

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Vocabulary Building

Match the words given below to their closest synonyms, in context of the text given below, by writing them in the corresponding boxes.

### THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS

The sun had hardly begun to rise behind the hills, and already a group of young boxers from the boxing academy were practising by punching the early morning air. Dressed in red and black tracksuits, the teenage boys and girls were skipping and moving with great focus and determination.

Soon they were all out of breath with their efforts. During a short break, a fourteen-year-old girl said: "We used to play football in the village, but now I like boxing. I want to be like Manisha Kaur."

Manisha Kaur is the name that these young people mention all the time. One of the world's most successful female boxers, Manisha set up this academy in the state of Manipur several years ago with the simple wish of helping young people in this region. They have very few opportunities to achieve success in life in their home area and one of the main reasons is the high rate of unemployment.

Manisha started the academy with her own money but now she receives help from different organisations. The academy provides accommodation and coaching to around fifteen young people. They pay very little to attend or maybe even nothing at all. Manisha says: "At the academy I try to provide them with equipment but most importantly I want to help out by giving them the feeling of a family relationship, which many of them do not have. This is so important to young people, as they often feel isolated from the rest of the community."

Manisha's own boxing achievements are exceptional. In addition to the many national titles that she has collected, she has won the world women's boxing championship five times and the Asian championship on two occasions. She was a member of the group that

persuaded the Olympic authorities to include women's boxing for the first time in the 2012 Olympic Games in London.

Yet Manisha's life is not simply about winning medals. In addition to her success inside the boxing ring, she is just as important as a role model and inspiration in many other ways. The story of her success and of how she overcame her own personal problems is truly exceptional. She is an example to the young people through her strength of character, something which she has inherited from the women of the state of Manipur. Recently, for example, it has been the women who have led campaigns to try and improve life in the area for all the citizens. Like these women, Manisha is admired by the young people for her defiance and forcefulness. Like most of the young people at the academy,

Manisha came from a very simple background. Hardwork as much as real talent was the reason for her success. She was totally dedicated and trained twice as hard as anyone else. All of these characteristics are what make Manisha a heroine in the eyes of the young people who live and train at her academy. Fourteen-year-old Sheila Sapna came from a remote village and will be staying at the academy for a year. She said that she was impressed by the fact that Manisha had been so successful and she wanted to be like her. "Women here can withstand anything," she says. "Not just the physical aspects, but also the mental pressure, too."

Manisha's husband adds: "This academy is like a lifeline to young people. Our aim here is to raise the spirits and improve the opportunities available to them."

### Synonyms:

*not scared to share strong opinions*

*will*

*defiant nature*

*traits*

*gear*

*to bring up*

*joblessness*

*secluded*

*accomplishments*

*institute*

*icon*

*project*

*resources and infrastructure*

*enhance*

### Words:

1. Determination

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2. to mention

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3. unemployment

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4. equipment

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5. isolated

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6. achievements

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7. defiance

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8. forcefulness

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9. academy

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10. characteristics

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11. opportunities

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12. Role model

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13. campaign

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14. improve

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