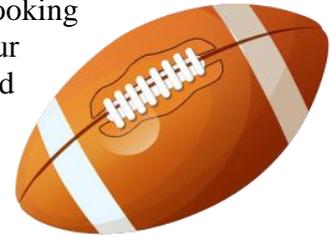


At the end of the day, I really hate clichés (13, 04, 13)

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Do you suffer from a bad case of cliché? Stop groping your body parts looking for a sore spot. Today's senior grammar lesson will help us all to keep our heads above water as we learn better ways to express ourselves orally and on paper. The paper part has actually gone the way of the dodo bird as we now prefer computer screens.



Can you be counted on in the clutch? Are you ready to clean up your messy method of communication? I have already produced several clichés thus far. Can you spot them or are you one sandwich short of a picnic, one brick short of a load?

Some people express themselves in far too many clichés. And older people are particularly prone to this malady. Actually, if you want to feel superior, listen to sportscasters; they deliver truck loads of clichés. When I recently watched Alabama crunch Notre Dame for the U.S. college football championship, the commentators said multiple inane things like: That's gotta hurt. Notre Dame sure look out of synch. They're making a lot of un-forced errors. They have to generate some offense. They're back on their heels. They're on the ropes. They have to get back into their offensive rhythm. They're going to have to make some adjustments. They must maintain their composure.

And when they interviewed coaches and players after the game, it was worse: He always gives 110 percent. We're taking it one game at a time. (Not too clever in a championship final) We have to stay focused. Notre Dame left their game in Grand Bend. They went to the well once too often.

A cliché is characterized by overuse. It might be factual as in – He is as big as a house. It might no longer true – I work like a dog. Or it might be simply enigmatic – Your sewing machine now is right as rain. Nevertheless, it's hackneyed, worn out, and if you resort to this lazy thinking, your game is getting out of hand. You have to get back on track even if you, like Notre Dame, have a tough road to hoe.

So senior friends, don't circle the wagons. We've still got plenty of football left. There's no need to panic. Never say die. We can try the "Hail Mary." Stranger things have happened. It ain't over 'til it's over. In fact, it ain't over 'til the fat lady sings.

While you are busy watching for the sudden appearance of a plump woman who is as big as a house with an attached garage, it might be fun to keep track of clichés that you hear from others such as politicians.

Doing more with less is one of my favourites, particularly at budget time. They all rely on that one. It's like they got up out of the wrong side of the bed. Try telling the police to do more with less. Last time I checked, all crime stats were down and budgets were zooming up. Wouldn't that be doing less with more or did the wheels just fall off of my thinking? The PM or your MP is provided with proposals or reports or inquiries, and what do they say? Thanks for your input; we will refer this to committee. What committee? It doesn't matter. You have just run into a buzz saw. The roof caved in. It's lights out. It could get ugly if you know what I



mean.

What's this got to do with the price of rice in China? Once politicians climb the stairway to success by hook or by crook, they get high as a kite and no matter how we turn up the pressure, what we ultimately have is a real train wreck.

At the end of the day is my most hated cliché. Why can't someone be creative and say something poetic like - when the bus is safely in the terminal or when darkness covers the earth?

Gees! I hate clichés.