.

"TO BE TAKEN ABACK"

This phrase, meaning surprised, is believed to be derived from:

(A) American saloons in the Gold Rush era where pretty young girls would lure gentlemen travellers to the back of the bar. The girls would have accomplices there who would mug the gentlemen for their money and valuables.

(B) Military encounters where one army distracts another and then sneaks around the back of them to launch a surprise attack from behind.

(C) *Sailing boats where a shift in the wind would cause the sails to fill from the wrong side and blow the boat backwards.*

"BLACK DIAMONDS"

This is another name for:

(A) Oil wells

(B) *Truffles*

(C) Fool's gold

"EMPTY THE BUTTER BOAT"

This phrase means:

(A) *To lavish compliments upon somebody or something to such an extent that there's nothing more to be said.*

(B) To turn a place upside down looking for something. A butter boat is a pot used for serving melted butter and the implication is that even this ridiculous object has been searched in the quest to find whatever is missing.

(C) To start a new phase of life, such as marriage, and leave all your bad habits behind.

"THE BUZZ-NAPPERS ACADEMY"

The Buzz-nappers academy was an 18th century nickname for:

- (A) *An underworld system for training thieves and other crooks.*
- (B) The army. The source of the phrase derives from the army lifestyle which consisted of periods of intense activity (the buzzes) followed by periods of sitting around with nothings to do (the naps).
- (C) The House of Lords. It was believed that the House of Lords was full of doddering old souls who often fell asleep during debates.

"A1"

Meaning first rate, A1 entered into popular usage due to:

- (A) The construction of the A1 Road which was planned to be better than any other road of its era. The print media began to term anything excellent as being of 'A1' standard.
- (B) *A Lloyds classification system for ships. The top mark for the body of the ship was an 'A' whilst for the rest of the boat it was a '1'. Therefore the very best rating a ship could achieve was an 'A1'.*
- (C) The postgraduate degree grades given at Oxford and Cambridge. The best postgraduate grade is a 'first class;merit won', commonly abbreviated to 'A1' and duly used to describe other examples of excellence.

"BESIDE THE CUSHION"

This phrase means:

- (A) *Something that is a side issue, not the main point.*
- (B) A cosy home but one that is not a primary place of residence.
- (C) The place where objects that have been lost are probably to be found.

"BLOWING MARLIN SPIKES"

This phrase refers to:

- (A) A sword fight.
 - (B) *A howling gale. A marlin spike is a thin cylindrical device with a pointed ended which is used by sailors to undo knots. Blowing marlin spikes therefore means a really strong biting wind.*
 - (C) Spiteful chatter. To say that you are blowing spikes at somebody roughly equates to verbally stabbing them in the back.
-

"BIG BERTHA"

In American English, a big berth is:

- (A) *An overweight lady.*
 - (B) A large concrete multi-storey parking lot.
 - (C) A cargo ship or oil tanker which is so large that it can only dock in certain ports that have the correct facilities.
-

"SWALLOWING THE ANCHOR"

This phrase is used to describe:

- (A) A ship sinking under the waves.
 - (B) A fish as it bites onto a fisherman's hook.
 - (C) *A sailor who has retired from seagoing life.*
-

"ALMA MATER"

This phrase that a graduate uses to refer to his or her college, literally means:

- (A) *Bountiful mother.*
 - (B) Mother tongue.
 - (C) Mother Taught me.
-

"HIP, HIP, HURRAH"

This well known phrase is thought to have originally meant:

- (A) "My sweetheart has accepted my proposal of marriage"
 - (B) "The Queen has given birth to the future Emperor of Prussia"
 - (C) *"Jerusalem has fallen to the Arabs and we are on the way to Heaven"*
-

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"THE CAMBERWELL DEATH TRAP"

This unpleasant sounding phrase refers to:

(A) A dilemma that consists of a choice between two courses of action when both of them have nasty consequences.

(B) *A canal in Camberwell (London) which was notorious for the number of people who drowned in it.*

(C) A type of horse drawn carriage. These carriages were made in Camberwell and were prone to losing wheels whilst being driven.

"A DEAD HORSE"

This phrase would be used to describe:

(A) A point of no return.

(B) An enormous portion of food.

(C) *Work that you have been paid for but have not done.*

"DESPERATELY MASHED"

This phrase would be used to describe:

(A) Being badly cut and bruised.

(B) *Hopelessly in love.*

(C) Very hungry indeed.

"DEFERRED STOCK"

This phrase would be used to describe:

(A) *A broth that has been made from cheap ingredients or left overs.*

(B) A bloodline that has been erroneously traced back to nobility.

(C) A policy of buying goods at an agreed price now for delivery at some time in the future.

"A GENTLEMAN OF FORTUNE"

This phrase would be used to describe:

(A) A beggar.

(B) *A pirate.*

(C) A gambler.

"DAVY'S DUST"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Gunpowder.
 - (B) Sand.
 - (C) Nail clippings.
-

"E.C. WOMEN"

This phrase was used in the early 20th century to mean:

- (A) A females living within the European Community.
 - (B) English County Ladies. The implication was that these ladies who typically came from the home counties, were better bred than others.
 - (C) Ladies who lived in the EC postal district of London. This was a smart address to have and implied that your husband was earning a lot of money in the City of London.
-

"A DAY BUG"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A pupil who attends a public school but who is not a boarder there.
 - (B) A firefly or similar insect which has the ability to make itself visible in darkness.
 - (C) A cold or minor ailment that only lasts for a day.
-

"DYNAMITE"

This word is generally used to mean an explosive substance. However in the nineteenth century it was also used to mean something different. What?

- (A) A knockdown bargain from a market stall.
 - (B) Popcorn.
 - (C) Afternoon tea.
-

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"DIAMOND CRACKING"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *Being employed as a coal miner.*
 - (B) Being a bank robber, especially one who enters the bank safe.
 - (C) Throwing stones at the houses of criminals.
-

"BEATING THE DUTCH"

This eighteenth century phrase would have been used to mean:

- (A) *Accomplishing something that is exceptional.*
 - (B) Giving somebody a special treat.
 - (C) Talking in plain terms that cannot be misunderstood.
-

"A DIGBY DUCK"

A 'Digby Chicken' is a herring. What is a Digby Duck?:

- (A) A basted chicken.
 - (B) A stuffed duck.
 - (C) *A dried herring.*
-

"TAKING THE DUBLIN PACKET"

This nineteenth century English phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Winning a bet on a horse race.
 - (B) Sharpening up a knife.
 - (C) *Hiding around the corner.*
-

"A DISMAL DITTY"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A spoil sport.
 - (B) A nursery rhyme.
 - (C) *A song sung before somebody was executed.*
-

"A PAIR OF DRUMS"

This phrase would have been used in nineteenth century nautical circles to describe:

(A) *A pair of trousers.*

(B) A pair of drummers. Drummers are large seabirds that travel in pairs and are supposed to bring good luck.

(C) Two biscuits. This was the standard British Navy breakfast ration.

"THE DISTRICT OF SAPPERS"

This phrase would be used to describe a part of England. Which part?

(A) Lancashire.

(B) Camberley.

(C) *Oxford.*

"GREASE THE DUKE"

This slang phrase would have been used in the nineteenth century to describe:

(A) *Paying somebody a 'backhander' to accomplish something.*

(B) Washing your hands.

(C) Buttering your toast.

"DOG WALLOPING"

This phrase would have been used to describe:

(A) Remaining absolutely motionless to avoid detection.

(B) *Collecting cigarette ends then rolling your own cigarettes from the leftover tobacco that was in the discarded butts.*

(C) Dog fighting.

"A JACK OF DOVER"

This phrase would be used to describe:

(A) *A type of flatfish.*

(B) A person from France.

(C) A roll-on roll-off car ferry.

"A DOODLE DOO MAN"

This slang phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A teacher at an art college.
- (B) A cleaner who works in an abattoir.
- (C) *A chicken breeder.*

"DROPPING YOUR ANCHOR IN LEVANT"

This is a phrase which emerged in the 19th century. It would be used to describe:

- (A) Retiring from work.
- (B) Fishing a long way out to sea where the water is too deep to drop anchor.
- (C) *Running away from home and starting a new life somewhere else.*

"TO HAVE A BONE IN THE THROAT"

This phrase which dates back to the 16th century refers to:

- (A) Stuttering or speaking incoherently.
- (B) *Having an amusing excuse for not doing something.*
- (C) Having a coughing or choking fit.

