

# UNIT 73    The (2)

## a) Study these sentences:

- **The** rose is my favourite flower.
- **The** giraffe is the tallest of all animals.

In these examples **the ...** doesn't mean one particular thing. **The** rose = roses in general, **the** giraffe = giraffes in general. We use **the** + *a singular countable noun* in this way to talk about a type of plant, animal etc. Note that you can also use a plural noun without **the**:

- Roses are my favourite flowers. (*but not* 'The roses ...' - see Unit 74)

We also use **the** + *a singular countable noun* when we talk about a type of machine, an invention etc. For example:

- When was **the** telephone invented?
- **The** bicycle is an excellent means of transport.

We also use **the** for musical instruments:

- Can you play **the** guitar? (*not* 'Can you play guitar?')
- **The** piano is my favourite instrument.

## b) The + adjective

We use **the** with some adjectives (without a noun). The meaning is always plural. For example, **the rich** = rich people in general:

- Do you think **the rich** should pay more taxes?

We use **the** especially with these adjectives:

the rich	the old	the blind	the sick	the disabled	the injured
the poor	the young	the deaf	the dead	the unemployed	

- That man over there is collecting money for **the blind**.
- Why doesn't the government do more to help **the unemployed**?

These expressions are always plural. You cannot say 'a blind' or 'an unemployed'. You have to say 'a blind man', 'an unemployed woman' etc.

## c) The + nationality words

You can use **the** with some nationality adjectives when you mean 'the people of that country'. For example:

- **The French** are famous for their food. (= the French people)
- Why do **the English** think they are so wonderful? (= the English people)

You can use **the** in this way with these nationality words:

the British	the Welsh	the Spanish	the Dutch
the English	the Irish	the French	the Swiss

Also with nationality words ending in -ese (**the Japanese** / **the Chinese** etc.)

With other nationalities you have to use a plural noun ending in -s:

(the) Russians (the) Italians (the) Arabs (the) Scots (the) Turks

For **the** see also Units 71, 72 and 74-7.

# UNIT 73 Exercises

**73.1** Answer these questions about yourself and your favourite things. Use a dictionary if you don't know the English words you need.

Example: What is your favourite flower? the rose.....

- 1 What is your favourite tree? .....
- 2 Which bird do you like most? .....
- 3 What is your favourite car? .....
- 4 What is your favourite musical instrument? .....

**73.2** Now you have to make sentences from the words in brackets.

Example: (Mary / play / piano very well) Mary plays the piano very well......

- 1 (Jack / play / guitar very badly) Jack plays .....
- 2 (Jill / play / violin in an orchestra) .....
- 3 (I'd like / learn / play / piano) .....
- 4 (you / play / guitar?) .....

**73.3** This time you have to complete these sentences about animals. Choose one of the words in brackets. Use a dictionary if you don't know these words.

Example: The giraffe..... is the tallest of all animals. (elephant/lion/giraffe)

- 1 ..... is the fastest of all animals. (tiger/cheetah/elephant)
- 2 ..... is a mammal but it lives in the sea. (octopus/elephant/whale)
- 3 ..... is the largest living bird. (eagle/sparrow/ostrich)

**73.4** Complete these sentences using **the** with these adjectives:

rich sick ~~blind~~ poor injured unemployed dead

Example: Braille is a system of reading and writing by touch for the blind.....

- 1 Many people were killed in the plane crash. The bodies of ..... were taken away. .... were taken to hospital.
- 2 Every English child knows the story of Robin Hood. It is said that he robbed ..... and gave the money to .....
- 3 Those people with jobs have enough money but life is not so easy for .....
- 4 Agnes has been a nurse all her life. She has spent her life caring for .....

**73.5** What do you call the people of these countries?

Examples: England? the English..... Russia? the Russians.....

- |                   |                  |                             |
|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Britain? .....  | 6 France? .....  | 10 Switzerland? .....       |
| 2 Ireland? .....  | 7 Japan? .....   | 11 America (the US) ? ..... |
| 3 Wales? .....    | 8 Germany? ..... | 12 the Netherlands? .....   |
| 4 Scotland? ..... | 9 China? .....   | 13 and your country? .....  |
| 5 Spain? .....    |                  |                             |