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Jose Mourinho and Chelsea part company

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Contents

The Article	2
Warm-ups	3
Before Reading / Listening	4
While Reading / Listening	5
Listening Gap Fill	6
After Reading / Listening	7
Student Survey	8
Discussion	9
Language Work	10
Writing	11
Homework	12
Answers	13

21st September, 2007

THE ARTICLE

Jose Mourinho and Chelsea part company

The outspoken boss of fashionable London soccer club Chelsea has shocked the football world by suddenly leaving the club. The announcement was made on the team's website in just one sentence. It read: "Chelsea Football Club and Jose Mourinho have agreed to part company today by mutual consent." The shock news comes just six games into the new English football season. With Mourinho as manager, Chelsea enjoyed the most successful period in their history. His successes earned him the nickname of the "Special One". He was a master tactician and won the English Premier League twice and three other trophies in his three years in charge of the club. However, three poor recent performances in a row seem to have been too much for the team's owner, Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich.

The west-London team only managed a draw at home against European minnows Rosenberg on Wednesday night in a Champions League clash. This was perhaps the final nail in the coffin for Mourinho. In spite of his impressive record of losing only 10 of his 120 Premier League games as Chelsea coach, Abramovich wanted more. Russia's richest man criticized his manager for not playing a more entertaining brand of football, similar to that of cross-town rivals Arsenal. He was also frustrated that Chelsea did not win the Champions League – the biggest prize in European football. Chelsea lost in the semi-finals twice under Mourinho. The two men often clashed over player signings, team selection and tactics. Mourinho was frequently frustrated over the Russian's interference in team affairs.

WARM-UPS

1. FOOTBALL: Walk around the class and talk to other students about football (soccer). Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your original partner(s) and share what you found out.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

outspoken bosses / fashionable sports teams / mutual consent / successes / minnows / final mails in coffins / rivals / frustration / tactics / interference

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. QUICK ROLE PLAY: Students A are Roman Abramovich, the Russian billionaire owner of Chelsea; Students B are Jose Mourinho, the former Chelsea manager. Role play a meeting between them. After the role play, talk about your roles – do you really believe what you said?

4. FOOTBALL LEAGUES: With your partner(s), talk about these soccer leagues. What do you know about them? Which ones are best and why?

- English Premier League
- Italy's Serie A
- USA's Major League Soccer
- Iceland's First Division
- Brazil's Serie A
- Spain's La Liga
- Japan's J-League
- Germany's Bundesliga

5. TEAM GAMES: With your partner(s), talk about these team sports. Discuss how popular they are around the world. Will they become more popular?

- football (soccer)
- rugby
- American football
- baseball
- cricket
- basketball
- hockey
- volleyball

6. SOCCER: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with soccer. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

7. QUICK DEBATE: Students A think football (soccer) is the greatest sport in the world; Students B think it isn't. Change partners often. After your debates, share what you talked about.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- a. A top London soccer team is suddenly without its manager (coach). T / F
- b. The club put a long message on its website about the coach's exit. T / F
- c. The manager was the most successful in the club's history. T / F
- d. The team had impressively won its last three games in a row. T / F
- e. A draw against lowly European opposition sealed the coach's fate. T / F
- f. The owner criticized the coach for focusing on attractive football. T / F
- g. The boss led Chelsea to two major European finals. T / F
- h. The owner never interfered in the team's selections and signings. T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. outspoken | a. agreement |
| 2. fashionable | b. fought |
| 3. mutual | c. the last straw |
| 4. consent | d. shared |
| 5. in a row | e. style |
| 6. the final nail in the coffin | f. trendy |
| 7. brand | g. meddling |
| 8. rivals | h. blunt |
| 9. clashed | i. adversaries |
| 10. interference | j. in succession |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 1. The outspoken boss of | a. over the Russian's interference |
| 2. agreed to part company today by | b. much for the team's owner |
| 3. His successes earned him the | c. over player signings |
| 4. three poor recent performances | d. against European minnows |
| 5. ...seem to have been too | e. mutual consent |
| 6. only managed a draw at home | f. brand of football |
| 7. This was perhaps the final nail | g. fashionable London soccer club |
| 8. playing a more entertaining | h. in the coffin for Mourinho |
| 9. The two men often clashed | i. nickname of the "Special One" |
| 10. Mourinho was frequently frustrated | j. in a row |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Jose Mourinho and Chelsea part company

The _____ boss of fashionable London soccer club Chelsea has shocked the football world by suddenly leaving the club. The announcement was _____ on the team's website in just one sentence. It read: "Chelsea Football Club and Jose Mourinho have agreed to part company today by _____ consent." The shock news comes just six games into the new English football season. With Mourinho as manager, Chelsea _____ the most successful period in their history. His successes earned him the _____ of the "Special One". He was a master tactician and won the English Premier League twice and three other trophies in his three years in _____ of the club. However, three poor recent performances in a _____ seem to have been too _____ for the team's owner, Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich.