"FLY THE BLUE PIGEON"

This 18th century phrase means:

- (A) To go out peacock shooting.
- (B) To be a teetotaller.
- (C) *To steal the lead from the roofs of large houses, public buildings and churches.*

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"A BRISKET-BEATER"

This 18th century phrase refers to:

(A) A young army conscript. Brisket was a metal polish used for cleaning and shining guns.

(B) A Roman Catholic. So called because of the Roman Catholics' practice of crossing their chests.

(C) A staunch and loyal friend. Brisket meant trouble and so the connection is that your friend would beat off your troubles for you.

"A BROTHER OF THE BUNG"

This phrase refers to:

(A) A person who is corrupt. A bung is a bribe and so it probably refers to somebody who is willing to accept bribes.

(B) A brewer. Possibly derived from 'Bung Ball', a dance held every year in London for members of the brewing trade.

(C) A sailor. A bung is a small plug in the bottom of boats which can be removed to let water out. A brother of the bung is an informal way to describe a sailor.

"CANADOE"

This word arises from a mixture of other words but which of the following is correct?

(A) It means killing a deer. It is Scottish phrase and literally means "getting a doe in the can."

(B) It means a drink. It stems from the 'can', being the container and from the French "d'eau" being the water. In fact it usually referred to "eau de vie" which is a spirit distilled from fruit.

(C) It is a small Canadian canoe used by salmon fishermen.

"BURY THE HATCHET"

Bury the Hatchet was:-

(A) A blood thirsty commander who served under Cromwell, only to repent later and enter the church. He later became properly known as Bishop Bury of Durham but to this day historians refer to him by his nickname.

(B) A Pagan custom observed at the arrival of Spring. A festival was held each year during which an axe would be buried to symbolise the end of a hard winter of chopping wood and struggling against the cold and to welcome in the less strenuous lifestyle of the summer months.

(C) A tradition of some American Indians who would bury their weapons after a battle to help them to forget about fighting and get on with normal life.

"TO BUCK YOUR STUMPS"

This 19th century phrase means:

- (A) To throw your arms in the air in a gesture of exasperation.
- (B) *To speed up what your doing.*
- (C) To put your feet up and relax.

"PULLING CAPS"

This phrase refers to:-

- (A) Drinking beer. The phrase is believed to stem simply from the need to remove the cap from the bottle before drinking it. Thus in American English one might say "He's going out to pull a few caps".
- (B) Achieving great things. It derives from mountaineers who refer to scaling summits as "pulling caps." Tradition-ally a mountaineer would put a badge onto his backpack for each graded peak that he had successfully reached.
- (C) *Arguing with somebody. The implication here is that one might prod somebody or pull their cap in the heat of an argument.*

"HE HASN'T GOT ALL HIS BUTTONS"

This phrase:-

- (A) *Equates to the modern phrase "He hasn't got all his marbles" or "He's one croissant short of a petit dejeuner". In other words, it is somebody who is a bit daft or dopey.*
- (B) Means that the person concerned is fat. In other words, the buttons on his clothes keeping bursting because he's such a porker.
- (C) Means that he has lost money gambling. It originates from the custom of using buttons as gambling chips in dice games.

"A BREAD AND BUTTER WICKET"

This phrase refers to:

- (A) *A cricket wicket that is extremely easy for batsmen.*
 - (B) A mouth. This implication being that your mouth is the target for your bread and butter.
 - (C) A food coupon.
-

"A BONE CRUSHER"

This 19th century phrase was used to describe:

- (A) A bad fever that made your bones ache.
 - (B) *A rifle with a forceful recoil.*
 - (C) An undertaker.
-

"BURNING THE THAMES"

Burning the Thames was an 18th century term that referred to:

- (A) *Doing something absolutely astonishing. The inference being that it would be something as remarkable as setting fire to the River Thames in London.*
 - (B) Racing at full speed. Burning is a rowing term for going flat out.
 - (C) Poaching fish from somebody else's water.
-

"BORN IN A MILL"

This 16th century phrase refers to:

- (A) *Being deaf. The phrase probably arises from the loud noise generated in a mill.*
 - (B) Always leaving the door open. Mills were very poorly ventilated and so the doors were open to let the heat out in all but the coldest weather.
 - (C) Having a large appetite. The phrase arises from the popular assumption that mill work was the hardest way to make a living and generated huge appetites.
-

"A CABIN CRACKER"

This nineteenth century nautical phrase refers to:

- (A) A loaf of bread, so called because unless a boat was in port, the bread would be hard and stale.
 - (B) *A thief who entered into the cabins of ships whilst they were in harbour.*
 - (C) A violent storm.
-

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“ BLACKBERRY SWAGGER ”

This phrase refers to:

- (A) A carefree way of walking, often used to describe a young person who is in love.
 - (B) *Somebody who sells ribbons and shoelaces on the street.*
 - (C) A poacher.
-

"UNABLE TO SAY BRITISH CONSTITUTION"

This phrase from the early 20th century means:

- (A) *Drunk. Presumably this is because the words 'British Constitution' might be difficult to utter when drunk.*
 - (B) Misbehaving. Presumably his is because if you have been misbehaving you cannot claim to be living within the laws of the British Constitution.
 - (C) Not well educated. The implication here is that somebody has been so poorly taught that they are unable to put together words of several syllables.
-

"A CABLE-HANGER"

This eighteenth century phrase refers to:

- (A) A hangman.
 - (B) *An oyster poacher.*
 - (C) A stage hand in a theatre.
-

"TO RING THE BELLS BACKWARDS"

This 17th century phrase means:

- (A) *To raise the alarm. Church bells were the normal way to communicate an important event before the advent of telephones and TV. Starting a peal in an unusual way signalled that something was amiss.*
 - (B) To try and do something that you will not be successful in. Given that you can't ring bells backwards, you can see where the phrase comes from.
 - (C) To fall for a trick. Gypsies and travelling entertainers would arrive in a village and challenge locals to solve trick problems that often involved bells & cups. The locals would become confident and risk money on the outcome, where-upon the gypsies would trick them and take their money.
-

"LET'S BROOM IT"

This slightly slang phrase from the 18th century means:

- (A) *Let's do a runner.*
 - (B) Let's pretend that it never happened.
 - (C) Let's get on with it.
-

"ADAM'S ALE"

(A) Comes from South West England and means strong, home-brewed cider. The phrase derives from the story of the Garden of Eden where Adam took the apple which proved his undoing.

(B) *Means water and presumably also refers to the Garden of Eden where Adam had nothing to drink but water.*

(C) Means the River Thames in London. It was sarcastically described in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales as being "as sweet as Adam's Ale". As sewage systems had not been invented then, the truth was very different! It was in fact a very unpleasant place!

"TO GIVE SOMEBODY A BAKER'S DOZEN"

This phrase means:

- (A) To be more generous to somebody than you need to be in the hope that you will be able to call in favour from them in due course.
 - (B) *To give somebody a really good thrashing.*
 - (C) To con somebody by appearing to offer more than you intend to give them.
-

"A BOOZE OUT"

This 19th century phrase refers to:

- (A) *A good meal out with friends.*
 - (B) A closet under the stairs where cleaning tools such as mops and brooms are kept.
 - (C) A soup kitchen run by the church for the poor. Typically alcohol was forbidden and there would be a teaching from the scriptures at each meal time.
-

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"SELLING SOMETHING BY CANDLE"

This phrase refers to:-

(A) Selling something quietly on the black-market, usually stolen or illicit goods.

(B) A type of auction where a needle is pushed into a candle and bids are taken until the candle burns down to a point where the needle falls out. The last bids placed before the needle falls is the successful one.

(C) Striking a bargain and making absolutely sure that neither side can attempt to re-negotiate the terms.

"WORKING UNDER THE ARMPITS"

This unattractive 19th century phrase means:

(A) Working in the sewers. As London's sewers were reconstructed, countless labourers were enlisted to build the underground tunnels that emptied London's waste into the Thames. It was unpleasant but well paid work. The labourers were known as armpitters for obvious reasons!

