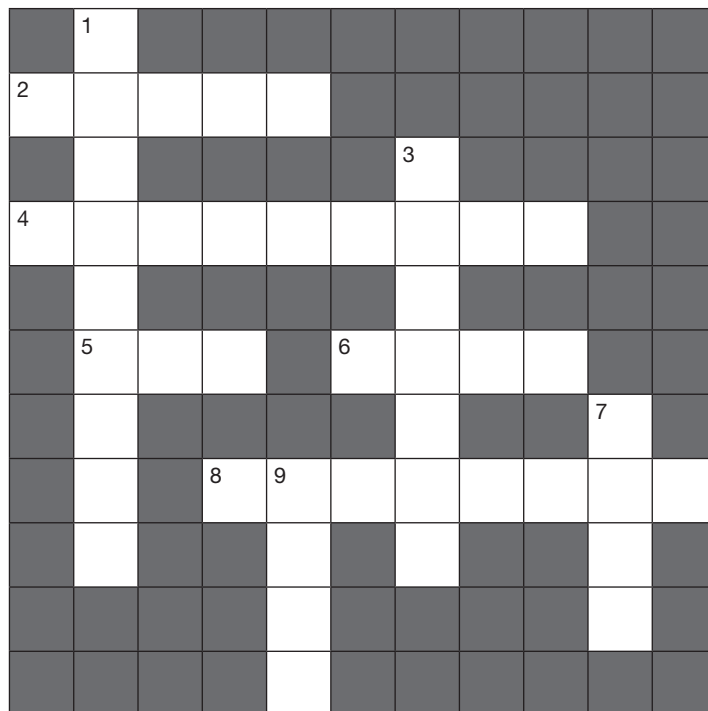


## Trouble and difficulty

- 1 Complete the idioms so that they mean the same as the phrase in *italics*. Use the correct form of any verbs. Then use the words to complete the crossword.



### Across

- 2 They have a very *difficult task to do, involving a lot of hard work* if they're going to solve the problem. They have a **mountain to** ..... *climb* .....
- 4 The main *problem which stops us achieving something* has been people's attitudes. The main ..... **block** has been people's attitudes.
- 5 His comments have landed him *in a difficult situation in which people are angry with him*. His comments have landed him **in** ..... **water** .....
- 6 Her next job was even worse. She had moved *from a bad situation to an even worse one*. She had jumped **out of the frying pan into the** .....
- 8 As with all projects, we had a few *problems in the early stages*. We had a few **teething** .....

### Down

- 1 I didn't really think it would work – I was *just trying anything that might succeed because I was desperate*. I was ..... **at straws** .....
- 3 She gets cross with me, so I get cross with her and of course, this makes her even more angry – *it's a situation in which one problem causes another problem, which then makes the first problem worse*. It's just a ..... **circle** .....
- 7 They *had an extremely upsetting and difficult time* when Julia went missing. They ..... **through hell** .....
- 9 I was new to the job and I didn't want to do anything to *cause trouble in the situation*. I didn't want to ..... **the boat** .....

2 Complete the idioms in the dialogue with these words.

stone

tall

fire

rough

bears

**Ava:** How are you, Sara?

**Sara:** Oh, tired and stressed, but otherwise okay!

**Ava:** Oh, poor you! Is it the studying that's getting you down?

**Sara:** Yes, and Tom is so grumpy these days. He's under a lot of stress at work. It's his first proper job, and he's managing three other people. So it's a real **baptism of** <sup>1</sup>.....*fire*..... for him.

**Ava:** Yes, it must be. Does he talk to you about how he's feeling?

**Sara:** No. You know Tom! Getting him to tell me anything is **like getting blood out of a** <sup>2</sup>.....!

**Ava:** And what about your exams? How's the studying going?

**Sara:** It's hard. I knew that taking four exams in the same year would be a <sup>3</sup>..... **order**, but I didn't realize how tough it would be.

**Ava:** Is your mum being supportive?

**Sara:** Yes, but it's hard for her. I'm often quite irritable with her. It's not her fault that I'm having these problems, but she <sup>4</sup>..... **the brunt of** it. She's having a <sup>5</sup>..... **ride** at work, too. Her boss treats her badly.

**Ava:** Oh poor thing, she doesn't deserve that!

**3** Read these statements about the conversation in exercise 2.

Are they true (T) or false (F)?

- 1 Tom's first real experience of work has been easy. .... *F*
- 2 Sara thinks her mother is affected by her bad moods more than anyone else. ....
- 3 Tom talks freely to Sara about his feelings. ....
- 4 Sara knew that it would not be easy to take four exams in the same year. ....
- 5 Sara's mother is having problems herself at work at the moment. ....

**4** Write the idioms from the conversation in exercise 2 next to the correct definition.

- 1 something that will be very difficult to do ..... *a tall order* .....
- 2 to suffer the most in a situation .....
- 3 (of information or money) extremely difficult to get .....
- 4 a first experience of a situation that is very difficult .....
- 5 a lot of problems .....

## **Trouble and difficulty – Answer key**

---

### **Exercise 1**

#### **Across**

- 2** climb
- 4** stumbling
- 5** hot
- 6** fire
- 8** troubles

#### **Down**

- 1** clutching
- 3** vicious
- 7** went
- 9** rock

### **Exercise 2**

- 1** fire
- 2** stone
- 3** tall
- 4** bears
- 5** rough

### **Exercise 3**

- 1** F
- 2** T
- 3** F
- 4** T
- 5** T

### **Exercise 4**

- 1** a tall order
- 2** bear the brunt
- 3** like getting blood out of a stone
- 4** a baptism of fire
- 5** a rough ride