



American Expression E1299 Strike a chord

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"Strike a chord" is a commonly used idiomatic expression in the English language that conveys the idea of eliciting a strong emotional or empathetic response from someone. When something "strikes a chord," it means that it resonates with a person's feelings, experiences, or beliefs in a way that deeply affects them. This idiom is often used to describe the profound impact of music, words, or actions on an individual's emotions or thoughts.

The phrase "strike a chord" is derived from the world of music, particularly stringed instruments like guitars or pianos. In this context, striking a chord involves plucking or hitting the strings to produce a specific musical note or sound. Each chord has its own unique tone and quality, which can evoke various emotional responses in listeners. When a chord is struck on an instrument, it creates a harmonious or dissonant sound that can convey happiness, sadness, nostalgia, or other emotions.

Figuratively, "strike a chord" extends beyond the realm of music to encompass any situation where something resonates deeply with someone on an emotional or intellectual level. This resonance can be triggered by various forms of expression, including written or spoken words, art, film, personal experiences, or actions.

For example, if someone listens to a powerful speech that addresses a deeply held belief or personal experience, they might say, "That speech really struck a chord with me," indicating that it touched their heart or inspired strong emotions. Similarly, a movie that explores themes of love and loss might strike a chord with viewers who have experienced similar emotions in their lives.

"Strike a chord" is also often used in the context of empathy and understanding. When someone shares a personal story or reveals their vulnerability, others may respond by saying, "Your story really struck a chord with me," expressing their ability to relate to or sympathize with the person's experiences or emotions.

Moreover, this idiom emphasizes the power of human connection and shared experiences. It highlights the ability of words, actions, or creative works to bridge gaps between individuals, fostering understanding and empathy. When something strikes a chord, it can create a sense of unity and mutual understanding among people who may have diverse backgrounds or perspectives.

In conclusion, "strike a chord" is a figurative expression that signifies the profound impact of words, actions, or creative works on an individual's emotions, thoughts, or sense of empathy. Its origins in the world of music underscore the idea that certain expressions can evoke strong emotional responses, much like the harmonious or dissonant sounds produced by striking chords on a musical instrument. This idiom serves as a reminder of the power of human connection and the shared experiences that bring people closer together.

Questions for Discussion

1. Can you recall a specific instance when a piece of art, music, literature, or a personal story struck a chord with you? What was it about that experience that made it so emotionally resonant?
 2. How does the phrase "strike a chord" relate to the concept of empathy and shared human experiences? Can you provide examples of situations where this idiom signifies the power of understanding and connection?
 3. In what ways can individuals or artists intentionally use their creativity to strike a chord with their audience? Are there common themes or techniques that evoke strong emotional responses?
 4. Have you ever witnessed or been part of a conversation or dialogue where a particular topic or statement struck a chord with everyone present? What was the impact of that shared emotional connection on the discussion?
 5. Can you think of historical figures or contemporary artists who are known for their ability to consistently strike a chord with audiences through their work or actions? What qualities or elements contribute to their resonance with people?
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