



# Language Usage

**Eyhab A. BadrEddin Lecturer, English Department**

<b>Idiom in English</b>	<b>An Achilles' heel</b>
<b>Meaning in English</b>	a weak or vulnerable spot in something or someone which is otherwise strong
<b>Idiom in Arabic</b>	نقطة ضعف - عقب أخيل
<b>Historical Origin</b>	According to Greek mythology, Thetis held her young son Achilles by the heel while dipping him into the river Styx to make him invulnerable. Achilles' heel, however, remained dry and was his only weakness. After years as a brave and invincible warrior, Achilles was killed during the Trojan war by an arrow which pierced his heel. His deadly enemy Paris had learned of his secret and aimed at the weak spot. The full story is told in Homer's Iliad.
<b>Examples from Literature</b>	A social climber can ill afford an Achilles heel, and this particular weakness on Hutchins' part would probably be disastrous to him sooner or later. JOHN WAIN, <i>Hurry On Down</i> , 1953. Usage Tip: As in the quotation, there may be no apostrophe. Most people would insert one, however. Originally used of people and their character, it may now be applied to projects and plans.
<b>Examples from daily life</b>	I'm trying to lose weight, but ice cream is my Achilles' heel. The food supply proved to be the nation's Achilles' heel in its defense against terrorist attacks

<b>Idiom in English</b>	<b>The acid test</b>
<b>Meaning in English</b>	a foolproof test for assessing the value of something
<b>Idiom in Arabic</b>	اختبار فاصل - دليل دامغ - اختبار قاطع
<b>Historical Origin</b>	A sure way to find out whether a metal was pure gold was to test it with aquafortis, or nitric acid. Most metals are corroded away by nitric acid but gold remains unaffected. Although the original acid test has been known for centuries, the phrase in its figurative use is only a hundred years old. If something survives the acid test it has been proved true beyond the shadow of a doubt.
<b>Examples from Literature</b>	The treatment accorded Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their good will. WOODROW WILSON, Address, January 8, 1918.
<b>Examples from daily life</b>	The senator doesn't look too popular just now, but the acid test will be if he gets reelected. The new team faced its first acid test when it played the national champions.