

MONEY IS A LIQUID



What are they talking about?

You are in the executive lounge at JFK airport in New York. You are waiting for your flight when you overhear these comments made by different people around you. What are they talking about? Work with a partner and speculate on the meaning and the background to this comments.

1. "Do you mind? I only have Euros, my dollars are all dried up."
2. "I wouldn't if I were you. Investing in their stock at this moment is like pouring your money down the drain."
3. "Terrible really. They have only just started liquidating assets. I wonder how long they can stay afloat..."
4. "Obviously, in a situation like that, anybody would find it difficult to keep their head above water, financially I mean..."
5. "...can't believe that NICTEL went under!" "Yup, sank like a rock after the Argentine crisis."
6. "...getting restless. You know, this wage freeze hasn't been very popular."
7. "...until my paycheque arrives before I'm solvent again."

Money is a Liquid 1

Underline all the words or phrases above which are connected with LIQUID. Then match them to their meanings below.

- a) To waste money
- b) To have enough money to survive (2 examples)
- c) To be out of money
- d) To sell for cash, usually to pay off a debt
- e) To fail financially (2 examples)
- f) To fix at a particular level
- g) To have enough money to pay debts

Money is a Liquid 2

All of the above expressions concerning money use the metaphor that money is a liquid. Look at the following pairs of sentences. Complete the sentences using only one word. The word is the same for both sentences and is related in some way to liquid. When you are finished, check with a partner. Do you understand what the word means in each situation?

1. The ship _____ after hitting the iceberg.
Many internet businesses _____ after only three years.
2. With the high waves and rough water, I found it difficult to stay _____.
Even with both parents working, many families only just manage to stay _____.
3. When they woke up that morning they found that the lake had _____ overnight.
The government has _____ the price of water for the next two years.
4. In the summer of 1973, the river _____ and many crops were lost.
It looks like we'll have to end our holiday early. Our funds have _____.
5. The rescue workers' next challenge was to restore the _____ of clean, fresh water.
All of the companies in the group are obliged to disclose cash _____ information.
6. After the police pulled the body from the river, they realised that the victim had died by _____.
The situation was desperate, Harold was _____ in debts and couldn't keep going much longer.

THINK of **3** -Challenge!

Answer the following questions. You only have one minute for each one.

- Think of three reasons that a company might liquidate assets.
- Think of three big businesses that have gone under or sunk in the last ten years.
- Think of three times when you found it difficult to keep your head above water financially.
- Think of three investments which would be pouring your money down the drain.
- Think of three things which might be subject to a price freeze.

Money is a liquid- Teaching notes

An advanced vocabulary and idiom lesson. The aim is to introduce between ten and fifteen expressions connected to money in a business/professional context with an emphasis on meaning and using the phrases. A sub aim is to highlight the metaphor in English that money is considered a liquid, and that many expressions draw on that metaphor.

Warmer

Ask the class where they are likely to hear people talking about money, business and financial matters. Write the places up on the board. Some possibilities are: in a bank, at the stock market, on the street in the financial district of a city, in a business lounge at the airport, in the business class section of an airplane etc.

What are they talking about?

Explain that the students are having a drink in the executive lounge of JFK airport in New York before an international flight. They overhear some remarks about money. Hand out the worksheet and ask students in pairs to speculate what the sentences mean, and what could be the background to them. When they have finished, check back answers as a class.

Money is a liquid 1

Tell the students to highlight all the expressions in the examples that have something to do with LIQUID. Then do exercise 2, which involves matching the expressions to the meaning.

ANSWERS: a) pouring money down the drain b) stay afloat/ keep your head above water c) dried up d) liquidate e) go under / sink f) freeze g) solvent

Money is a liquid 2

Instruct students to do this in pairs, with a dictionary if necessary. There are some expressions from (1) above, but there are also some new ones.

ANSWERS: 1. sank 2. afloat 3. frozen 4. dried up 5. flow 6. drowning

Check back with class at the end, especially for the meaning of cash flow (the movement of money coming in as income and going out as wages, materials etc. It can be positive or negative.)

Think of 3

This is a quick speaking activity to get students using the new expressions. Divide the class into groups of 5 maximum. Copy and cut up each of the sentences and give each group a set of sentences. Each person in the group must take a sentence at random and answer the question. They must do this in a minute.