

Catch Word #278 – Left to your own devices (Ad free)

Episode description

In this episode of Catch Word, Andrew and Kassy teach you two useful expressions for describing situations where you are left alone without support: "Left to your own devices" and "High and dry." With several helpful example conversations, they discuss the meaning and nuance of these expressions and provide easy-to-understand explanations to help you know how to use them in different real-life situations.

Fun fact

The expression "high and dry" has sailing origins. It was used to describe ships that were stranded on land when the tide went out, leaving them "high" on the shore and "dry" without water. This expression has been used as early as the 1700s to describe being abandoned without help or resources.

Expressions included in the study guide

- To be left to one's own devices
- [To be left] high and dry
- To slack off
- To hit close to home
- All's well that ends well
- [To hold up] one's end of the bargain



Transcript

Note: The words and expressions that appear in **bold text** within the transcript are discussed in more detail in the Detailed Explanations section that follows the transcript. The transcript has been edited for clarity.

Andrew: Catch Word number 278, "**Left to your own devices.**" Featuring Andrew and Kassy. Hello and welcome to another episode of Catchword. Today I'm here with my co-host Kassy. Hello, Kassy. How's it going?

Kassy: Hey, Andrew. I'm doing well and I'm excited to talk about our two catchword phrases today.

Andrew: Yeah, today we are going to be diving into another vocabulary lesson and talking about some expressions that you can use when you're all alone, when all of your help or support has gone and you're all by yourself. Guys, don't worry though. You're not all by yourself today. We're here to support you. OK. These are some expressions that you aren't going to be using for this kind of situation because you're not alone. So, Kassy, why don't we get into it here and explain to everyone about the two expressions that we are going to be learning? They are, as I mentioned, expressions that you could use for talking about situations where you might feel abandoned or left alone. You're on your own, you're by yourself. What are the two key expressions for today?

Kassy: The first one is "**Left to your own devices**" and the second one is "**High and dry**" or "**To be left high and dry.**" I think the second one sounds more like abandonment, but the first one could honestly be a good thing sometimes. Sometimes you like **being left to your own devices** and listeners, you'll find out why in the next few minutes.

Andrew: Yeah, exactly. I think that's a good point. Both of these expressions are related, and we use them in kind of similar contexts when you are left alone. But as you mentioned, Kassy, there is a nuance between them and sometimes being left alone can

actually be a good thing, right? It's case by case. So, we'll get into it, and we'll explain the nuance between these two expressions, what kind of situations you want to use them in and what they mean exactly right now. So, let's get started and we're going to begin with **"Left to your own devices."** **Left to your own devices.** And Kassy, I don't know, these days when you see this word or hear this word "devices," what pops into your mind?

Kassy: Automatically electronics pop into my mind, like phones, computers, iPads, but that is not what we mean in this phrase.

Andrew: Right. Yeah. I think, you know, like if you on the surface saw this expression, **"Left to your own devices,"** you might get confused and you might think, oh, this just means like using your iPad alone.

Kassy: Which kind of it could, it could mean that, but...

Andrew: It could mean that, but this "devices," this expression goes back way, way, way, way, way farther in history than the modern era, the last 20 years or so where we've had these personal electronic devices to use. So, this is not what it means. It's not connected exactly to electronic devices. In fact, Kassy, this idiom means to be left alone, to do whatever you want without any help or supervision. And like you said, it might mean just using your iPad by yourself, but it doesn't have to. OK? It's broader than that. It means being left alone to do whatever you want without any help or supervision.

Kassy: And this expression is often used passively. You're usually talking about someone else or a figurative someone else.