(B) Working beside the big guns, passing shells to other soldiers so that a constant barrage of fire could be laid down. The guns were dug into small pits to prevent them moving back on the recoil. These pits were nicknamed 'armpits'.

(C) Only committing crimes that were not punishable by hanging. If you were convicted, any physical punishment would be inflicted on the lower body below the armpits.

"A SCOTCH CAP"

This phrase refers to:-

(A) A supposedly small glass of whisky which was taken at night to prevent insomnia.

(B) A cap that forms part of the Scottish national dress.

(C) A newspaper. Newspapers were used by tramps and street alcoholics to keep the rain off them. The phrase was coined in London where it was believed (hopefully incorrectly) that most of the tramps were good-for-nothing Scotsmen.

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"ACE OF SPADES"

This phrase would refer to:

(A) A gardener, the modern day equivalent being "having greenfingers". The phrase remains in limited use and in particular is applied to the overall winner of London's Chelsea Flower Show.

(B) A crooked gambler. The probable source of the phrase is the belief that a cheat would keep extra trump cards about his person and introduce them into play to win the crucial tricks.

(C) A widow. Probably derived from the custom of a widow dressing in black to signify that she is in mourning.

"A BONE SHAKER"

This late 19th century phrase refers to:

(A) An early model of bicycle which due to poor suspension and cobbled streets, produced an extreme shuddering effect when ridden.

(B) A hospital doctor (i.e. as opposed to a General Practitioner).

(C) A very loud noise, such as that of a thunder clap or a cannon being fired. The implication being that the noise reverberated right through to your bones.

"A CAPE COD TURKEY"

A Cape Cod Turkey is:

(A) A bad educated American living in a rural area.

(B) A saltwater fish, so named by sailors.

(C) A bald eagle.

"BLADDERDASH"

This 19th century phrase describes:

(A) An urgent need to go to the loo.

(B) Nonsense. It has subsequently evolved into the current phrase "Balderdash."

(C) A person who is clean and well-dressed.

"A BOG ORANGE"

This unlikely sounding expression means:

(A) *A potato.*

(B) A small waterfall - perhaps the connection lies in both being refreshing and wet.

(C) Bruised or otherwise unwanted oranges that are left behind in a market place and later gathered by vagrants and paupers.

"BOLTING THE MOON"

This phrase means:

(A) Running around with no clothes on.

(B) *Making off with something without paying for it.*

(C) Going insane.

"TAP THE ADMIRAL"

This is a phrase that:

(A) *Originates in a horrifying story. A naval officer died overseas but was to be buried at home. His corpse was placed in a container & preserved with gallons of rum. One of the crew on the return journey was almost constantly drunk. He had been 'tapping the admiral' to get his booze. Consequently 'to tap the admiral' means to get drunk.*

(B) For reasons unknown, it means going to the toilet.

(C) Means mutiny. In early mutinies, the ship's officers were set adrift in long boats. However in one case some of them survived & the mutineers were later hanged. After that case, the officers were generally killed on board to avoid retribution. This was known as tapping the admiral.

"ACCORDING TO HOYLE"

This phrase means:

(A) "If you believe that then you'll believe anything". Named after Eric Hoyle, a conman who gained notoriety by proposing marriage to the daughters of wealthy merchants and then fleeing when the dowry was paid.

(B) "If something can go wrong then it will". It was coined by Darwin in his landmark book 'The Origin of Species' and refers to the consistently unlucky Captain Hoyle who was skipper of the HMS Beagle.

(C) *"The proper way". Named after Mr. E. Hoyle who was the author of several books on the rules of games. Thus if you referred to one of Hoyle's books, one would find out the right way to play a certain game.*

"STABBED WITH A BRIDPORT DAGGER"

This 17th century phrase means:

(A) *To be hanged by a noose. Nooses were made of hemp which grew in abundance around Bridport.*

(B) To fall in love with somebody unsuitable. It was a popular romantic legend that when parents disapproved of a relationship, the young couple would elope to Bridport to marry & start a new life.

(C) To start off on a venture that seems like a good idea at the time but turns out to be a failure. The Bridport dagger was a cursed sword kept in Bridport cathedral, hence the term.

"TO BOIL YOUR LOBSTER"

This originally 18th century phrase means:

(A) *To sign up with the army having previously been in the church. The implication perhaps, is that the black clothes of the clergy are exchanged for the red clothes of the army.*

(B) To come into money. The connection may lie in the fact that lobsters were an expensive delicacy and therefore unavailable until you had enough money to afford one.

(C) To get sunburnt on an exposed bit of skin, especially on the nose.

"PLEAD THE BABY ACT"

This old phrase refers to:

(A) *Getting out of doing something by pretending that you are too young or inexperienced to be able to do it.*

(B) Getting out of doing something by pretending that you have something else to do, like tending to a baby or to other family matters in general.

(C) Getting a light punishment from a court of law because you have dependants that you alone are responsible for caring for.

"BURN CRUST"

This phrase refers to:

(A) *A baker. It was a colloquial jocular phrase used in the nineteenth century.*

(B) Rust. It was a cockney rhyming phrase, the connection lies in rust appearing like a burn on the top of a metal surface.

(C) A lobster. The derivation is from the characteristic colour changing that occurs when a lobster is cooked.

"BROWN COW"

Who or what was a brown cow in the 18th century?

(A) A brown cow was a barrel of beer. Perhaps this is because beer was brown and the barrel could be 'milked' from the tap at the bottom of the barrel.

(B) A brown cow was a friend. The source of the phrase is not clear but it survives to this day in the children's phrase "How now brown cow" - in other words, "how are you?".

(C) A brown cow was a soldier's uniform. The term arose when the traditional red uniforms of the British Army were abandoned in favour of less conspicuous brown ones.

"BABY'S LEG"

This is:

(A) A food that comes rolled up, such as a Swiss roll or a sausage roll.

(B) A lobster that has been cooked and cut in half lengthways.

(C) A walking stick that has a sword built into the middle of it. The sword is usually released by twisting the handle and is often as effective as a conventional sword.

"CUT A BLOCK WITH A RAZOR"

This closest match to this phrase would:

(A) To be up the creek without a paddle.

(B) To send coals to Newcastle.

(C) To make a mountain out of a molehill.

"BRUMBIE"

A brumbie is or was:

(A) An Australian word for a wild horse.

(B) An English West Country word for a bumble bee.

(C) An American word for a trout.

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"BALLOON JUICE"

This phrase means:

- (A) Hydrogen. The phrase exists perhaps because it is the gas pumped into hot air balloons to make them fly.
 - (B) Soda water. *The phrase exists perhaps because of the bubbles found in the water.*
 - (C) Beer. The phrase exists perhaps because of the swollen bellies found on heavy beer drinkers.
-

"A BUTTON CATCHER"

This phrase comes from the late 19th century and means:

- (A) A tailor
 - (B) A magpie
 - (C) A beggar.
-

"A BUNDOOK AND SPIKE"

This is a 19th century phrase that refers to:

- (A) A rifle and bayonet. *It was a term used in the army, a bundook being a rifle and a spike being a bayonet.*
 - (B) A kiss & tell scandal. It was a term that was rarely used outside gentrified Scottish circles.
 - (C) A knife and fork. It was a nautical term based on the 'bundook' which were the bows of the ship and the 'spike' which was a pointed metal device used for loosening shackles.
-

"A BANZAI PARTY"

This phrase refers to:

- (A) A direct method of selling miniature trees through social gatherings, coffee mornings etc.
 - (B) A political movement that was active in Japan during the Second World War and who advocated the execution of all prisoners of war regardless of their usefulness as labourers.
 - (C) *A group of navy men going on a binge when in port. The phrase derives perhaps from the enthusiasm amongst British soldiers in the early 20th century for all things Japanese.*
-

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"RIDING THE BLACK DONKEY"

This phrase 19th century phrase refers to:

(A) *Sulking in a moody stubborn kind of way. Perhaps the phrase comes from the famous stubbornness of mules combined with the blackness of a bad mood.*

(B) Wearing a clergyman's robe that has been specifically designed for riding horses. The robe is black and the lower section is almost like a lady's skirt.

