



09 – VOCABULARY: PROBLEMS



There are many kinds of problem. Here are some:

Difficulty, obstacle, trouble, issue, challenge, matter, question, dilemma, hurdle, snag, predicament, headache (inf.), sticky situation, nuisance, pain (inf.), enigma, puzzle, mystery, conundrum, riddle,

Some phrases to talk about problems:

1. Where will we stay in Gloucestershire?" "Oh, I'm not sure yet. We'll have to **play it by ear**.
2. We get about 2,000 complaints every year and that's just **the tip of the iceberg**.
3. Don't worry if you are going bald - 40 per cent of men under 35 are **in the same boat**.
4. The government is fully aware of the problem but they just **look the other way**.
5. I can't come out this evening - I'm **up to my ears in** reports.
6. People often hope that if they **sweep something under the carpet** the problem will go away, but that is not the case.
7. This was one of those debates which simply **went round in circles**.
8. I didn't know if I could memorize a text of that length and started to worry that I **had bitten off more than I could chew**.
9. He realized that he was **in over his head**, and that only his family could help him.
10. It was a classic **own goal** by the fashion house. They brought their prices down to attract more customers but lost the high-end customers that they already had.
11. It's her attitude that's the biggest **stumbling block**.
12. There are bound to be **teething problems** in a new marriage.
13. The economy couldn't create jobs because consumers weren't spending.
Consumers weren't spending because the economy wasn't creating jobs. And this was the **vicious circle** we were caught in.
14. The two men had an argument that **got out of hand** and the police were called.