Andrew: Yeah, that's a great point, Kassy. So let me just break that down. What that means is, often we would say, like, let's say, for example, at work, you **were left to your own devices.** Your boss left you alone. OK? Your boss just said, "OK, Kassy, you're on

your own. Do what you want. I'm going on a business trip for the day, and you're by yourself in the office." OK? In that situation, it would be more common to say, "**I was left to my own devices**" instead of saying, "My boss **left me to my own devices**." Right? We usually use it like, "**I was left to my own devices**" or, "**He was left to his own devices**." We can say it both actively and passively, but I do think that you're right there, Kassy, that there's more of a tendency to use this in the passive voice. We don't really focus on who did the leaving. We more focus on the action of us being left. And yeah, so this expression just in general is about being given freedom and often without guidance or support. So, Kassy, could you think of an example for us, kind of situation where we would use this expression?

Kassy: Honestly, I think this expression is used most with children or pets. When kids are young or when pets are young as well, you tend to have to give them a lot of attention and you can't leave them alone for a long time. But as they get older or more mature, parents can, you know, give them a bit more freedom and **leave them to their own devices**. They can trust them to not destroy the house without them being there 24/7.

Andrew: And here, I think this word "devices" really means like the resources that the person has, maybe mentally, like their mental resources or their physical resources. They're left alone just to use what they know how to do or what they can do already. That's what the word "devices" is referring to in this expression. So, like we said, it's not talking about the electronic devices that we're all so familiar with. It's more like the mental and physical resources, the emotional resources that we already have within us. And yeah, Kassy, I think that's right. Any person or animal that needs and requires supervision, when that supervision is gone, then they're **left to their own devices**. So usually that's the kind of context we'll use it in. And with that being said, I think we can just jump right into a couple of example conversations to help us understand how to use this expression better. So, let's do it. We'll take a listen to the first one right now. Here we go.

Friend 1: Hey, didn't you say that work was pretty chill this week?

Friend 2: Yeah, it's been nice. My boss is out of town, so **we've been left to our own devices at work**. It's awesome.

Friend 1: Wow, that sounds so relaxing. Did you get a lot of stuff done?

Friend 2: No, not really, to be honest. We kind of just goofed around and chilled out. But I guess tomorrow we're going to have to get busy because the boss comes back on Monday.

Andrew: So, in this conversation, we hear two friends talking about a boss who is away on vacation. He was out of town. And because of that, one of the friends **was left to their own devices** at work. So, I guess this is a kind of situation where usually the boss is doing a lot of direct supervision. Maybe directing the employees what to do. "Do this, do that, do this, you know, report back to me." It's kind of direct supervision. But since the boss is away, then the employees have more freedom and they are supposed to, probably, still maintain the same level of work and effort. But it sounds like they're **slacking off** a little bit and not working so hard when the boss is away.

Kassy: You know, everybody needs a rest day or two, right?

Andrew: What is it that that little rhyme, Kassy? It's like, "While the teacher's away, the students will play." Something like that?

Kassy: Oh, yeah, I've heard of that. Yep.

Andrew: Yeah, it's kind of like that, right? When the boss is away, the employees will play. Anyways, that gives us a nice context for how we can use this expression. And before we move on, let's listen to one final example right now.

Friend 1: How was the workshop that you attended last week?

Friend 2: It was a bit disorganized. The instructor **left us to our own devices** most of the time.

Friend 1: Oh, no. Did you learn anything?

Friend 1: I mean, a little, but it was mostly self-directed learning. I could have done that from home.

Andrew: OK, let's break down this example conversation. Kassy, could you do us the honors? What did we hear in that one?

Kassy: Sure. This example **hits close to home** because this happens to me a lot as an educator. I don't know about college professors, Andrew, but international schoolteachers often have to do PD days, professional development. And just like in this case, sometimes the workshops or the trainings you go to can be a bit disorganized and you **are left to your own devices**, which means you're not really getting any direct instruction. They're telling you to, you know, go find something that inspires you and see if it will support your teaching style or whatever job you have. It's not very effective.