The west-London team only _____ a draw at home against European minnows Rosenberg on Wednesday night in a Champions League _____. This was perhaps the final nail in the _____ for Mourinho. In spite of his impressive record of losing only 10 of his 120 Premier League games as Chelsea coach, Abramovich wanted more. Russia's richest man _____ his manager for not playing a more entertaining brand of football, similar to that of cross-town _____ Arsenal. He was also frustrated that Chelsea did not win the Champions League – the biggest _____ in European football. Chelsea lost in the semi-finals twice under Mourinho. The two men often clashed over player signings, team _____ and tactics. Mourinho was frequently frustrated over the Russian's interference in team _____.

mutual
charge
enjoyed
much
outspoken
nickname
row
made
coffin
affairs
rivals
managed
selection
criticized
prize
clash

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Jose Mourinho and Chelsea part company

The _____ fashionable London soccer club Chelsea has shocked the football world by suddenly leaving the club. The announcement _____ team's website in just one sentence. It read: "Chelsea Football Club and Jose Mourinho have agreed to part company today _____." The shock news comes just six games into the new English football season. With Mourinho as manager, Chelsea enjoyed the most _____ history. His successes earned him the nickname of the "Special One". He _____ and won the English Premier League twice and three other trophies in his three years in charge of the club. However, three poor recent performances _____ to have been too much for the team's owner, Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich.

The west-London team _____ at home against European minnows Rosenbergs on Wednesday night in a Champions League clash. This was perhaps _____ the coffin for Mourinho. In spite of his impressive _____ 10 of his 120 Premier League games as Chelsea coach, Abramovich wanted more. Russia's richest man criticized his manager for not playing a more entertaining _____, similar to that _____ Arsenal. He was also frustrated that Chelsea did not win the Champions League – the biggest prize in European football. Chelsea lost in the semi-finals twice under Mourinho. The two men often _____ signings, team selection and tactics. Mourinho was frequently frustrated over the Russian's _____.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'part' and 'company'.

part	company

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• outspoken• sentence• consent• period• nickname• row	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• managed• nail• impressive• brand• prize• frustrated
--	--

STUDENT FOOTBALL SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about FOOTBALL in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) Do you like football (soccer)?
- c) Why do you think a top club would let one of the world's top coaches go?
- d) Jose Mourinho will receive around \$50 million compensation from Chelsea. What do you think of this?
- e) Where in the world is the best football (soccer) played?
- f) What is the condition of football (soccer) in your country?
- g) Where do you think Jose Mourhino got his nickname of the "Special One"?
- h) Do you have a nickname?
- i) What are the best football club teams in the world?
- j) Why do you think football is the most popular sport in the world?



STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Do you think the game should be called "soccer" or "football"?
- c) Is a poor start to a season a good enough reason to part company with a top coach?
- d) What is more important for fans, attractive football or good results?
- e) How has football (or any other sport) changed with globalization?
- f) Do you think it's right for a team owner to interfere in his coach's team selection, player recruitment, etc?
- g) What do you think Jose Mourinho should do now?
- h) Do you think soccer will ever become America's top sport?
- i) What questions would you like to ask Jose Mourhino?
- j) Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a) What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b) Was there a question you didn't like?
- c) Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d) What did you like talking about?
- e) Which was the most difficult question?

LANGUAGE

CORRECT WORD: Put the correct words from a–d below in the article.

Jose Mourinho and Chelsea part company

The (1) ____ boss of fashionable London soccer club Chelsea has shocked the football world (2) ____ suddenly leaving the club. The announcement was made on the team's website in just one sentence. It read: "Chelsea Football Club and Jose Mourinho have agreed to part company today by mutual (3) ____." The shock news comes just six games (4) ____ the new English football season. With Mourinho as manager, Chelsea enjoyed the most successful period in their history. His successes earned him the nickname of the "Special One". He was a master (5) ____ and won the English Premier League twice and three other trophies in his three years in charge of the club. However, three poor recent performances in a (6) ____ seem to have been too much for the team's owner, Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich.