(C) Being a highwayman. The phrase may be linked to our current phrase "being a dark horse".

"BUNNY GRUB"

Bunny grub is a slang phrase that refers to:

(A) *Edible green plants, suitable for rabbits to eat.*

(B) A small fly that, along with rats, was believed to be a carrier of the bubonic plague.

(C) A leap into the air that ends in the crouch position. The source of this phrase may be military training establishments.

"OVER THE BENDER"

This phrase refers to:

(A) Being in bed. Mattresses were nicknamed 'benders' in the 19th century and 'going over the bender' simply meant going to bed.

(B) Being past the worst of a situation.

(C) *Something that sounds so extraordinary that you can't quite believe it. To be precise, you might use the phrase "over the bender" as a retort to say that you think you being told a load of hogwash.*

"BAKING SPITTLE"

This unusual phrase means:

(A) *A tongue. It is thought to derive from a large spatula that was put into ovens to retrieve loaves of bread and cakes, etc.*

(B) Yeast. It is thought to derive from the fact that yeast is the crucial component in baking and without it nothing would work smoothly.

(C) A small wood-fired stove in a factory or mill that was used to bake the potatoes which the workers ate at lunchtime.

"TO BUY A WHITE HORSE"

This is phrase that was widely used amongst sailors and means:

- (A) *To squander money on passing whims.*
 - (B) To wave a flag denoting that you want to surrender.
 - (C) To be mischievous or a trouble maker.
-

"A BLOOD TUB"

This gory sounding phrase means:

- (A) A coffin
 - (B) *A theatre that shows highly dramatised but unrealistic plays that often contain much violence.*
 - (C) A bare knuckle boxing venue. These venues were outlawed but remained extremely popular and are rumoured to still exist in certain parts of the country.
-

"BALLS OF FIRE"

This phrase:

- (A) Literally means lightning. It was used colloquially to denote extremes of anger (for example you might have said "he was spitting balls of fire").
 - (B) Is a retort that roughly means "You'll go to hell for saying that sort of thing". The implication being that if you go to hell you will be surrounded by flames for eternity.
 - (C) *Glasses of brandy. The implication here is that the brandy would burn your throat as you swallowed it, creating the impression of a ball of ire inside you.*
-

"TO HAVE BEEN TO BARKING CREEK"

This phrase refers to:

- (A) To have caught rabies. Presumably the derivation of the phrase lies in an association between mad dogs and barking.
 - (B) To have been sent to Barking to convalesce from an illness. Although Barking is now a borough of London, it was a popular rural retreat before London sprawled to its present size.
 - (C) *To be suffering from a cough. Perhaps the phrase derives from the sound of cough being vaguely similar to a dog barking.*
-

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"GO TO BATH"

This phrase refers to:

- (A) Doing something wrong. Not dissimilar to the contemporary phrase "being sent to Coventry."
 - (B) Getting your act together. The derivation may be from the old habit of bathing only occasionally, sometimes as little as once a month. Going to bath was therefore, a major exercise in personal hygiene and tidying one's appearance.
 - (C) *Becoming a beggar. Bath was a magnet for beggars in 19th century and still has problems with beggars today.*
-

"GOING UP A LADDER TO BED"

This mid 18th century phrase means:

- (A) *To be hanged. The implication being that you would walk up a ladder to the gallows and then go to eternal rest.*
 - (B) To be easily frightened, like a child would be. The implication being that you appear so young that you are probably still sleeping in a bunk bed.
 - (C) To be extremely small. The implication being that you are not even tall enough to get into bed without needing support.
-

"A BARREL OF TREACLE"

This phrase comes from London and means:

- (A) A sticky situation. It might be used colloquially as follows: "He's got himself a real barrel of treacle there."
 - (B) Somebody who is widely disliked. The implication is that the unfortunate person naturally attracts flies and wasps.
 - (C) *Love. The derivation here may be that love is all sweetness like a barrel of treacle.*
-

"BAT MUGGER"

This phrase refers to:

- (A) A street thief who operates at nights, often concealing themselves by hiding in dark doorways and derelict buildings before jumping out and confronting their victims.
 - (B) Somebody who collected bat droppings from the floors of churches and caves. Bat droppings were an unlikely but popular fertiliser in the early 19th century.
 - (C) *A device used to rub oil into cricket bats. The oil prevents the bat from drying out.*
-

"A BELLY BUSTER"

This curious, late 19th century phrase refers to:

(A) A very hot or spicy food from the imported by the British from their colonies which would upset the stomachs of those who were new to eating it.

(B) A close fitting corset that ladies squeezed themselves into. They were uncomfortable to wear and could do terrible damage to the stomach is used too often.

(C) *A fall or dive which is awkward. The closest contemporary phrase is a 'belly-flop' meaning a bad landing in water.*

"HER HEAD IS FULL OF BEES"

This could be used about a man or woman & means:

(A) *Being fidgety and impatient. The connection with bees is not clear but presumably it simply means that somebody is buzzing to get on with something else.*

(B) Having an acute headache, the implication being that hundreds of tiny bees are inside the head, giving countless tiny prickles of pain.

(C) Being angry in an out-of-control way. The implication here is that somebody is so they would behave like an angry bee and just attack anything that they happened upon.

"A BUBBLY JOCK"

This phrase, which sounds like it ought to mean 'an enthusiastic Scotsman', comes from the 18th century and means:

(A) A moral scandal that hasn't directly hurt anybody but is of widespread interest.

(B) *A turkey cock. Perhaps it is a rhyming slang connection.*

(C) A swindler. Presumably this derives from the excitement generated by a swindler to entice people to part with their money.

"A LAWYER'S CALF"

This phrase would be used to describe:

(A) *A leather binding found on some legal literary volumes.*

(B) A junior articled clerk in a law partnership.

(C) A veal crate.

"BESIDE THE BOOK"

This 17th century phrase refers to:

(A) An unconventional shortcut.

(B) *Being completely wrong about something.*

(C) A way of keeping money hidden from potential thieves. Notes were often hidden between books on a shelf and sometimes they were even stored inside hollowed out books.

"BAG OF MOONSHINE"

This 19th century phrase means:

(A) A shot of gin. Gin was also known as 'Mother's Ruin' in those days and was the most popular drink amongst lower class females.

(B) Illicit goods of some sort, whether stolen, smuggled or simply prohibited.

(C) *Nonsense. Moonshine means unreal so a bag of moonshine is simply a load of tosh!*

"A LEAP YEAR"

Leap Years have an extra day and occur when year's date can be divided by 4. This is always true except when:

(A) *The date of the year can be divided by 100 but not by 400. (So for example the year 2000 will be a leap year whilst the years 2100 & 2200 will not be).*

(B) The year's date can be divided by 144. On these years, there is no extra day. The next one is 2016.

(C) The Swiss Society of TimeKeepers decide that the cycle is becoming too far adrift and organise an agreed adjustment. So far this has happened only once in 1892 when an extra day was added to create the 30th February for the first time ever. One of the side effects was that babies born on this day never had a real birthday!

"BACK OF BEYOND"

This phrase is believed to come from:

(A) *Australia where it was used to refer to the huge area known as outback.*

(B) Expeditions to the North Pole who found their compasses spinning wildly when they reached their destination. Any attempt at navigation was hopeless until the party was a safe distance away from the pole again.

(C) Alaska where it was believed that you could walk for 100 days without ever seeing anything new or different.

