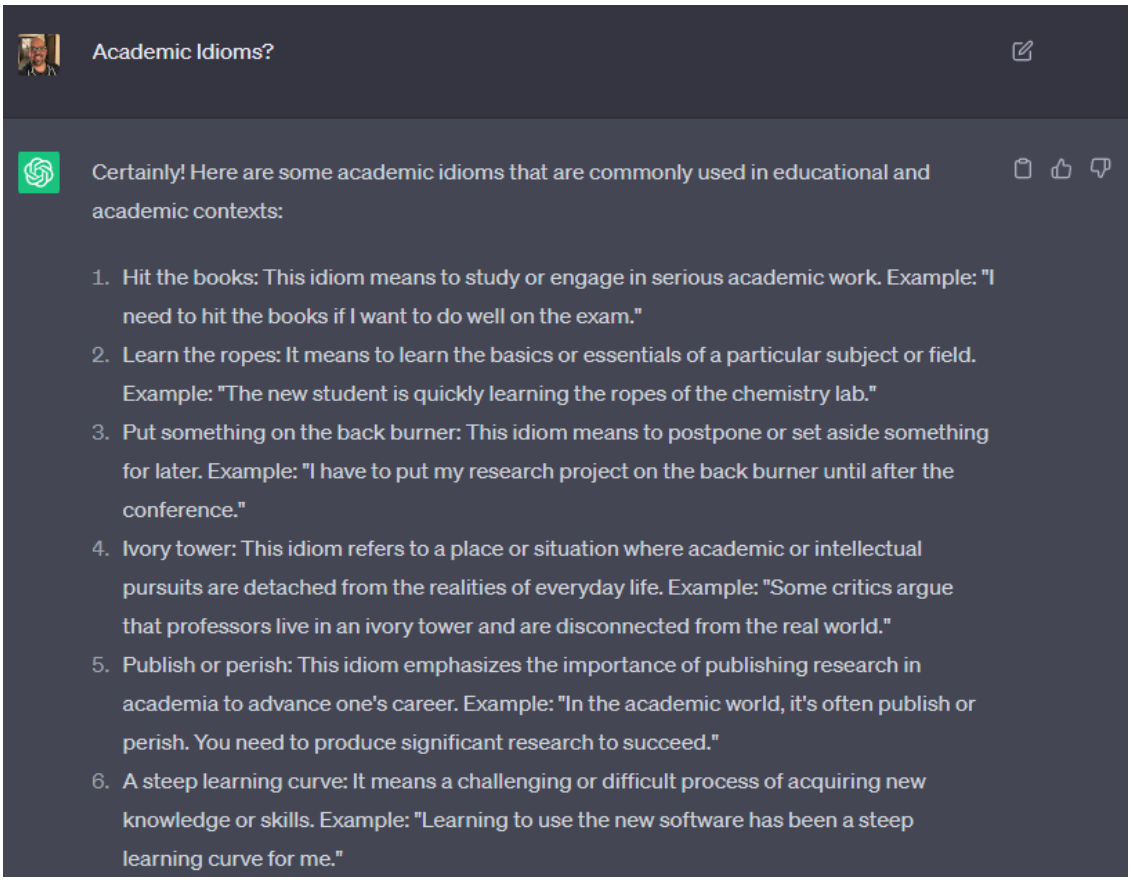
Appendix: Sample ChatGPT Output Before and After Prompt Engineering



I'm teaching an EAP class for first-year college students, and I want to teach my students about how we can use idiomatic expressions in academic writing. I already have the class planned and will introduce the fact that we typically avoid idioms in academic writing, but we do use idiomatic expressions like "shed light on" and "a double-edged sword". Can you help me come up with a handout of 15-20 common idiomatic expressions with definitions and examples?

Certainly! Here's a handout of 15 common idiomatic expressions with definitions and examples that can be used in academic writing:

