Unit **76**

Α

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the 4 (the giraffe / the telephone / the old etc.)

Study these sentences:

- The giraffe is the tallest of all animals.
- **The bicycle** is an excellent means of transport.
- When was the camera invented?
- **The dollar** is the currency of the United States.

In these examples, **the** ... does not mean one specific thing. **The giraffe** = a specific type of animal, not a specific giraffe. We use **the** ... in this way to talk about a type of animal, machine etc.

In the same way we use **the** for musical instruments:

- Can you play **the** guitar?
- **The** piano is my favourite instrument.

Compare **a** and **the**:

- I'd like to have a piano. but I can't play the piano.
- We saw **a giraffe** at the zoo. *but* **The giraffe** is my favourite animal.

Note that **man** (without **the**) = human beings in general, the human race:

What do you know about the origins of man? (not the man)

the old, the rich etc.

We use **the** + *adjective* (without a noun) to talk about groups of people. For example:

the old	the rich	the homeless	the sick
the elderly	the poor	the unemployed	the injured

the old = old people, the rich = rich people etc. :

- Do you think the rich should pay higher taxes?
- We need to do more to help the homeless.

Note that we say: the **old** (not the olds), the **poor** (not the poors) etc.

The rich, the homeless etc. are *plural*. For one person, we say: **a** rich **man** (*not* a rich) **a** homeless **person** (*not* a homeless)

the French, the Chinese etc.

We use **the** + a few nationality adjectives that end in -**ch** or -**sh**. For example: **the French the Dutch the British the English the Spanish**

The meaning is *plural* – the people of that country.

The French are famous for their food. (*not* French are ...)

We do not say 'a French' or 'an English' (*singular*). For example, we say:

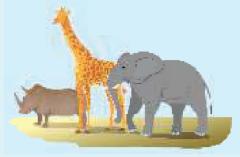
We also use **the** + nationality words ending in -**ese** or -**ss**. For example:

the Chinese the Portuguese the Swiss

These words can also be singular (a Chinese, a Swiss etc.).

With other nationality words, the plural ends in -s (usually without the). For example: an Italian \rightarrow Italians a Mexican \rightarrow Mexicans a Thai \rightarrow Thais Italians / Mexicans / Thais are very friendly.

In all cases you can use *adjective* + **people**. For example, you can say: **French** / **Chinese** / **Mexican** people are very friendly.



Exercises

1		2		3		4	
animals		birds		inventions	5	currencie	es
tiger	elephant	eagle	penguin	telephone	e wheel	dollar	pesc
rabbit	cheetah	swan	owl	telescope	laser	euro	rupe
giraffe	kangaroo	parrot	pigeon	helicopte	r typewrite	er rouble	yen
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