"AULD LANG SYNE"

This is a song often sung at New Year. The title Auld Lang Syne means:-

- (A) Literally "Old luck ahead". In other words, may we be as lucky in the future as we have been in the past.
 - (B) "Bygone times".
 - (C) "The wisdom of old age"
-

"THE ATTIC BEE"

The attic bee is or was:

- (A) A hot water system located in lofts that hummed continually and irritated virtually everybody that had it installed.
 - (B) *An ancient Greek poet, whose writings were supposed to be as sweet as honey.*
 - (C) A second world war rooftop lookout whose job was to observe incoming, low flying enemy aircraft.
-

"A PERFECT BABEL"

This phrase means:

- (A) A perfect place, a utopia.
 - (B) *Total confusion.*
 - (C) An unblemished ring that is given to a loved one as a symbol of the eternity.
-

"AXLE GREASE"

This phrase means:

- (A) *Money*
- (B) Soap
- (C) Alcohol

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"AUGUST"

This month is named after Caesar Augustus. It was previously known as:

- (A) 'Sextilis', meaning the sixth month.
 - (B) 'Aridius', meaning the dry month.
 - (C) 'Vilinius', meaning the month of madness.
-

"AUSTRIAN LIP"

This phrase refers to:

- (A) The high levels of arrogance and self-confidence generally associated with Germanic cultures.
 - (B) A deformed lower jaw that was a hereditary feature of the Austrian royal family.
 - (C) A highly successful mountain escape route for second World War POWs held in Austria. On reaching the Swiss border, escapees would supposedly blow a kiss back towards Austria in a gesture of sarcasm.
-

"AWKWARD SQUAD"

This phrase refers to:

- (A) People who have joined the army but have not completed their training.
 - (B) An alliance of small but politically active trade unions who resist the introduction of machinery and technology in the workplace.
 - (C) Teenagers.
-

"AS MAD AS A HATTER"

This phrase is thought to arise from:

- (A) The Haberdashers who are a City of London livery company. Traditionally the seniority of the members was determined by elegance and extravagance of his hat. Some of these hats became so elaborate that outsiders coined that phrase "As mad as a Haberdasher" which gave rise to the current phrase.
 - (B) The practice of making village idiots wear a dunce's cap on festivals. As village idiots were often believed to be insane, the phrase was born.
 - (C) A chemical used in hat production which was quite literally made some hat producers go mad.
-

"THE AZTEC STATE"

This another name for:

- (A) Suffering gold rush fever
 - (B) Arizona
 - (C) Being in a dilapidated condition.
-

"AN ANCIENT MARINER"

An ancient mariner is better known as:

- (A) A seagull because it was believed that the souls of sailors lost at sea were held by seagulls.
 - (B) A belt because the texture of the leather was considered to resemble the weather beaten face of a seasoned sailor.
 - (C) A pipe because it was the method of smoking that was favoured by seamen.
-

"ANKLE BEATER"

- (A) A nickname for the leg irons worn by slaves and prisoners. Although effective in restraining people, the leg irons caused substantial cuts and bruising to those forced to wear them.
 - (B) *Somebody who drove cattle to market. In order to avoid damaging the appearance of the beasts before they were sold, people would herd the animals by beating them around the ankles.*
 - (C) An army issue shoe which was in use during the First World War. The shoe was inflexible and impaired the mobility of troops during battle. It afforded very little aeration and is thought to be partially responsible for the high level of trench foot cases suffered during the war.
-

"ANGEL'S OIL"

This phrase refers to:

- (A) Candle wax because the burning candle flame produced a flicker that supposedly resembled an angel.
- (B) Laughter because it was believed that laughter was relaxing and made you live longer.
- (C) *Bribe's because apart from heavenly intervention, the payment of money to officials was the only way to be sure of getting anything done.*

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"St. ANTHONY'S PIG"

This is another name for:

- (A) *The runt of a litter because St. Anthony was the patron saint of pigs.*
 - (B) A donkey because St. Anthony was blind and mistakenly traded his crop of barley for a donkey when he actually wanted a pig.
 - (C) A well. Popular superstition held that St. Anthony and his pigs lived at the bottom of wells. Therefore people were cautious draw only as much water as they needed from wells, so that there would be enough left for St. Anthony and his pigs.
-

"AULD HORNIE"

This is a Scottish phrase which would be spelt 'Old Hornie' in English and which refers to:

- (A) *The devil because the devil supposedly has horns.*
 - (B) A thistle because of its spiky prickles.
 - (C) A stag, also because of its horns.
-

"HIGHLAND BAIL"

Highland Bail is or was:-

- (A) A Scottish cricket wicket used informally and constructed from wood gathered from the vicinity of the pitch.
 - (B) *Avoiding being caught by policemen by hitting them and running away.*
 - (C) The term used in hilly areas of the North to describe the control of flood waters that occur annually when the snow thaws.
-

"A BOOM PASSENGER"

This phrase concerns travelling and refers to:

- (A) *A convict on board a ship. The connection may lie in the fact that convict were sometimes chained to the boom.*
 - (B) A stowaway.
 - (C) A person who had paid a fare to be on the ship and consequently was supposed to get good treatment during the journey.
-

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"TO HAVE A BROKEN FEATHER IN YOUR WING"

This 19th century phrase refers to:

- (A) Being completely crestfallen about something.
 - (B) *Having blotted your copybook.*
 - (C) Wearing one piece of clothing that clashes with another.
-

"LIBERTY HORSES"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Horses that have bred in the wild and are not owned by an individual. In earlier times these horses could be roped and trained by anybody who wished to have one.
 - (B) *Horses that execute circus tricks without having anybody riding them.*
 - (C) Horses that have completed a life of hard labour and are being allowed to live out their last years happily in a field.
-

"ALL NIGHT MAN"

This phrase refers to:

- (A) Somebody who could hold their drink extremely well. In the past it has more specifically referred to a hustler who would befriend a stranger, stay up late drinking until the stranger was in a drunken slumber and then everything of value from them.
 - (B) *Somebody who would go out at nights and remove bodies from graves, subsequently selling them for dissection.*
 - (C) A pauper who had a day job, usually as a labourer but also had to have a second job that started after the first one finished. The suggestion is that they were working so hard that they never had time to sleep.
-

"A BARBER'S CAT"

This phrase refers to:

- (A) An ornamental cushion stuffed with hair clippings gathered from the floors of hairdressers salons.
 - (B) A bayonet. This derives perhaps from the thought that bayonet could be used to cut in close quarters.
 - (C) *A thin, sick looking person who resembles the stereotype barber's cat.*
-

"A LEATHER MEDAL "

This phrase would be used to describe:

(A) A prize winning bull.

(B) A whip. A person who was to be whipped as a punishment in earlier times was said to have been 'awarded the leather medal'.

(C) *A booby prize. The first place medal was called the 'gold' and the last place was nicknamed the 'leather'.*

"LEAD THE BLIND MONKEYS TO EVACUATE"

This colourful phrase comes from the mid 19th century when knowledge of monkeys was slim compared to present times. It means:

(A) Send somebody off on a wild goose chase.

(B) *That somebody is incapable of doing any useful job. The modern equivalent might be to say that somebody is "a waste of space."*

(C) That your first priority should always be to look after those who cannot look after themselves. It was used slightly mockingly, suggesting that whilst this was a nice idea in theory, in practice you ought to make yourself safe before worrying about anybody else.

"A BARGE MAN"

This yesteryear phrase refers to:

(A) Someone who is prone to heavy drinking.

(B) A truncheon.

(C) *A maggot that infested biscuits on ships.*

"THE ANSWER IS.... A LEMON"

This phrase would be used to describe:

(A) A puzzle. One of the earliest verbal puzzles was the riddle: "What do you call a cut up melon?". The answer is a lemon because you can rearrange the letters in the word 'melon' to spell the word 'lemon'.

(B) Something that is not appropriate for the ladies to hear. In earlier times this phrase was used to indicate that a particular topic of conversation was too sour to be continued in the presence of females.

(C) *Reluctance to do something. It was used as a retort to a stupid request.*

"A BUMMAREE"

This is a phrase that refers to:

(A) A schoolboy who cheats by copying the work of another schoolboy. The phrase is believed to have been coined at Eton College.

(B) A fish broker at Billingsgate. Individual fishermen would go to the bummaree to sell their catch and he would combine several catches to make larger deals.

(C) A sailor who is married. The source of the phrase is not clear but seems to stem partly from the word 'marry.'

"TO DRINK LIKE A BEAST"

This phrase refers to somebody who drinks:

(A) Very heavily.

(B) Very messily.

(C) Only when thirsty.

"EATING THE LEEK"

This phrase would be used to describe:

(A) Somebody who moves to Wales.

(B) Somebody who has to apologise and take back something that they have said.

(C) Someone who is bitter and unpleasant.

"TO HAVE GOT THE BULGE ON"

This is a slang term that means:

(A) To have the upper hand in a situation.

(B) To become very jealous about something, as if to have "eyes-out-on-stalks" about it.

