Adages and Proverbs

Practice

Print this page and then write your answers.

A. Underline the adage or proverb in each sentence, and then circle the correct meaning.

1. Although I was still mad at my cousin for losing my book, I decided to let sleeping dogs lie and not mention it again.
   a. It is better not to restart an old argument.
   b. It is better to let your relatives’ pets sleep on the floor.

2. When I pack my lunch, I always tell myself that an apple a day keeps the doctor away.
   a. Telling doctors you eat an apple every day keeps them from scolding you.
   b. Eating an apple every day keeps you in good health.

3. Dad said that while the rest of us are out grocery shopping, he’s going to make hay while the sun shines and take a nap.
   a. The best place to take a nap is outside in the sun.
   b. Take advantage of an opportunity while you have chance to do so.

4. When Danny asked his grandmother why she saved used wrapping paper, she replied, “Waste not, want not.”
   a. If you carefully save things, you will not find yourself in need of things.
   b. If you don’t want anything, you are not a wasteful person.

5. I didn’t want to move to a different town, but every cloud has a silver lining; I made lots of friends at my new school.
   a. You can find interesting shapes in every cloud in the sky.
   b. You can find something good in every bad situation.
B. Use your own words to explain what these common expressions mean.

1. Don’t count your chickens before they’re hatched.

2. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.