

FP WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

March 11-15

Old Sayings...

2019

We've had a lot of chatter around FP about wanting a newsletter that has information behind old sayings; what do they mean and where did they come from? Today is your lucky day...it's here! Make sure to let me know if anything was completely surprising to you! And, of course, there are some "dumb" jokes included in this newsletter...

Saying: Bite the bullet

Meaning: Accepting something difficult or unpleasant

History: There was no time to administer anesthesia before emergency surgery during battle. The surgeon made patients bite down on a bullet in an attempt to distract them from the pain.



Saying: Blood is thicker than water

Meaning: Family comes before everything else

History: In ancient Middle Eastern culture, blood rituals between men symbolized bonds that were far greater than those of family. The saying also has to do with "blood brothers," because warriors who symbolically shared the blood they shed in battle together were said to have stronger bonds than biological brothers.



Saying: Cat got your tongue?

Meaning: Something said when a person is at a loss for words

History: There are two possible sources for this common short saying. The first refers to the cat-o'-nine-tails – a whip used by the English Navy for flogging. The whip caused so much pain that the victims were left speechless. The second refers to the practice of cutting out the tongues of liars and blasphemers and feeding them to cats.

Saying: Spill the beans

Meaning: To reveal a secret

History: In Ancient Greece, beans were used to vote for candidates entering various organizations. One container for each candidate was set out before the group members, who would place a white bean in the container if they approved of the candidate and a black bean if they did not. Sometimes a clumsy voter would accidentally knock over the jar, revealing all of the beans and allowing everyone to see the otherwise confidential votes.

Saying: Butter someone up

Meaning: To flatter someone

History: An ancient Indian custom involved throwing balls of clarified butter at statues of the gods to seek favor.



Saying: Caught red handed

Meaning: To be caught doing something wrong

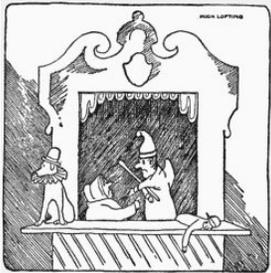
History: This saying originated because of a law. If someone butchered an animal that didn't belong to him, he had to be caught with the animal's blood on his hands to be convicted. Being caught with freshly cut meat did not make the person guilty.



Saying: Eat humble pie

Meaning: Making an apology and suffering humiliation along with it

History: During the Middle Ages, the lord of a manor would hold a feast after hunting. He would receive the finest cut of meat at the feast, but those of a lower standing were served a pie filled with the entrails and innards, known as "umbles." Therefore, receiving "umble pie" was considered humiliating because it informed others in attendance of the guest's lower status.



Saying: Pleased as punch

Meaning: To be very happy

History: A 17th century puppet show for children called Punch and Judy featured a puppet named Punch who always killed people. The act of killing brought him pleasure, so he felt pleased with himself afterwards.

Saying: Rub the wrong way

Meaning: To irritate, bother, or annoy someone

History: In colonial America, servants were required to wet-rub and dry-rub the oak-board floors each week. Doing it against the grain caused streaks to form, making the wood look awful and irritating the homeowner.

Saying: Saved by the bell

Meaning: Rescued from an unwanted situation

History: As scary as it sounds, being buried alive was once a common occurrence. People who feared succumbing to such a fate were buried in special coffins that connected to a bell above ground. At night, guards listened for any bells in case they had to dig up a living person and save them "by the bell."



Saying: Go cold turkey

Meaning: To quit something abruptly

History: People believed that during withdrawal, the skin of drug addicts became translucent, hard to the touch, and covered with goose bumps – like the skin of a plucked turkey.



Saying: Go the whole 9 yards

Meaning: To try one's best

History: World War II Fighter pilots received a 9-yard chain of ammunition. Therefore, when a pilot used all of his ammunition on one target, he gave it "the whole 9 yards."

Saying: Kick the bucket

Meaning: To die

History: When a cow was killed at a slaughterhouse, a bucket was placed under it while it was positioned on a pulley. Sometimes the animal's legs would kick during the adjustment of the rope and it would literally kick the bucket before being killed.

Saying: Let your hair down

Meaning: To relax or be at ease

History: Parisian nobles risked condemnation from their peers if they appeared in public without an elaborate hairdo. Some of the more intricate styles required hours of work, so of course it was a relaxing ritual for these aristocrats to come home at the end of a long day and let their hair down.



Saying: Rule of thumb

Meaning: A common, ubiquitous benchmark

History: Legend has it that 17th century English Judge Sir Francis Buller ruled it was permissible for a husband to beat his wife with a stick, given that the stick was no wider than his thumb.



Saying: Waking up on the wrong side of the bed

Meaning: Waking up in a bad mood

History: The left side of the body or anything having to do with the left was often associated with something sinister. To ward off evil, innkeepers made sure the left side of the bed was pushed against a wall so guests had no other option but to get up on the right side of the bed.

Weekly Joke Section

Q: Why was the baby strawberry crying?

A: Because her mom and dad were in a jam!

Q: How do you stop an astronaut and baby from crying?

A: You rocket!

Q: What happens to a frog's car when it breaks down?

A: It gets toad away!

I was wondering why the baseball was coming towards me...and then it hit me