The west-London team only (7) ____ a draw at home against European minnows Rosenberg on Wednesday night in a Champions League clash. This was perhaps the final (8) ____ in the coffin for Mourinho. In spite of his impressive record of losing only 10 of his 120 Premier League games as Chelsea coach, Abramovich wanted more. Russia's richest man criticized his manager for not playing a more entertaining (9) ____ of football, similar to that of cross-town (10) ____ Arsenal. He was also frustrated that Chelsea did not win the Champions League – the biggest prize in European football. Chelsea lost in the semi-finals twice (11) ____ Mourinho. The two men often clashed over player signings, team selection and tactics. Mourinho was frequently frustrated (12) ____ the Russian's interference in team affairs.

- | | | | | |
|-----|-------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|
| 1. | (a) speech | (b) speaker | (c) outspoken | (d) speaking |
| 2. | (a) with | (b) by | (c) for | (d) so |
| 3. | (a) consent | (b) sense | (c) common sense | (d) consensus |
| 4. | (a) on | (b) by | (c) over | (d) into |
| 5. | (a) tactics | (b) tactical | (c) tactic | (d) tactician |
| 6. | (a) row | (b) column | (c) fight | (d) paddle |
| 7. | (a) manager | (b) manage | (c) managed | (d) manages |
| 8. | (a) screw | (b) nail | (c) tack | (d) lid |
| 9. | (a) logo | (b) brand | (c) slogan | (d) trend |
| 10. | (a) riviera | (b) rivalry | (c) rivals | (d) rivets |
| 11. | (a) lower | (b) less than | (c) beneath | (d) under |
| 12. | (a) over | (b) higher | (c) more than | (d) on top of |

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information about Chelsea Football Club and Jose Mourinho. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. SOCCER POSTER: Make a poster showing the different leagues around the world. Which ones are best? Show your poster to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

4. MAGAZINE ARTICLE: Write a magazine article about the importance of football (soccer) as the world's most popular game. Include imaginary interviews with players and fans.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Which article was best and why?

5. ARSENAL: Do your very best to watch an Arsenal game in the coming months and see how beautifully football can be played. Write a letter to the Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger congratulating him on his attractive and stylish brand of football.

6. LETTER: Write a letter to the former Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho. Ask him three questions about his leaving Chelsea. Give him three pieces of advice on where to go next and why. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. T b. F c. T d. F e. T f. F g. F h. F

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. outspoken | a. blunt |
| 2. fashionable | b. trendy |
| 3. mutual | c. shared |
| 4. consent | d. agreement |
| 5. in a row | e. in succession |
| 6. the final nail in the coffin | f. the last straw |
| 7. brand | g. style |
| 8. rivals | h. adversaries |
| 9. clashed | i. fought |
| 10. interference | j. meddling |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 1. The outspoken boss of | a. fashionable London soccer club |
| 2. agreed to part company today by | b. mutual consent |
| 3. His successes earned him the | c. nickname of the "Special One" |
| 4. three poor recent performances | d. in a row |
| 5. ...seem to have been too | e. much for the team's owner |
| 6. only managed a draw at home | f. against European minnows |
| 7. This was perhaps the final nail | g. in the coffin for Mourinho |
| 8. playing a more entertaining | h. brand of football |
| 9. The two men often clashed | i. over player signings |
| 10. Mourinho was frequently frustrated | j. over the Russian's interference |

GAP FILL:

Jose Mourinho and Chelsea part company

The **outspoken** boss of fashionable London soccer club Chelsea has shocked the football world by suddenly leaving the club. The announcement was **made** on the team's website in just one sentence. It read: "Chelsea Football Club and Jose Mourinho have agreed to part company today by **mutual** consent." The shock news comes just six games into the new English football season. With Mourinho as manager, Chelsea **enjoyed** the most successful period in their history. His successes earned him the **nickname** of the "Special One". He was a master tactician and won the English Premier League twice and three other trophies in his three years in **charge** of the club. However, three poor recent performances in a **row** seem to have been too **much** for the team's owner, Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich.

The west-London team only **managed** a draw at home against European minnows Rosenberg on Wednesday night in a Champions League **clash**. This was perhaps the final nail in the **coffin** for Mourinho. In spite of his impressive record of losing only 10 of his 120 Premier League games as Chelsea coach, Abramovich wanted more. Russia's richest man **criticized** his manager for not playing a more entertaining brand of football, similar to that of cross-town **rivals** Arsenal. He was also frustrated that Chelsea did not win the Champions League – the biggest **prize** in European football. Chelsea lost in the semi-finals twice under Mourinho. The two men often clashed over player signings, team **selection** and tactics. Mourinho was frequently frustrated over the Russian's interference in team **affairs**.

LANGUAGE WORK

1 - c 2 - b 3 - a 4 - d 5 - d 6 - a 7 - c 8 - b 9 - b 10 - c 11 - d 12 - a