

Language Usage

Below is a list of common expressions in the English language. Beside each expression, indicate whether you have ever used this expression or heard someone else use it. Then, using the rating scale below, indicate whether you believe the meaning of this expression is positive, neutral, or negative. After you have rated each expression, list the characteristics of the group associated with it (as implied by the expression). It is okay if you do not know the meaning or characteristics.

	1 Positive	2	3 Neutral	4	5 Negative			
Phrase						Have heard or used? (yes or no)	Rating (using scale above)	Characteristics of Group Referred to in Expression
1. Welsh on a bet						_____	_____	_____
2. Dutch treat (going Dutch)						_____	_____	_____
3. Indian giver						_____	_____	_____
4. Jew down a price						_____	_____	_____
5. Get your Irish up						_____	_____	_____
6. Ugly American						_____	_____	_____
7. Young Turk						_____	_____	_____
8. Excuse my French						_____	_____	_____
9. Got gypped						_____	_____	_____
10. Chinese fire drill						_____	_____	_____

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11. Get off Scot free _____
12. Barbarian _____
14. Mexican standoff _____
14. It's all Greek to me _____
15. Beware of Greeks bearing gifts _____



Definitions: Most from Random House Unabridged Dictionary (2nd Edition), 1993, New York, Random House. Others from Oxford English Dictionary.

Welsh: To cheat by failing to pay a gambling debt (*you aren't going to welsh on me, are you?*); to go back on one's word (*he welshed on his promise*).

Dutch treat (going Dutch): A meal or entertainment for which each person pays his or her own expenses.

Indian giver: A person who gives a gift and then takes it back.

Jew: To bargain sharply with, beat down in price.

Irish up: to become angry or outraged (don't get your Irish up over a little matter like that).

American: Of or pertaining to the United States or its inhabitants. **Ugly:** Disagreeable; unpleasant; objectionable.

Young Turk: An insurgent in a political party, especially one that supports liberal or progressive policies. (Note: one definition of Turk is a cruel, brutal and domineering man.)

Excuse my French: Links the French language with negative language

Take French leave: Leave without saying goodbye to host; to do anything without permission or notice.

Gypped: To defraud or rob by some sharp practice; swindle; cheat. From relationship to Gypsy.

Chinese fire drill: A state of chaotic, often clamorous disorder

Get off Scot free: No consequences or payment. Related to use of Scotch as frugal and thrifty, sometimes in an offensive way.

Barbaric: A person living outside; a person not living in a Christian country or within a Christian civilization.

Jewish American Princess: A pampered young Jewish woman, especially one who takes material advantages for granted.

Mexican Standoff:

It's all Greek to me:



***Peanut Gallery:
Beware of Greek's bearing gifts***

Reference: Bolinger, D. (1990). *The loaded weapon: The use and abuse of language today*. Longman.

