

I've got a lot on my plate

Idiom of the month

a cura di Sarah Gudgeon

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1. Tick 5 things that make you feel stressed.

- a. exams
- b. movies
- c. family problems
- d. homework
- e. pets
- f. arguments with friends
- g. global problems like war and poverty.

Answers: Tick a;c;d;f;g

2a. Read

What's wrong, Ines?
You look really stressed.

I've got a lot on my plate, Samad. I've got exams next week, my grandma is really sick and my mum and her boyfriend argue every night.

That does sound stressful. Come round to my house for dinner tonight. I'll help you study and you can tell me more about the situation with your grandma and your mum and her boyfriend.

2b. Complete with the idiom of the month.

When someone has got _____ they are trying to manage a lot of situations at the same time.

Answer: When someone has got a lot on their plate they are trying to manage a lot of situations at the same time.

We use the plate metaphor to talk about feeling stressed when we have too much to do because if you have too much food on your plate, it falls off and then you have a real problem. Similarly, if you try to put too many things on your mental 'to do' list, you overload your brain and this leads to stress and feelings of anxiety.

3. Underline in green the things that you should do when you feel like you have got a lot on your plate. Underline the things you shouldn't do in red.

- a. Make a realistic 'to do' list. List all the things you have to do in order of priority and complete each task calmly and methodically.
- b. Don't talk to anyone
- c. Create a realistic study plan before exams and give yourself plenty of breaks.
- d. Spend time with your family and friends.
- e. Stay alone in your room all day.
- f. Talk to a responsible adult about any problems that are making you very anxious.
- g. Take exercise, eat well and go to bed early.
- h. Spend all day on social media.

Answers: Underline: a;c;d;f;g in green. Underline b;e;h in red.

4.a. Read this message from a friend.

Hi Rachel.

I can't come to your party tonight, sorry.

I've got a lot on my plate at the moment.

See you soon.

Rosie

4b. Reply to your friend. Include these points in your message:

- Say you are sorry she can't come to the party
- Ask her why she has got a lot on her plate
- Tell her to call you tomorrow to talk about her problems.

Sample answer:

Hi Rosie,

I'm sorry you can't come to my party tonight.

Why have you got a lot on your plate?

Call me tomorrow to talk about your problems.

See you soon.

Rachel