A PIECE OF CAKE

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PDF 1: Reading & Comprehension

Piece of Cake!

A Fun English Idiom Story



Warm-up Questions (Discuss in pairs – 5 minutes)

1. What do you say in your language when something is very easy to do?
2. When was the last time you thought “This is easy!”?

Vocabulary Builder

Word	Sounds Like	Meaning
Idiom	ID-ee-um	a common expression with a special meaning
Easy	EE-zee	not difficult
Task	task	a piece of work or job
Simple	SIM-pul	easy to do or understand
Origin	OR-i-jin	where something comes from
Effort	EF-ert	the work or energy needed to do something
Confident	KON-fi-dent	feeling sure about something

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Reading Passage (approx. 235 words)

Piece of Cake! – The Story Behind the English Idiom

“It’s a piece of cake!”

This popular English idiom means **something is very easy to do**. When a task is simple and requires almost no effort, native speakers say “It’s a piece of cake!”

For example:

- “Don’t worry about the test. It’s a piece of cake!”
- “Cooking dinner tonight? That’s a piece of cake for me.”

The origin of this idiom is quite interesting. One popular theory comes from the 1930s in America. The poet Ogden Nash wrote: “A writer is a person for whom writing is more difficult than it is for other people.” Someone replied, “Writing is a piece of cake for me!” The phrase became popular after that.

Another theory links it to the “cakewalk” — a 19th-century dance competition where the prize was a cake. The dance was so easy and graceful that winning it felt like “a piece of cake.”

During World War II, British and American pilots in the Royal Air Force (RAF) also used the expression. When a mission was simple and low-risk, they would say “It’s a piece of cake!”

Today, “a piece of cake” is used everywhere — at school, at work, and in daily life — to mean something is surprisingly easy and enjoyable.

Comprehension Questions

1. What does “It’s a piece of cake!” mean?
2. Give one example sentence using this idiom.
3. According to the reading, what is one possible origin of the idiom?
4. True or False: The idiom comes only from the cakewalk dance.
5. When did British and American pilots start using this expression?
6. In what situations do people usually say “It’s a piece of cake”?
7. Why is this idiom useful for English learners?

Discussion Questions (for class discussion or pairs)

1. Do you like this idiom? Why or why not?
2. What is something in your life right now that feels like “a piece of cake”?
3. What is something that feels difficult for you but might be “a piece of cake” for someone else?
4. Which origin story do you like more — the poet or the cakewalk? Why?

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Answer Key

1. Something is very easy to do.
2. Any reasonable example (e.g. “The homework was a piece of cake.”)
3. Ogden Nash’s comment or the cakewalk dance (or RAF pilots).
4. False
5. During World War II.
6. When a task is simple, low-risk, or requires little effort.
7. It helps you express that something is easy in a natural, friendly way.

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