

KNOW YOUR ENGLISH EDUCATION

The cat is out of the bag

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“After shouting at me for five minutes, she tells me I know nothing about computers.”

“That’s how Sujatha is! You know that! Now, pull yourself together and get on with the job at hand.”

“Pull myself together? How do I do that?”

“When you tell someone to pull himself together, what you’re asking him to do is to calm down – to stop being angry or upset about something.”

“In other words, you want me to regain my composure. How about this example? Sujatha’s dad has always been tough on her. Whenever something didn’t go according to plan, he told her to pull herself together.”

“When Devashish lost the election by two votes, we thought he would be devastated. But he pulled himself together in no time.”

“That’s true. Although everyone expected the race to be neck to neck, I don’t think anyone expected Devashish to lose.”

“I don’t think he did either. By the way, it’s ‘neck and neck’ and not ‘neck to neck.’”

“The race is too close to call. The three candidates are running neck and neck.”

“My grandmother says as you get older, it becomes difficult to pull yourself together.”

“That’s understandable, I guess. As you get older, it becomes difficult to deal with the unexpected. Talking about the unexpected, I hear that you and your friends are throwing your boss a surprise party.”

Not a surprise

“Who told you about the party? Who let the cat out of the bag?”

“Cat? What cat? What are you talking about?”

“When you say, ‘don’t let the cat out of the bag’, what you mean is keep it a secret. In this case, don’t tell anyone about the party.”

“And if someone does let the cat out the bag, it means that they have revealed the secret.”

“That’s right! They may have revealed the secret to someone quite unintentionally – accidentally. Only two people in our office knew about the merger, and they did not let the cat out of the bag till the two companies had signed the relevant contracts.”

“Rupa wanted her engagement to Suresh to be a secret. But her best friend Shanthi let the cat out of the bag.”

“So, who let the cat out of the bag regarding the party? Was it Suman?”

“How does it matter? How is your boss’ new house? I saw the ad in the paper, and...”

“The complex is quite fancy, all right! Considering how much the builder was charging for each villa, I thought the construction work was pretty slipshod.”

“Slipshod? Does it mean a careless piece of work? Not well done?”

“That’s right! When you say that a piece of work is slipshod, what you’re suggesting is that it hasn’t been well thought out or executed. It’s crude and full of mistakes. The new manager was fired when he made a slipshod presentation at the board meeting.”

“The assignment we submitted was slipshod. We’ve been asked to redo it.”

“Praveen is a wonderful carpenter. But whatever you do, never hurry him. If you do, he gets angry and does a slipshod job.”

“In that case, I’ll stay out of his way.”

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Dogs look up to us. Cats look down on us. Pigs treat us as equals. – Winston Churchill

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