Andrew: Yeah. So, in this context, we hear the expression used in a negative way. Right? In the first example conversation, it was actually used in a positive way. Like, I **was left to my own devices** at work. The boss wasn't bothering me, wasn't distracting me. I had a lot of freedom. In the second usage example, we hear it used in this negative way where it's like the speaker actually wanted more interaction with the instructor. They wanted more direct teaching. They wanted more involvement, but they didn't get that. So here it's kind of negative, right? I wanted this direct interaction with the instructor, but I didn't get that. I was just left on my own. I was **left to my own devices**. And so, this really illustrates and shows us that it's context specific, right? It depends on the context and the way that you express

yourself, your tone of voice, that is going to tell us if this is a positive or negative experience that you've had.

Kassy: Exactly. And it depends on the person too, right, Andrew? Other people that join this workshop might be ecstatic that they **are left to their own devices** instead of having to listen to an instructor the entire time.

Andrew: Right. So, it really depends on the context. Great. OK, Kassy, I think we're ready to move on to our second key expression for this episode, which is "**High and dry.**" **High and dry.** Now, this idiom, as you mentioned a little bit earlier, Kassy, is usually negative, always negative. I wouldn't say that there's a positive meaning **to being left high and dry.** And that's a good point too. We use this also with the verb "To leave." And in the past tense, we change that to "Left." And usually, we're using this expression to talk about a past situation. Not always, but most of the time. And so often it will be "**To be left high and dry.**" So, this just means to be left in a difficult situation without any help or without any resources, kind of like you're just abandoned. Right?

Kassy: Yes. I love this phrase. It makes me think of pirates because the origin of this phrase actually comes from the maritime world where a ship **is left high and dry**, where it is stranded on land after the tide goes out. So, this ship can no longer move. It's stuck in the sand until the water comes back in and can take it out to the ocean.

Andrew: Yeah, it's a great visual. It's really easy to imagine. Like, imagine the ocean is your support network, your help for getting a task done. But then the tide, the tide is what we call the, you know, when the ocean moves due to the gravitational forces and the moon. Right?

Kassy: Ooh, that's a strong, it's a big phrase: "Gravitational forces."

Andrew: It's hard to describe the tide in an easy way. When the water goes out daily, you know how the ocean moves in and out. So, when the water goes out and suddenly the ocean disappears, right? A boat in that situation might get stuck on the sand and there's no water to help the boat float. It's lost its support network, literally its support network. So, **it's left high and dry**. High on the sand and dry because there's no water. So, we can use this metaphor also to talk about when our support, our help is gone and we're just left alone to fend for ourselves, to use another idiom, which means to fight by ourselves.

Kassy: Exactly. I like that you used that expression to fight by ourselves. Usually when you use the expression **left high and dry**, you are in a very stressful, no fun situation.

Andrew: Yeah, exactly. I think this is not a positive situation. If you're **left high and dry**, it's because you're complaining about something, right? Some kind of situation where you feel like you have been abandoned and left alone, but you need more support in order to do the task correctly or to be successful. Absolutely.

Kassy: Well, Andrew, should we take a listen to our first example conversation?

Andrew: Yeah, I think it's a good time to do that. So yeah, let's check it out. Here we go.

Friend 1: I heard your flight got cancelled. What happened?

Friend 2: It was a nightmare. They just **left us high and dry** at the airport with no information at all.

Friend 1: What? That sounds awful. Did you find another flight?

Friend 2: Eventually, but we had to figure everything out on our own. I'm never flying with that airline again.

Andrew: OK, let's break this example conversation down. So, Kassy, in this one, we heard a conversation between two friends and one of the friends was complaining about a travel nightmare that he had. And I think a lot of people who fly regularly probably can connect with this conversation, at least on some level, because one of the flights was cancelled and the traveler **was left high and dry** at the airport. So that just means that the flight was cancelled and then the airline didn't offer any support, didn't offer any help, and it was 100% entirely the traveler's job to try and figure out how to get to his destination. The airline just offered no support at all. He **was left high and dry**.

Kassy: Such a stressful situation.

Andrew: Has that ever happened to you, Kassy? Have you **been left high and dry** at the airport before?

