Words Beyond Words

Use story clues to explain idioms and proverbs.

4.L.5.b "Recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms and proverbs."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline four expressions that mean more than their words say. Circle a nearby clue that helps you understand each one.

The Book Swap

1. On Saturday, Mina and Leo helped set up the school book swap. Leo rushed toward a tall stack of boxes and reached for the top one. "Hold your horses," Mina said. "We need to move the bottom boxes first, or the stack might fall." Leo stopped and waited while Mina showed him a safer way to carry the books. Together they began sorting them by type.

2. Soon two more classmates arrived. Mina asked everyone to place picture books on the blue cloth and chapter books on the green cloth. "Are we on the same page?" she asked. Each helper repeated the plan, so nobody put books in the wrong spot. The boxes emptied quickly. "Many hands make light work," Leo said as four students carried the last box together.

3. Before the doors opened, Leo spotted a long line outside. "Every book will be gone in ten minutes!" he said. Mina shook her head. "Don't count your chickens before they hatch. We do not know how many books people will take." After an hour, some books still filled the tables. Leo smiled. He had guessed too soon, but there was time to help visitors find stories they liked.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does Mina mean by “Hold your horses”? Which action helps you know?

2. When Mina asks if everyone is “on the same page,” what does she want to know? What do the helpers do next?

3. What does “Many hands make light work” mean at the book swap? Use a detail from the story.

4. Why does Mina tell Leo, “Don’t count your chickens before they hatch”? What happens that shows she was right?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a short scene that uses a common idiom or proverb not in the passage. Show what it means through something a character says or does.

ANSWER KEY

Words Beyond Words

GRADE 4 · 4.L.5.b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline four expressions that mean more than their words say. Circle a nearby clue that helps you understand each one. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does Mina mean by "Hold your horses"? Which action helps you know?	**She means Leo should stop and wait. Leo stops reaching for the top box and waits.**
2	When Mina asks if everyone is "on the same page," what does she want to know? What do the helpers do next?	**She wants to know if everyone understands the plan. The helpers repeat where each type of book goes.**
3	What does "Many hands make light work" mean at the book swap? Use a detail from the story.	**A job is easier when people work together. Four students carry the last box together.**
4	Why does Mina tell Leo, "Don't count your chickens before they hatch"? What happens that shows she was right?	**She means Leo should not assume every book will be taken. After an hour, books are still on the tables.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

When Amir joined our chess club, he was too shy to speak. I asked him about his favorite game to break the ice. Soon we were talking and laughing as we set up the board.

Accept explanations in the student's own words when they match the expression's meaning and use a relevant story clue. For Your Turn, the scene should use an expression not found in the passage and make its meaning clear through context.