(C) To become fat as a result of many years of heavy beer drinking.

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"TO BEAT THE ROAD"

This is an old American-English phrase that means:

(A) To do something utterly purposeless. Also found in the phrase "you may just as well beat the road if you're going to do that."

(B) *To travel on a train without having bought a ticket.*

(C) To find a shortcut around a situation. It probably originally meant a path that was a quicker route than taking the road itself.

"A LIMEY"

This phrase would be used in Australia and the USA to describe a British person. It has its origins in colonial times and derives from:

(A) A slimy. The British were thought to be devious and unscrupulous and were originally nicknamed 'slimies' in Australia. The phrase moved to the USA where it became Limey and this in turn was adopted later by the Australians.

(B) 'Cor Blimey'. This was a common exclamation of surprise in the British navy and was noticed by their more polite colonials who shortened it to 'Limey'.

(C) *The practice of feeding limes to British sailors to help to prevent scurvy whilst they were at sea.*

"TAKE THE BUN"

This is a 19th century phrase that came to England from the USA. Its closest modern equivalent is:

(A) *Take first prize.*

(B) Take the biscuit.

(C) Take the mickey.

"A BROWNIE"

Nowadays this term is applied to a chocolate fudge cake or a girl guide. In earlier times a brownie was:

(A) *A polar bear. The term was coined by sailors, presumably colour blind ones.*

(B) A type of shoe similar to brogues that were typically worn by gentlemen and bankers in the City of London.

(C) A boxer. Perhaps the connection lies in the fact that a boxer would appear battered, bruised and therefore brown.

"A LEFT HANDED OATH"

When taking an oath in court, people are required to place their right hand on a bible and make the oath. However a left handed oath would be:

- (A) A nickname for a lie.
 - (B) An oath of allegiance to an institution or cause that is fanatical about its aims.
 - (C) *An informal promise.*
-

"A BUFF NAPPER"

This eighteenth century phrase refers to:

- (A) *A dog thief. The phrase may derive from the words 'bufe' meaning dog and 'nabber' meaning thief.*
 - (B) A chair in a barber's shop. The source of the phrase may lie in the notorious comfort of these chairs which was one of the few attractions of going to a barber at that time.
 - (C) A fold of material that army officers were permitted to wear on the shoulder of their uniform after they had seen battle for the first time.
-

"GET THE BIG BIRD"

This phrase from the mid 19th century refers to:

- (A) A sporting tradition wherein the poorest marksman on any particular days' shooting would be given the biggest bird to take home. The biggest bird was thought to be the toughest and duly it was no honour to receive it.
 - (B) Being dealt the queen of spades during a card game. The queen of spades had special status in many early card games & usually it was a disadvantage to hold it.
 - (C) *Being an actor and getting hissed at during your stage performance. Strangely the hissing did not always signal displeasure from the audience. If you were playing a baddie then being hissed was actually a compliment.*
-

"THE CITY OF LILIES"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) York in England.
 - (B) Amsterdam in Holland.
 - (C) *Florence in Italy.*
-

"SELLING LOCK, STOCK AND BARREL"

This phrase means selling something in its entirety. Where does it come from?

(A) Public Houses. It is used to denote that the bar is being sold as an ongoing business, to include the locks, the stock of alcohol and the barrels that they are held in.

(B) *The arms trade. Lock, stock and barrel are all parts of a gun.*

(C) Agricultural property sales. It means that all the farming equipment is bought with the farm house.

"TO BITE YOUR OWN HIPS"

This strange sounding phrase refers to:

(A) *Regretting something. It's not clear what the connection with hips is in this context, as finger nails or lips might seem easier things to bite.*

(B) Being pregnant. Again the connection is not obvious but it may be linked to pressure experienced on the hips and lower back during pregnancy.

(C) Construing a set of circumstances that suit you but do not suit the others who are involved. In other words it means being selfish in your planning of an event.

"A BILLINGSGATE PHEASANT"

Billingsgate is the biggest London fish market and the source of this phrase. The phrase means:

(A) *A red herring.*

(B) A crab.

(C) Seaweed.

"THE FORTY IMMORTALS"

This is a nickname that is given to:

(A) The Viking Gods.

(B) *The members of the Academie Francaise.*

(C) The days of Lent.

"THE WHITE BIRD"

This phrase refers to:

(A) *The soul. This draws on the symbolism of the dove and the suggestion is that it represents the souls of good people.*

(B) The aeroplane. The phrase comes from East Africa at the time of the introduction of aeroplanes. There was nothing in the Swahili language to describe a man-made flying device and so it was simply known as the white bird.

(C) Laundry. The phrase may stem from laundry flapping on the washing line.

"WHIPPER SNAPPER"

This phrase which means a person who is young and insolent is thought to stem from:

(A) *A whip snapper. The implication being that the person concerned has nothing better to do than crack a whip all day.*

(B) A whippet napper. Whippets are dogs that are similar to greyhounds. A whippet napper was somebody who stole the best whippets in one part of the country and went on to race them in a different area.

(C) A fly fisherman who casts like a beginner. Instead of the usual graceful cast of the fly fisherman, a beginner tends to whip the rod back and snap it forwards too early.

"AN INDIAN GIVER"

This phrase would be used to describe:

(A) A father who tries to force his daughters into an arranged marriage.

(B) *A person who gives a present and later asks to have it back.*

(C) A bird that migrates from India to spend the summer in North West Scotland.

"THE WOBLIES"

The Wobblies is or was:

(A) An organisation formed by old age pensioners.

(B) *An organisation formed by industrial workers.*

(C) An organisation formed by overweight people.

"BURIAL IN WOOLLEN"

This is a term from the seventeenth century which refers to:

(A) *A law which was designed to boost the wool industry. The law decreed that bodies should only be covered in wool when buried. The law did not last long.*

(B) A burial during a military campaign when there was insufficient time to give the deceased anything but a makeshift grave.

(C) A cremation.

"TEARING CHRIST'S BODY"

This was a phrase used to mean that:

(A) Somebody was eating bread.

(B) *Somebody was using bad language.*

(C) Somebody was a witch.

"THE INSANE ROOT"

This phrase would have been used in bygone times to describe:

(A) Extremists. The modern equivalent of the phrase would be "The Lunatic Fringe."

(B) *A plant that brings madness to anybody who eats it.*

(C) Somebody who starts a rumour.

"BEING BETWEEN DOG AND WOLF"

This phrase means:

(A) Being on guard and ready to react.

(B) *Dusk.*

(C) Having a bounty on your head.

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"BEING IN AN INTERESTING CONDITION"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *A woman who is pregnant.*
- (B) A person who is dead.
- (C) A person who is mad.

"WOOPIES"

This was an abbreviation coined in the 1980s to describe people that were:

- (A) *Well off older people.*
 - (B) Weary of other people.
 - (C) Well out of prison.
-

"SPANISH WORM"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) An informer.
 - (B) A golden candle stick.
 - (C) *A nail that you strike when sawing through a piece of wood.*
-

"A PI JAW"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) An astronomer, PI being an important number in the understanding of planetary movements.
 - (B) Somebody with hollow cheeks.
 - (C) *Somebody who does no wrong and brags about it.*
-

"TO HAVE A WORM IN YOUR TONGUE"

This pretty unpleasant phrase refers to:

- (A) *Being quarrelsome in the extreme, picking a row about even the smallest matters.*
 - (B) Going mad, usually through diseases encountered in old age.
 - (C) Having been sold something that is not what it should be. Taken literally, the phrase would mean finding a worm in a piece of tongue that you had bought from the butcher.
-

"A TUSCAN ORDER"

This phrase would refer to:

- (A) Something that follows a sequence which is the opposite of what you would expect.
 - (B) A plain form of architectural design.*
 - (C) An instruction that have to obey but which you know is faulted or doomed to end in disaster.
-

"GIVING ONE LAW"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Explaining in precise terms how you want something to be done.
 - (B) Giving somebody a head start.*
 - (C) Making a donation to a church.
-

"TO PUT NEW WINE IN OLD BOTTLES"

The closest modern match to this old phrase is:

- (A) Try to teach an old dog new tricks*
 - (B) Mutton dressed as lamb
 - (C) Try to teach your grandmother to suck eggs.
-

"TO TWIST SOMEBODY"

This phrase would refer to:

- (A) Persuading somebody to do something that they wouldn't normally want to do
 - (B) Conning somebody out of money or other valuables.*
 - (C) Talking ill of somebody behind their back and giving a distorted or negative impression of their character.
-

"A MAN OF THE LAWN"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A Protestant bishop.*
 - (B) A professional gardener.
 - (C) A rural estate agent.
-

"PASSING UNDER THE YOKE"

This is a phrase used to mean:

(A) That something is about to mixed up. The implication is that the plough is about to the driven through it.