Kassy: Luckily, I have not, but I **have been left high and dry** in other travel type situations. And it sucks.

Andrew: Never a fun situation to be in. Agreed. OK, let's listen to example conversation number two now.

Friend 1: How did your move go?

Friend 2: Ugh, not great. The moving company didn't even show up and we **were left high and dry**.

Friend 1: Yikes. So, what did you have to do?

Friend 2: We had to rent a truck and move everything ourselves. It was exhausting.

Andrew: Kassy, I know you had a recent move. If this situation happened to you for your move, it'd be pretty stressful, I think.

Kassy: Seriously, depending on how much stuff you have or if you know how to drive a big truck like that, I'd be freaking out.

Andrew: One time I had a situation where I was ready to move, and I had rented a U-Haul truck. In North America, it's really common to just rent a bigger size truck, a moving truck, and yeah, to move all of your own things. That's what I always did when I lived in Canada. But I went to the U-Haul office on the day of my reservation, and they said, "Sorry, we have no trucks."

Kassy: They really **left you high and dry** there. What'd you do?

Andrew: I had to go to another company and thankfully they actually had a truck in stock. And so, they were able to let me rent one of their trucks. But it was super stressful for those couple of hours where I was trying to figure that out because you know, you're like, you have all of your stuff packed up, you're ready to move and you have to go on that day because in the afternoon you have different people coming in to live in that apartment.

Kassy: Exactly. Yeah.

Andrew: I was stressing out, but **all's well that ends well**, I suppose. But I **was left high and dry**.

Kassy: Anyway, back to these conversations. I think both the airline **leaving someone high and dry** and this moving company **leaving someone high and dry** are perfect examples of when to use this phrase. And I think that the listeners can clearly see that these kinds of situations happen when you are depending on someone else or some other

company and you know, they just do not pull through with **their end of the bargain** that you made in the past.

Andrew: Well put. Yeah. Very good, Kassy. We're going to wrap things up here in just a second. But before we do, I want to give one little cultural note for all of the music fans out there. Kassy, I don't know if you know these bands because you're too young, but for old folks like me, there's a song from 1988 going all the way back to 1988 by the amazing British group, the Pet Shop Boys. And they have a song called "**Left to My Own Devices**." And then to fast forward to the 90s, I think it was 1995 that Radiohead released their song called, "**High and Dry**." So, guys, if you want to hear these expressions in very popular British pop songs, actually, then there are two songs that I recommend to you. "**Left to My Own Devices**" by the Pet Shop Boys and "**High and Dry**" by Radiohead. And Kassy, you can check those two out too, if you don't know them.

Kassy: I will, right after recording.

Andrew: You know, Radiohead was one of my favorite bands when I was a teenager. But now that I'm a little bit older, I think I actually would prefer the Pet Shop Boys. So, I don't know. It's funny how our tastes change over time. But yeah, listeners, check those tunes out and let me know what you think. And with that said, Kassy, I think that will bring us to the end. So please, everyone, take care. Happy English studies as always. And we'll catch you in the next episode. Bye bye.

Kassy: See ya.

Andrew: That brings us to the end of this lesson. Talk to you next time. Bye.

Detailed Explanations

To be left to one's own devices

Idiomatic verb

Andrew and Kassy explain that "**to be left to one's own devices**" is an idiom used to describe a situation where someone is left alone to make their own decisions without any help or supervision.

For example, when the boss is out of town, the employees will **be left to their own devices** at work, meaning they have to manage everything on their own. Another example is a child staying alone at home while her mother quickly goes out to the store. The child's mother is **leaving her to her own devices** – hopefully she makes good decisions and won't get into trouble while her mother is absent!

To be left to one's own devices can be either positive or negative, depending on the situation. For instance, **being left to your own devices** at work could mean having the freedom to work independently, but it could also mean feeling abandoned without any support.

Be careful not to confuse "devices" in this phrase with electronic gadgets like phones or tablets. In this case, "devices" refers to personal abilities and resources, not physical devices.

