

Teaching Ideas: Reading Worksheet

Manchester United Season Review 2008-9

Background Information

In this reading, a Manchester United fan reviews the 2009 title-winning season of his club for us.

- Stoke = Stoke City; Villa = Aston Villa; Pompey = Portsmouth are all Premier League team names
- The Charity Shield (Community Shield); FA Cup; League Cup (Carling Cup); Premier League are all domestic competitions in England. The World Club Cup and the Champions League are both international club competitions.
- (Carlos) Tevez; Nemanja Vidic and Michael Carrick are all players from Manchester United.
- Howard Webb is a referee in England
- Messrs is used when referring to two or more people. It comes from the French word *monsieur* and its pronunciation is similar to 'dressers'

Pre-Reading - Predicting

1. This reading is an interview about a football fan's team's successful season. What kind of questions would you ask a Manchester United fan?

2. Below are the questions asked in the interview.

- How different are they from your own questions?
- What kind of answers do you think the fan gives?

a) How would you sum up the season?

b) What were the key moments of the season?

c) Were you ever worried about not winning?

d) What was the darkest moment of the season?

e) Who was your player of the season?

f) Can you win again next season? Who will be your main challengers?

A. Vocabulary

Read the whole report and match the meanings on the right with the word from the text on the left.

A	Pipped	1	Important
B	Fervent	2	Very down, feeling bad or slightly upset
C	Fixture	3	Total, the amount
D	Notable	4	This means to beat someone by a small margin
E	Slump	5	Can get something back, can come back from
F	Tally	6	Keeping, maintaining, winning again
G	Disconsolate	7	Game or match, one of the games in a season
H	Retrievable	8	To do badly for a while, a period of bad play
I	Outstanding	9	Fanatical, very strong
J	Retention	10	Excellent, very good

B. Vocabulary – words in context

Choose one of the paraphrases below that best explains the original sentence

1. All in all, a pleasing season given our huge commitments in all competitions.
 - a) Very pleased with the team especially as they had to play many games.
 - b) Very pleased with the team's performances but hope we can do better next year.
 - c) The players worked very hard in all the games.

2. In fairness, Liverpool pushed us all the way this season.
 - a) I cannot believe that Liverpool did not challenge us at all.
 - b) Liverpool were unlucky this season.
 - c) It was always very close between United and Liverpool this season.

3. So, until Michael Carrick scored a late goal against Wigan last week I was always worried.
 - a) I was never really concerned this season about losing the title.
 - b) I could only relax a little last week.
 - c) When Wigan scored a late goal last week I was worried.

4. A game at which I was in attendance.
 - a) I did not go to the game.
 - b) I went to the game.
 - c) I went to the game but left at half time.

5. Nemanja Vidic played most games and was probably our most consistent performer (save for the Liverpool match).
 - a) Vidic was excellent in all our games.
 - b) Vidic had an up and down season.
 - c) Vidic played well in all but one of our games.

6. As will the retention of our pensioner manager!!
 - a) We hope that our old manager stays at the club.
 - b) It is time for the old manager to retire.
 - c) We need a younger manager.

C. Writing – summary

Write a short summary of the interview – using your own words as much as possible (about 100 words).

ANSWERS

A. Vocabulary

Read the whole report and match the meanings on the right with the word from the text on the left.

A	Pipped	4	This means to beat someone by a small margin
B	Fervent	9	Fanatical, very strong
C	Fixture	7	Game or match, one of the games in a season
D	Notable	1	Important
E	Slump	8	To do badly for a while, a period of bad play
F	Tally	3	Total, the amount
G	Disconsolate	2	Very down, feeling bad or slightly upset
H	Retrievable	5	Can get something back, can come back from
I	Outstanding	10	Excellent, very good
J	Retention	6	Keeping, maintaining, winning again

B. Vocabulary – words in context

Which of the explanations below best

- All in all, a pleasing season given our huge commitments in all competitions.
 - a) Very pleased with the team especially as they had to play many games.**
 - b) Very pleased with the team's performances but hope we can do better next year.
 - c) The players worked very hard in all the games.
- In fairness, Liverpool pushed us all the way this season.
 - a) I cannot believe that Liverpool did not challenge us at all.
 - b) Liverpool were unlucky this season.
 - c) It was always very close between United and Liverpool this season.**
- So, until Michael Carrick scored a late goal against Wigan last week I was always worried.
 - a) I was never really concerned this season about losing the title.
 - b) I could only relax a little last week.**
 - c) When Wigan scored a late goal last week I was worried.
- A game at which I was in attendance.
 - a) I did not go to the game.
 - b) I went to the game.**
 - c) I went to the game but left at half time.

5. Nemanja Vidic played most games and was probably our most consistent performer (save for the Liverpool match).

- a) Vidic was excellent in all our games.
- b) Vidic had an up and down season.
- c) Vidic played well in all but one of our games.**

6. As will the retention of our pensioner manager!!

- a) We hope that our old manager stays at the club.**
- b) It is time for the old manager to retire.
- c) We need a younger manager.

C. Writing – summary

Write a short summary of the interview – using your own words as much as possible (about 100 words).

Suggested Answer

I was very happy that we won the title again considering that we played so many matches in so many different competitions. To make matters even better, we also managed to beat our big rivals Liverpool - despite a huge effort from them. Unlike other seasons, there was no stand out player this year though the defender Vidic played consistently well throughout. There were moments when I thought we might have some trouble, for example away at Stoke or the home matches against Tottenham and Aston Villa and of course the terrible defeat at home by Liverpool but in the end we came through. I also think we can retain the title next year especially if we keep our manager.

Reading

How would you sum up the season?

All in all, a pleasing season given our huge commitments in all competitions. We were only a penalty shootout away from playing the most amount of games possible in a season - the World Club Cup, League Cup, FA Cup, Charity Shield, Premiership and Champions League. The most pleasing aspect being the fact that we pipped our most fervent rivals Liverpool to the title. And knocked them off their perch.

What were the key moments of the season?

When we arrived back from the World Club Championships we had a tough fixture against Stoke away which we managed to win with a late goal from Carlos Tevez. A tough place to win at any stage and also a place where Liverpool slipped up. Other notable mentions, 18 year-old Macheda's goal against Villa in stoppage time while we were going through a slump and also Howard Webb's timely intervention against Tottenham (on a personal note Michael Carrick's goal against Pompey).

Were you ever worried about not winning?

In fairness, Liverpool pushed us all the way this season. At the beginning of the year, I thought that a final points tally in the early 80's would suffice. As it happens, United could win on Sunday against Hull and finish with 90 and still only win by 4 points. So, until Michael Carrick scored a late goal against Wigan last week I was always worried. But isn't that what fans are supposed to do?

What was the darkest moment of the season?

A game at which I was in attendance. Old Trafford 14th of March: Man Utd 1 Liverpool 4. Didn't see it coming but as I said to fellow disconsolate fans leaving the ground, it is still retrievable. And it was.

Who was your player of the season?

Due to the severe workload, United had to use most of their squad at various stages this season, so in many ways it was a squad effort rather than being down to one outstanding performer. However, Nemanja Vidic played most games and was probably our most consistent performer (save for the Liverpool match)

Can you win again next season? Who will be your main challengers?

Yes we can. A lot depends on the future of messers Tevez and Ronaldo. The challengers will be the same as any other year, Chelsea, Liverpool and Arsenal. The transfer window will be key. As will the retention of our pensioner manager!!