41 Competitive football

A The championship

THE PREMIER **LEAGUE**

As the championship **reaches** its **climax**, Manchester City and Liverpool are still challenging for the **title**. Man City's next **opponents** are Fulham, **at home**, which looks to be a **relatively** easy game. Liverpool, however, face much **tougher opposition**, **away at** Arsenal. The manager is not **underestimating** the difficulty of the task. 'Arsenal are a quality side and still **contenders** for a place in the top four, so our **priority** is just that one game, and not to think about the championship title.'

GLOSSARY

league	a group of sports clubs that compete with each other for a prize
climax	the most important and exciting part of a book, film, game, etc.: ***reach a climax***
title	the position of being the winner in a competition, especially in sport: *She has three world* ***titles*** *in cycling.*
opponent	(in sports or competitions) a person/ team who plays against sb
at home	If a team plays **at home**, they play in their own stadium. OPP **away** (**at** Arsenal, etc.); **home** *adj*, **away** *adj*: ***an away/home game***
relatively	to quite a large degree, especially when compared with others
tough	difficult
(the) opposition	the person or team you compete against in sport
underestimate	think that sb/sth is not as strong, good, etc. as they really are OPP **overestimate**
contender	a person or team with a chance of winning a competition
priority	sth that is more important or you must do before anything else: ***a top priority***

1 Underline the main stress on these words. Use the APP to help you.

climax	underestimate	opponent	contender
relatively	priority	opposition	overestimate

2 Answer the questions.

1 If something is ***relatively*** easy, is it quite easy or extremely easy? .....
2 If it's a ***tough*** game, is it a very physical game, or a difficult game? .....
3 Is the ***opposition***, a team you are playing against or a team you don't like ? .....
4 In a competition, is a ***contender*** the team who is going to win it? .....
5 If something is a ***priority***, is it quite important or very important? .....
6 If you've observed the opposition carefully, are you likely to ***underestimate*** them, ***overestimate*** them, or judge them well? .....
7 Does a ***climax*** come at the beginning or the end? .....
8 Does a ***league*** involve one team or many teams? .....

3 Complete the sentences.

1 Our ..... in the next game are a team that have won two championships, so it will be a very ..... match.
2 After his injury, Brown's top ..... now is to get back to full fitness.
3 There are no weak teams in the League, so you should never ..... the opposition.
4 There are 20 teams in the Premier ..... .
5 Last week's game was ..... easy, but the next match will be much tougher.
6 Inter Milan are playing well, so they will be ..... again for the championship.
7 We are at ..... this week to Spurs, and ..... at Liverpool the following week.
8 With just one round of games to go, the championship is now ..... a climax.
9 Chelsea have now won three premiership ..... in recent years.

TEST YOURSELF

LIVEWORKSHEETS

B What do football supporters think?

CHELSEA

We lack a bit of **consistency** and the manager is **under pressure**. However, I still think we have **a real chance** of being in the top four and **qualifying** for The Champions League.

MANCHESTER UNITED

The new manager has **transformed** our season, and getting players back from injury has been a real **boost**. We had **no chance** of qualifying for Europe at Christmas, but now it's a possibility.

SPURS

We have a habit of **dominating** the opposition, then we **throw** it **away** at the end. Last week's **defeat** was a bad one, but I still think we **stand a chance of getting** into the top four.

ARSENAL

We've **sorted out** one or two problems off the **pitch**, but after three defeats **in a row**, there may only be **an outside chance** of making the top four.

GLOSSARY

consistency	the quality of always behaving in the same way or having the same standard, etc. **consistent** *adj* OPP **inconsistent**
under pressure	in an anxious situation, often because sb is forcing you to do sth in a certain way
qualify (for sth)	win the right to enter a competition or continue to the next stage of it **qualification** *n*
transform	change sth completely, usually in a positive way **transformation** *n*
boost	sth that helps or encourages sb/sth
dominate	be more powerful, important or noticeable than others **domination** *n*; **dominant** *adj*
throw sth away	waste or not use an opportunity
defeat	an occasion when sb fails to win or be successful against sb else OPP **victory**
sort sth out	find a solution to a problem
pitch	an area of ground where you play certain sports: ***a football/rugby pitch***
in a row	one after another, without a break

SPOTLIGHT *chance*

Chance is used in many phrases.

- *There's **no chance** that we will reach Sydney before night.*
- *We've only got an **outside chance of** promotion to the Premier League.* (= a very small chance) OPP ***a real/good chance***
- *Do you think we **stand a chance of** winning?* (= have a possibility of winning)
- *This season could be my **big chance**.* (= opportunity for success) *He's retiring soon, so this is his **last chance** to lead the team.* (= final opportunity)

4 Complete the sentences.

1 The noun from qualify is _____.
2 The opposite of defeat is _____.
3 The opposite of consistent is _____.
4 The noun from dominate is _____.
5 The noun from transform is _____.
6 The noun from consistent is _____.

5 Positive or negative? Write *P* or *N*.

1 It's been a real boost. ____
2 We've sorted it out. ____
3 Another defeat. ____
4 He transformed the team. ____
5 We're inconsistent. ____
6 Three victories in a row. ____
7 I threw it away. ____
8 I've been under pressure. ____
9 We've got a real chance. ____
10 We were dominant. ____

6 Complete the sentences.

1 Next season could be my last _____ of winning the championship.
2 The _____ is in bad condition because of the heavy rain.
3 If we win the next two games, it will be a _____ for the players and supporters.
4 One more victory and it will be three wins in a _____.
5 We just _____ away games that we really should win easily.
6 One week we play well, the next we're rubbish; we lack _____.
7 If we win on Saturday, we will _____ for the next round in the competition.
8 I know the team is under _____, but they have to _____ out their problems.
9 Unfortunately, in our last four games, we've had one victory and three _____.
10 I don't think we _____ a _____ of winning the title.

7 ABOUT YOU **Do you support a team? If so, how have they been playing recently? Write sentences using vocabulary from above, or tell a partner.**

TEST YOURSELF

LIVEWORKSHEETS