A similar expression is "to be left to fend for oneself," although this is usually used in a negative situation. A similar positive expression is "to be given free rein."

Here are a couple more examples with **to be left to one's own devices**:

Nicole: Did you manage to finish the project on your own?

Liam: Yes, I **was left to my own devices** after my partner called in sick, but I handled it.

Howard: How was your weekend, Beth?

Beth: It was interesting. My husband was away with the kids visiting his parents, so I **was left to my own devices** all weekend.

Howard: Did you enjoy your solitude?

Beth: Yes, it was a wonderful change of pace. I had a really relaxing day on Saturday and a very productive day on Sunday!

[To be left] high and dry

Idiomatic verb

The next idiom explained in this episode is “**high and dry**.” Similar to “**to be left to one’s own devices**,” “**to be left high and dry**” means to be abandoned in a difficult situation without help.

This idiomatic verb is often used to describe scenarios where someone is left to handle a problem on their own without the necessary support. For instance, if your co-worker promised to help you with a big project but then didn’t show up to work, you could say, “**I was left high and dry** with all the work.”

The origin of **high and dry** comes from maritime terminology. When the tide goes out and leaves a boat on dry land, the boat is considered **high and dry**. This imagery is effective in conveying the sense of being stranded and helpless. To remember this expression, think of a boat stuck on dry land without water. This visual can help you recall that **high and dry** means being left without the help or resources you need.

Common mistakes to avoid:

- Don’t use **high and dry** for positive situations. It’s only for when things go wrong.
- Make sure the situation truly involves being left without support. For example, don’t say “**I was left high and dry**” if someone simply forgot to call you back.

Similar expressions include “to be left in the lurch,” “left stranded,” and “left holding the bag.”

Here are a few more examples with **[to be left] high and dry**:

Michaela: I heard your car broke down on the highway. What did you do?

Christopher: It was awful. I called for roadside assistance, but they never came. I **was left high and dry** for hours until a passerby helped me.

Victor: How was your daughter’s baby shower?

Jenna: Oh, it was an absolute disaster. The caterer canceled last minute and we **were left high and dry** trying to find a replacement on short notice.

Victor: Oh no!

Jenna: We ended up ordering pizza. It wasn’t glamorous, but at least everyone was fed!

To slack off

Phrasal verb

In response to the first example dialogue for “**to be left to one’s own devices**,” Andrew says, "It sounds like the [employees] **are slacking off** a little bit and not working so hard when the boss is away."

The phrasal verb **to slack off** means to be lazy or to not work as hard as you should. It can refer to reducing the amount of effort you put into something or to take it easy instead of working hard.

You can use this expression when someone is not putting in the required effort, especially in work or study contexts. For example, if you see a student not paying attention in class and not doing their homework, you might say, "He's **slacking off**." Another example is a worker who should be finishing a report but is just playing Solitaire on her computer. She's **slacking off** instead of completing her job responsibilities.

The origin of **slack off** comes from the word "slack," which means loose or not tight. When you **slack off**, you are loosening your effort or not keeping it tight and focused. To remember this expression, think of a rope that is slack and not tight. Just like a slack rope is not doing its job well, **slacking off** means you are not working well.

Be careful not to describe someone taking a well-deserved break as “**slacking off**.” **Slacking off** implies being lazy or irresponsible, not resting.

Similar expressions include "to loaf around" and "to shirk responsibilities."

Here are a couple more examples with **to slack off**:

Gina: I've noticed some of you **have been slacking off** during your shifts.

Robbie: Sorry boss. We'll make sure to stay on task from now on.

Paula: Louis, I'm concerned about your grades. They seem to be dropping. Is anything the matter?

Louis: I admit that I've **been slacking off** lately. I've been much more interested in basketball than school these days.

Paula: I understand that you love athletics, honey, but your grades are important, too. Please try to focus a little more effort on maintaining a good GPA.