(B) Facing defeat in battle. It stems from a Roman custom of making their beaten foes pass under a yoke made out of spears.

(C) To die or more precisely, to be buried.

"AN UNDERTAKER"

Nowadays this phrase refers to somebody who organises funerals. However it previously was used to mean:

(A) A druid.

(B) A corset.

(C) Politicians and other people of influence.

"A TOM AND JERRY SHOP"

This phrase would be used to describe:

(A) A pet shop.

(B) A bar.

(C) A war zone.

"THE DAUGHTER OF ZION"

The Daughter of Zion is a phrase used to refer to:

(A) Jerusalem

(B) Israel

(C) The Jewish Faith

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"TO BE UNHINGED"

If somebody is unfortunate enough to be unhinged, what would be wrong with them?

- (A) They would be lost.
 - (B) *They would be shaken up about something.*
 - (C) They would be naked.
-

"AN INN"

This phrase would now be used to describe a bar or pub. However in earlier English it would have meant:

- (A) A drink.
 - (B) A corner.
 - (C) *A house.*
-

"A CARTWHEEL"

Nowadays a cartwheel is a cross between a handstand and a somersault. This has its origins in a rotating firework called a Catherine Wheel. However a cartwheel also had another meaning and this was:

- (A) *An unsubtle hint.*
 - (B) Cheap shoes, especially poorly fitting ones.
 - (C) A man's handbag.
-

"THE UNKNOWN PRIME MINISTER"

This was name given to the leader of the Conservative party in the early 1920's. What was his real name?

- (A) Richard Gallstone
 - (B) *A. Bonar Law*
 - (C) D. E. Bates
-

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"AN INNOCENT"

This phrase would have been used in bygone times to describe:

- (A) A nun.
- (B) *An idiot.*
- (C) A primitive or savage.

"A CARPET TOMCAT"

A Carpet Tomcat is:

- (A) *A man who pays a lot of attention to women and surrounds himself with them. A contemporary variation of this phrase would be a 'lounge lizard.'*
- (B) A mummy's boy.
- (C) A draft-excluder. It was a Victorian custom to have a long sausage shaped device beside doors. When the doors were closed, the tom-cats would be laid down at the bottom of the door to keep the draughts from entering the room.

"BEING TARRERED AND FEATHERED"

Being tarred and feathered consisted of removing your clothes, having tar pasted onto your body and then affixing feathers to the tar. Who did it and why?

- (A) The North American Indians tarred and feathered themselves to receive courage from the spirits before a battle.
- (B) *The British did it as a punishment for criminals.*
- (C) The Inkatha tribe of Southern Africa did it to make themselves more attractive to a boyfriend and girlfriend.

"SOME PUMPKINS"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A person who is a bit wet and who you do not think it is worth bothering with.
 - (B) *Something that is newsworthy and exciting.*
 - (C) White lies.
-

"A FOX'S SLEEP"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A sleep taken in a time of danger.
 - (B) A sleep taken with one eye still open.*
 - (C) A sleep taken in an unusual place.
-

"A CLARE MARKET DUCK"

This phrase would have been used in bygone times to describe:

- (A) A score of zero in a game of cards.
 - (B) A cow's heart stuffed with herbs and vegetables.*
 - (C) A gangly athlete who outshone others despite his apparently inappropriate physique.
-

"TAKING SOIL "

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Taking territory from a foreign power.
 - (B) A hunted animal that has taken refuge in a river or lake.*
 - (C) Hitting a golf ball badly and in so doing, removing a clump of earth from beneath it.
-

"THE ROARING FORTIES"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) The 1940's. The 1960's were referred to as the 'Swinging sixties' due to the cultural activities of that time and likewise the 1940's were referred to as the Roaring Forties due to the wars that raged during the decade.
 - (B) A time of life when, having had children who are becoming able to look after themselves, you set about rediscovering your own youth.
 - (C) An area of sea around the Cape of Good Hope where extremely dangerous weather conditions prevail.*
-

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"A CLAP OF THUNDER"

This phrase would have been used in the nineteenth century to describe:

- (A) *A drink of gin.*
 - (B) A flash of anger.
 - (C) A sudden brain wave.
-

"SNARLING LETTER"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A hand written letter that is sent anonymously and contains vengeful language or threats.
 - (B) An announcement of a reward for the capture or conviction of a wanted criminal.
 - (C) *The letter 'R', so called because animals that snarl make a sort of "Rrrrrrrr" noise.*
-

"BEWARE THE IDES OF MARCH"

This phrase would be used to describe danger. When are the Ides of March?

- (A) *The 15th March.*
 - (B) The last two days of February and the first two days of April.
 - (C) The first two Sundays in March.
-

"A CUDDY LEG"

This Scottish phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A castle rampart.
- (B) A knobbly knee.
- (C) *A herring.*

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"PUT A SOCK IN IT"

This phrase, which you might use to ask somebody to be silent, has its origins in:

(A) A common joke in the 19th century about putting socks in the gaps around windows to stop the whistling noise caused by the wind.

(B) Early record players which had a large horn that transmitted the sound. There was no volume control so a sock would be put in the horn to muffle the noise when appropriate.

(C) Socks being used to gag the mouths of prisoners.

"FORTY NINERS"

This phrase would be used to mean:

(A) Old people who retain unusually youthful appearances.

(B) People who took part in the Gold Rush to California.

(C) "Rubbish". It is a retort given to somebody who is telling an unlikely story. A 'niner' was a nickname for a fake ten dollar bill so 'forty niners' is a way of saying "What a load of rubbish".

"AS CLOSE AS WAX"

This phrase would describe:

(A) Somebody who is reluctant to part with money or goods of any value.

(B) Something that is extremely close to you.

(C) An event that is totally unavoidable.

"A CHUMMY"

This phrase would be used to describe:

(A) The young assistant employed by a chimney sweep.

(B) A small dagger concealed inside the sleeve of a long coat.

(C) A silver brandy flask.

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"HIGH FULHAMS"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Loaded dice.
 - (B) Churchmen.
 - (C) Roof tops.
-

"PILTDOWN MAN"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A hoax archaeological discovery in Sussex, England. Piltdown Man was supposed to be a previously unknown ancestor of present day humans.
 - (B) A huge chalk image of a human that appears on a hillside near Perth, Western Australia. The image is untypical of any aboriginal works and its origins are shrouded in mystery.
 - (C) An American baseball player who has scored more than one hundred home runs.
-

"FRENCH CREAM"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Cognac. It stems from the French habit of having cognac in their coffee rather than cream (on special occasions only!).
 - (B) Soft cheese. Traditionally the English have always made hard cheeses and imported soft cheeses such as Brie from the French.
 - (C) Cream that had turned sour and in earlier British society was viewed as only being fit for a Frenchman to eat.
-

"A COLD COOK"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Somebody who is useless in a kitchen.
- (B) An undertaker.
- (C) A summer meal of cold meats and salads.

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"FRIDAY"

Friday was considered an unlucky day for which groups of people:

- (A) Women and Children.
 - (B) *Christians and Buddhists.*
 - (C) Germans and Greeks.
-

"BEING COLLARED ON"

This is a nineteenth century Australian phrase. It would be used to describe:

- (A) Being made ready to go to the gallows.
 - (B) *Taking a strong fancy to a boyfriend or girlfriend.*
 - (C) Being dressed up in your very best clothes.
-

"GIVING COLD PIG"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Serving meat that has gone off.
 - (B) *Throwing a bucket of cold water over somebody to wake them up.*
 - (C) Cooling down molten iron.
-

"FROGS"

The English have used this nickname for the French for some time. Where did it come from?