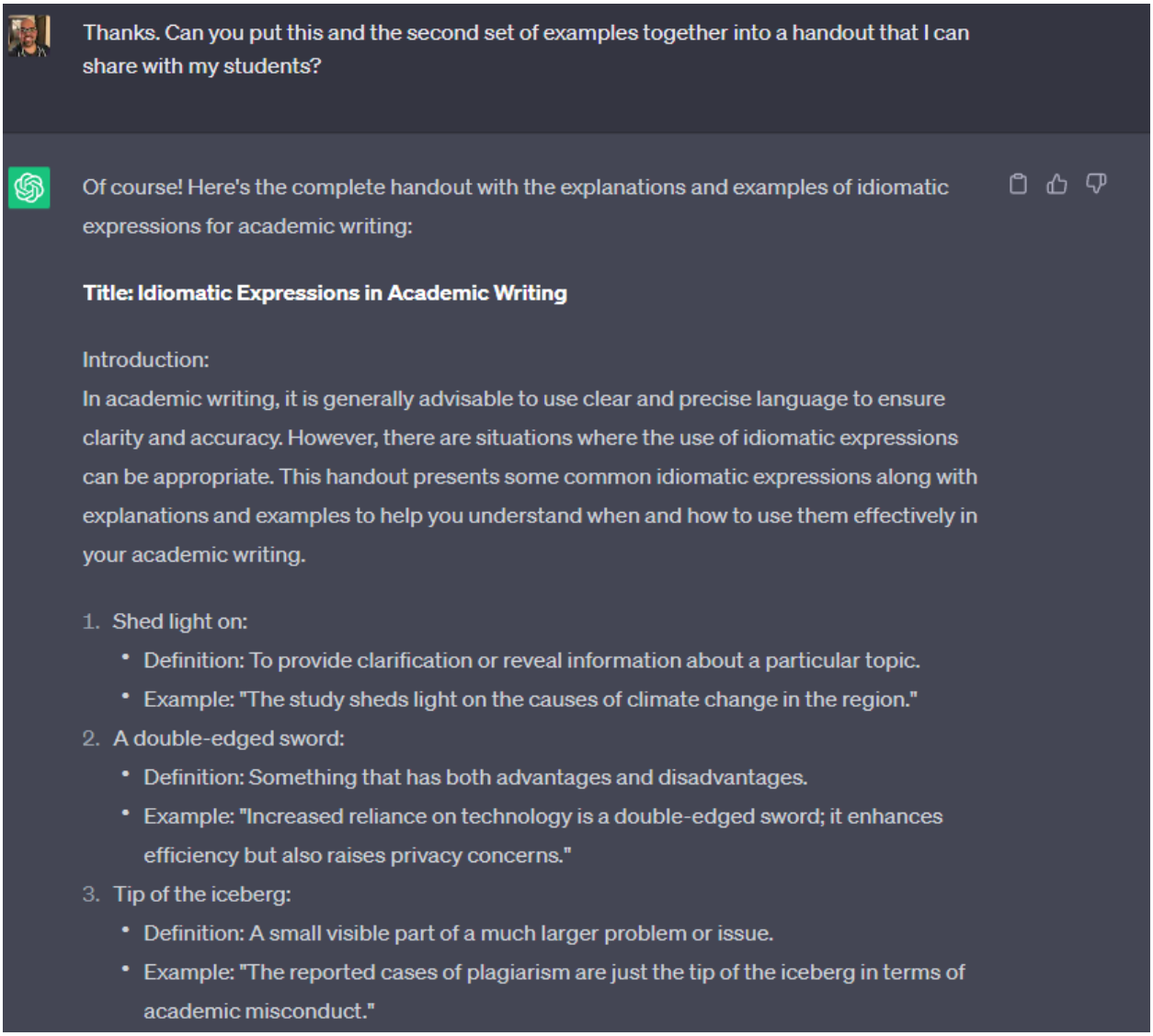
1. Shed light on: To provide clarification or reveal information about a particular topic.
   Example: "The study sheds light on the causes of climate change in the region."
2. A double-edged sword: Something that has both advantages and disadvantages.
   Example: "Increased reliance on technology is a double-edged sword; it enhances efficiency but also raises privacy concerns."
3. Tip of the iceberg: A small visible part of a much larger problem or issue.
   Example: "The reported cases of plagiarism are just the tip of the iceberg in terms of academic misconduct."
4. In the same boat: In a similar situation or facing the same challenges as others.
   Example: "Many students struggle with time management; you're in the same boat as your peers."
5. Catch-22: A situation where one is trapped by contradictory conditions or rules.
   Example: "To gain work experience, you need a job, but to get a job, you need work experience—a classic catch-22."
6. By the same token: Similarly or for the same reasons.
   Example: "Stress can negatively affect academic performance. By the same token, effective stress management can lead to better outcomes."

Great, can you add some explanation about when a person might choose to use idioms like these in academic writing, since we tend to avoid idiomatic expressions for clarity's sake?

Certainly! Here's an additional explanation to provide guidance on when a person might choose to use idiomatic expressions in academic writing, despite the general practice of avoiding them for the sake of clarity:

While it is true that idiomatic expressions are generally avoided in academic writing to maintain clarity and precision, there are situations where their use can be appropriate. Here are some instances where idiomatic expressions may be considered:

1. Familiarity with the audience: If you are writing for a specific audience that is familiar with the idiomatic expression, using it can enhance communication and create a connection with the reader. For example, if you are writing for a linguistics journal where idiomatic expressions are commonly discussed, employing them may be suitable.
2. Expressing nuance or creativity: In some cases, idiomatic expressions can add a layer of nuance or creativity to your writing. They can help convey complex ideas concisely or provide a fresh perspective on a topic. However, exercise caution and ensure that the idiomatic expression is relevant and effectively contributes to your argument.
3. Quotations or references: If you are quoting or referencing a source that employs idiomatic expressions, it may be appropriate to include them in your writing to maintain the integrity of the original text. However, make sure to provide sufficient context or explanation to ensure comprehension.
4. Informal or narrative sections: Academic writing may occasionally contain sections where


Thanks. Can you put this and the second set of examples together into a handout that I can share with my students?
Of course! Here's the complete handout with the explanations and examples of idiomatic expressions for academic writing:
Title: Idiomatic Expressions in Academic Writing
Introduction:
In academic writing, it is generally advisable to use clear and precise language to ensure clarity and accuracy. However, there are situations where the use of idiomatic expressions can be appropriate. This handout presents some common idiomatic expressions along with explanations and examples to help you understand when and how to use them effectively in your academic writing.
1. Shed light on:
• Definition: To provide clarification or reveal information about a particular topic.
• Example: "The study sheds light on the causes of climate change in the region."
2. A double-edged sword:
• Definition: Something that has both advantages and disadvantages.
• Example: "Increased reliance on technology is a double-edged sword; it enhances efficiency but also raises privacy concerns."
3. Tip of the iceberg:
• Definition: A small visible part of a much larger problem or issue.
• Example: "The reported cases of plagiarism are just the tip of the iceberg in terms of academic misconduct."