To hit close to home

Idiomatic verb

The second example dialogue for “to be left to one’s own devices” resonated with Kassy. She explains that the situation of receiving minimal support at professional workshops **hits close to home** for her because it happens to her a lot as an educator.

To hit close to home means that something affects you personally or feels very relevant to your own life. It usually refers to situations or topics that remind you of your own experiences, making you feel a strong emotional connection.

You can use this expression when you want to say that something is very similar to your own experiences or feelings. For example, if someone talks about having a hard time balancing work and family, and you also struggle with this, you might say, "That really **hits close to home** for me." Another example is watching a movie that involves a storyline about child going through a divorce. If your parents got divorced when you were a child and the movie made you feel emotional about that time in your life, you could say that it **hit close to home**.

To remember this idiomatic verb, think about something that is very important to you, like your home. When **something hits close to home**, it feels as important and personal as things related to your own home and family.

Similar expressions include "to resonate with" and "to strike a chord with."

Here are a few more examples with **to hit close to home**:

Britney: Are you okay, Jonathan? You look like you’ve been crying.

Jonathan: Yeah, I actually was crying a little just now. I just finished a book where the protagonist’s dog passes away from cancer. **It hit close to home** for me since my own dog died recently.

Britney: I’m so sorry to hear that. Can I give you a hug?

Emma: I was just watching the news about the hurricane landing in Texas. These extreme storm stories **hit close to home** for me because my parents were displaced from New Orleans when Hurricane Katrina happened.

Oliver: I can’t imagine how frightening and traumatizing it must be to experience a hurricane like that.

All's well that ends well

Expression

Andrew shares a stressful experience where he needed a moving truck, but the company he reserved a truck with suddenly had none available on the day he needed it. He had to find another company quickly. Even though it was stressful, he managed to get a truck and move his things. Andrew concludes his story by saying, "**all's well that ends well.**"

All's well that ends well is an old saying that means that if the final result is good, the difficulties or problems along the way do not matter.

You can use **all's well that ends well** to express relief and satisfaction when a challenging situation has a good outcome. For instance, let's say you participated in a job interview on Monday but you are convinced that you did an awful job and failed it. You feel terrible about yourself all week, but then you get a call from the employer and are offered the position. Although you were miserable all week, you might think, "**All's well that ends well!**"

One important thing to note is that **all's well that ends well** is used when talking about situations that had problems but finished well. It wouldn't make sense to use it if everything went perfectly from the beginning. Similarly, you shouldn't use it in situation that have a negative outcome.

Similar expressions include "the ends justify the means" and "everything turned out okay."

Here are a few more examples with **all's well that ends well**:

Mandy: I dropped my phone in the bathtub last night and it wouldn't turn on.

Nathan: That sucks. Is it still broken?

Mandy: Fortunately, no. I put it in rice overnight and it started working again this morning.
All's well that ends well!

Fred: Our camping trip was a disaster at first. We got lost and it started raining.

Ivy: Oh no! Did you manage to find the campsite and set up camp?

Fred: Yes, we eventually found it after hours of wandering. After our initial problems, it ended up being a great trip. The sun came out and the water in the lake was lovely.

Ivy: Sounds like **all's well that ends well.**

[To hold up] one's end of the bargain

Idiomatic verb

Kassy summarizes the explanation of **high and dry** by saying that this expression is great for situations when another person doesn't hold up their **end of the bargain**.

The expression **to hold up one's end of the bargain** means to do what you agreed to do in an agreement or deal. If someone **doesn't hold up their end of the bargain**, it means they didn't do what they promised to do.

For example, if two roommates agree to clean their house together, and one friend does the dishes while the other vacuums, both friends are **holding up their ends of the bargain**. Another example is a group project at school. If one member of the group finishes their assigned tasks but the other one **slacks off** and doesn't complete anything, the second member **isn't holding up their end of the bargain**.