- (A) From a French habit of eating Frog's legs which the English found repulsive.
 - (B) A combination of the words 'French' and 'Grog'. The French supplied wine to the English since the 1200's and at one time a glass of wine was described as a glass of 'French'.
 - (C) *From the French emblem which was originally a group of frogs.*
-

"CORIANDER SEEDS"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Chips used to stake a wager in a card or dice game.
- (B) Malicious gossip that is intended to turn people against something or someone.
- (C) *Money.*

"COME AND HAVE A PICKLE"

This phrase would be used to invite somebody to:

- (A) Join you for a drink.
- (B) Join you for a quick bite to eat.*
- (C) Join you in a risky undertaking.

"A COPPER KNOB"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Somebody who was very well-to-do.
- (B) A saucepan made from copper.
- (C) Somebody with red hair.*

"YOU'RE OFF TO COLNEY HATCH"

This phrase would be used to mean:

- (A) "You're made". Colney Hatch was a prestigious and elite hotel at the then exclusive seaside resort of Bognor Regis. The implication of the phrase is that you have done so well financially that you could go there and easily blend into the scene.
- (B) "You've gone mad". Colney Hatch was a notorious asylum for mentally disturbed people.*
- (C) "Get out of here or I'll thump you". Illegal bare knuckle boxing contests were held in the Colney Hatch theatre.

"A CRIPPLE STOPPER"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A medicine.
- (B) A flight of stairs.
- (C) A small pistol used by hunters to despatch wounded animals.*

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"A COPPER RATTLE"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A police informer.
- (B) *A stew.*
- (C) A fountain pen.

"AS RICH AS A FUGGER"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Somebody who was poor. 'Fugger' was a word used to describe people who lived on the streets and lit communal fires on the corners to warm themselves during winter.
- (B) *Somebody who was rich. The Fuggers were a wealthy German banking family.*
- (C) Somebody who was happy. 'Fugger' meant a person who had found fulfilment in their life.

"A CRUMPET SCRAMBLE"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A cooked breakfast.
- (B) A race held in the Yorkshire Dales where both a man and his dog had to complete a course which included both running and swimming across lakes.
- (C) *An afternoon tea party.*

"COTSWOLD LION"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *A sheep.*
- (B) A very large hill.
- (C) Somebody who showed all the best characteristics of an Englishman.

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"LADIES IN WAITING"

Amongst the Queen's employees are the Ladies in Waiting. Another phrase used to describe them is:

- (A) *Ladies of the Bedchamber*
 - (B) Ladies of the Scullery
 - (C) Ladies of the Summer Palace
-

"A SPANISH FLY"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) A sherry.
 - (B) *An insect.*
 - (C) A sling.
-

"GETTING THE WRONG SOW BY THE EAR"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) Talking in confidence to somebody who cannot keep secrets.
 - (B) *Completely misinterpreting something that has been said or done.*
 - (C) Losing a gambling game, especially a dice game.
-

"A WELSH UNCLE"

This unexpected phrase means:

- (A) *Not a real uncle but rather a male cousin of one of your parents.*
- (B) A fire, derived from the bigoted assumption that most Welsh people worked in mines.
- (C) Any male member of the family that could sing well.

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"TIDDY-OGGIE"

This is a phrase used in Cornwall to describe a food that is a local speciality. What sort of food is tiddy-oggie?

- (A) A Cornish Pasty.
- (B) Clotted cream.
- (C) Fudge.

"WHITE MAN'S GRAVE"

This was a phrase that was used to describe:

- (A) Cigarettes.
- (B) West Africa, where many Europeans died from tropical diseases.
- (C) China. According to Nostradamus the Chinese will eventually dominate the world and by implication, this will signal the end of the power and influence of the whites.

"THROWING A TUB TO THE WHALE"

This expression has its origins in the nautical community. It means taking action to avoid danger. It stems from:

- (A) When sailors encountered whales in the past they would throw a bath tub into the sea to distract the whales so that they did not attack the ship.
- (B) When ancient Greek ships were bumped by whales, they would throw the fattest slave overboard as an offering to placate the whales.
- (C) When Sir Francis Drake met whales at sea, his defence against them was to throw a barrel of rum into the sea to keep the whales happy. This practice was unpopular with his crew for whom rum was a scarce and prized commodity.

"A WAGGA BLANKET"

This is an Australian phrase that is used to describe:

- (A) A sleeping bag.
- (B) A long winter coat.
- (C) A cover up.

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"THE WEEPING SAINT"

Who was the weeping Saint?

(A) St. Swithin. This stems from the superstition that if it rains in his Saints day, then it will rain for the next 40 days.

(B) St. Peter. This stems from his grief and the tears he shed when Jesus died.

(C) St. Christopher. He is the patron saint of travellers and is supposed to weep over them to keep their thirst at bay.

"THE SPINDLE SIDE"

This phrase would be used to describe:

(A) The right hand side. The word 'spindle' refers to ladies and it was customary for them to side on the right hand side of the Royal Court.

(B) The female bloodline that runs through a family.

(C) The front side. This comes from the textile industry where it was always top priority to avoid any blemishes appearing on the front side of a garment.

"WEEPING"

If a bride wept a great deal at her wedding, this was considered to signify that:

(A) She was not a witch.

(B) She would produce a lot of children for her husband.

(C) Her father would live for many more years.

"XMAS"

Xmas is an abbreviation of Christmas. Why is the 'X' used?

(A) Because it is nearly the end of the alphabet and Christmas comes towards the end of the year.

(B) Because 'X' is a standard abbreviation for 'Christ'.

(C) Because it is a confusion of Kiss Mas and kisses were traditionally marked with an 'X'. How the term came to be confused with Christmas is not clear.

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"NO MONEY - NO SWISS"

This phrase would be:

- (A) A lack of pocket money. It is a children's expression and means that if you don't have any money then you can't buy any chocolate.
- (B) A curt reply to a beggar or hawker. It means that you don't have any money to give and that you don't have any time to hang around discussing it.
- (C) *A proverb. The Swiss historically hired out bands of men to fight battles for other countries. If you didn't have the money, you wouldn't be able to get extra fighting men.*

"CRUSHED STRAWBERRY"

This phrase means:

- (A) Having used considerable force to achieve something very minor or of little consequence.
- (B) Somebody who is in despair, usually as a result of a relationship breaking up.
- (C) *A colour that resembles a strawberry that has been crushed.*

"DO YOU KNOW DR. WRIGHT OF NORWICH?"

This phrase would be used to tell someone else:

- (A) That they are name dropping and everybody is bored of it.
- (B) *That they are not passing on the port decanter at the dinner table despite the fact that everybody wants some more.*
- (C) That they were talking complete claptrap and they would be better off changing the subject.

"SPANISH MOSS"

This phrase would be used to describe:

- (A) *A plant.*
- (B) A cover up.
- (C) The hair on the chest of an adolescent male.

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"ALL YOUR SWANS ARE GEESE"

This phrase would be used to mean that:

- (A) *All your hopes and aspirations have come to nothing.*
- (B) All your clothes are dirty.
- (C) You are pretending to be innocent but it is perfectly clear to everybody else that you are guilty.

"YARD OF TIN"

This phrase was used to refer to:

- (A) South Africa. Very rich in mineral deposits and positioned on the southern tip of the African continent, it gathered its nickname from discoverers who did not want its secrets to be shared.
- (B) A shell for an anti-aircraft gun.
- (C) *A horn on a coach which happily, was exactly a yard long and made out of tin.*

"A TEA FIGHT"

This phrase was used to describe:

- (A) A catty argument between two ladies.
- (B) *A tea party at a church or village hall.*
- (C) Any battle against the British that took place in what is now the USA.

"ENGLISH SWEAT"

This phrase has its origins in Great Britain in the fifteenth century. It applies to:

- (A) *A particularly nasty disease which could kill a man within a few hours.*
- (B) Beer.
- (C) Rain.

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"WRENNING DAY"

This expression refers to:

(A) *A custom of stoning a wren to death on boxing day.*

(B) The only non-religious festival held at St. Paul's Cathedral. It is held in honour of the architect of the cathedral, Christopher Wren.

(C) A day that a person is not working (i.e. weekends and public holidays).
