



Sport idioms

Here are some commonly-used idioms that originated from sport. Can you guess which sport they came from?

	Idiom	Sport
1.	the ball is in your court	
2.	a hit below the belt	
3.	to be on target	
4.	to jump the gun	
5.	to learn the ropes	
6.	neck and neck	
7.	to keep your eye on the ball	
8.	to win hands down	
9.	it's a long shot	
10.	to throw in the towel	



Now match the idioms with their meaning.

	Idiom		Meaning
1.	the ball is in your court	a)	to be making good progress with the task at hand, likely to meet the deadline
2.	a hit below the belt	b)	to give up
3.	to throw in the towel	c)	something that is unlikely to succeed but is worth trying
4.	to jump the gun	d)	to learn how to do a job or activity
5.	to learn the ropes	e)	to stay alert and pay attention to what is happening
6.	neck and neck	f)	it's your turn to make the next move
7.	to keep your eye on the ball	g)	to win easily
8.	to win hands down	h)	to do something too soon, before everyone else or before the right or proper time
9.	a long shot	i)	level in a race or other competition
10.	to be on target	j)	a comment that is inappropriate, insulting or unfair

Use the idioms to complete the sentences. You might have to change the pronouns or the forms of the verbs.

1. I'm relatively new to teaching. I am still _____.
2. Samsung and Apple are _____ when it comes to the smartphone market in the US.
3. In business it's very important to _____ in case you miss an opportunity or overlook a competitor's move.
4. There was no need to bring his late parents into the discussion. It was _____.
5. It's _____ my handbag will ever be found, but I've decided to report the theft to the police anyway.
6. They _____ and went ahead with the construction before a building permission had been granted.
7. You can't _____ now, after just being turned down for a job twice. You must keep trying.
8. I'm proud to say we _____ with the launching of our new perfume range on 15th, as planned.
9. I've told my boss under what conditions I would stay in the company so now _____.
10. The president was sure he'd _____ the election _____ but a recent scandal has weakened his political position.