The origin of this phrase comes from the idea of a "bargain" or agreement, where each party has a role to play. The term "hold up" means to maintain or keep something in place. So, **holding up your end of the bargain** means you are maintaining your responsibility in the agreement. To remember this expression, think of a bargain as a physical object, like a heavy load. If two people are carrying it together, each person must hold up their end to keep it from falling. This visual can help you remember that **holding up your end** means doing your part to keep the agreement going.

Similar expressions include "to keep your promise" and "to honor your commitment."

Here are a couple more examples with **[to hold up] one's end of the bargain**:

Walter: Rachel, we agreed you would handle the marketing for this project.

Rachel: Sorry, I've been swamped with other tasks.

Walter: We need to **hold up our end of the bargain** to make this partnership work.

Rachel: I understand. I'll focus on the marketing right away.

Tiffany: Alex, you said you would mow the lawn this weekend.

Alex: Sorry, I was busy. I'll do it next weekend.

Tiffany: We made a deal, Alex. If you mowed the lawn, I would let you go to Ben's party. You need to **hold up your end of the bargain**.

Quiz

1. When someone is "left to their own devices," what does it mean?

- a) They are given new gadgets to use.
- b) They are alone and have to manage by themselves.
- c) They are assigned a new task by their boss.
- d) They are given strict instructions to follow.

2. What emotion will you probably feel if you are "left high and dry"?

- a) Relief
- b) Excitement
- c) Frustration
- d) Disinterest

3. In which scenario is someone likely to "slack off"?

- a) When their boss is away and not watching them.
- b) When they receive a promotion.
- c) When they have a lot of energy.
- d) When they have an appropriate workload

4. Your friend tells you that the movie you just watched together "hit close to home for her." What does she mean?

- a) She didn't understand the movie.
- b) She found the movie very boring.
- c) She lives near where the movie was filmed.
- d) The movie reminded her of something personal in her life.

5. Which of the following is a good situation to say "All's well that ends well"?

- a) You had a difficult start to a project but everything turned out fine in the end.
- b) You started a project perfectly and finished it without any issues.
- c) You didn't start the project at all.
- d) You had problems throughout the project and it ended poorly.

Listening comprehension quiz

6. True or false: Andrew says that “**to be left to one’s own devices**” is in the passive voice and is seen more often than its active voice version, “to leave someone to their own devices.”
7. Why does Kassy say that the second example dialogue for “**to be left to one’s own devices**” **hits close to home** for her?
8. In the first example dialogue for the expression “high and dry,” why did the friend feel like they **were left high and dry** at the airport?
9. Why did Andrew feel like he **was left high and dry** when he booked a truck with the moving company?
10. True or False: Andrew says that he prefers the band Radiohead to the Pet Shot Boys these days.

Writing and discussion questions

1. Describe a time when you **were left to your own devices** and you had a *positive* experience.
2. Think of a situation where **you felt left high and dry**. What happened, and how did you resolve it? How did you feel about the lack of support?
3. Have you ever had a travel experience where things did not go as planned, like a flight getting canceled? How did you handle the situation?
4. Discuss the pros and cons of having less direct supervision at work or school. Do you prefer more freedom or more guidance?
5. Have you ever failed **to hold up your end of the bargain** and left a friend or coworker **high and dry**? If you have had this experience, why did it happen? Did you do anything to make up for leaving that person **high and dry**?

Quiz Answers

1.b 2.c 3.a 4.d 5.a

6. True

7. Because Kassy has been to many professional development workshops that were disorganized and had very little direction or support.

8. Because their flight was cancelled and the airline provided them with no information or support about getting to their destination.

9. Because the day of his truck reservation, the moving company told him there were no trucks left for him

10. False

Episode credits

Hosts: Andrew Bates and Kassy White

Music: *Something Elated* by Broke for Free

Episode preparation/research: Andrew Bates

Audio editor: Marshall Vaillancourt

Transcriptionist: Heather Bates

Study guide writer: Indiana Brown

English editor: Alina Morozova

Operations: Tsuyoshi Kaneshima

Image: RDNE Stock Project ([pexels.com](https://www.pexels.com))