

LESSON 125

684 Uses of the definite article: "the"

Alps

Andes

Himalayas

Netherlands

The most important use of the definite article "the" is when we are referring to something specific that is known to both the speaker and the listener. This is similar to the way that we use the words "this", "that", "these" or "those". For example, "The teacher we had last week has left", or "John's got a new house; the garden's lovely", or "The sun rose early today".

What is the most important use of the definite article "the"?

The most important ... is when we are referring to something specific that is known to both the speaker and the listener

Give me some examples, please.

The DVDs I bought yesterday are great.

Could you close the window, please?

The sky's grey today.

There are three other special uses of the definite article "the" that we should remember:

- 1) We can sometimes use the word "the" to speak about things in general, but only when we are speaking about types of animals or types of things. For example, instead of saying "Tigers are dangerous animals", we can say "The tiger is a dangerous animal". This doesn't refer to one specific tiger, but to tigers in general. Instead of saying "Computers are very useful things", we can say "The computer is a very useful thing". This means computers in general.

How can we sometimes use the word "the" to speak about things in general?

We can sometimes use the word "the" to speak about things in general when we are speaking about types of animals or types of things

685 Which is the heaviest land animal on earth?

The elephant is ...

When was the mobile phone invented?

The mobile phone
was invented in 1973

2) We sometimes put the definite article "the" in front of a name, but only when it is the name of a river, sea, ocean or mountain chain. For example "the Thames", "the Mediterranean", "the Atlantic", "the Alps" etc. We do not use "the" with the names of people and places. For example, we say "Queen Elizabeth lives in London".

When do we put the definite article "the" in front of a name?

We put the definite article "the"
in front of a name when it is the name
of a river, sea, ocean or mountain chain

Give me some examples of mountain chains.

Some examples ...
are the Andes, the Himalayas, the Alps etc.

Which is the longest river in the world?

The Nile is ...

3) Finally, we occasionally put the word "the" in front of the name of a country, but only if the name is plural in form. For example, "the Netherlands", "the United States of America" etc. With country names that are singular in form, we do not use "the". For example, we say "France" (not "the France").

When do we put the word "the" in front of the name of a country?

We put the word "the" in front of the
name of a country only if the name is plural in form

Name some countries that are plural in form, please.

The Netherlands,
the United States of America etc.

present /'prezənt/

(noun + adjective)

present /prɪ'zent/

(verb)

Do you think that the present state of the world is better than a hundred years ago?

Yes, I think ... ~ No, I don't think ...

686 Why or why not?

Were all the pupils present for the last lesson?

Yes, all the pupils ...
~ No, not all the pupils ...

When a person retires from work after many years of employment in the same company, are they usually presented with a gift? Yes, when a person ...

In job interviews, are people sometimes judged more by the way they present themselves than by their abilities and experience? Yes, in job interviews, people are ...

Do you enjoy choosing presents to give to other people or do you find it stressful? I enjoy choosing ... ~ I find choosing ...

swear – swore – sworn

The verb "to swear" means to say bad words. People often swear when they hurt themselves or when they're very angry.

What does the verb "to swear" mean? The verb "to swear" ...

What are the three forms of "swear"? The three forms of "swear" are "swear, swore, sworn"

When do people swear? People swear when ...

Are there some people who have never sworn in their lives? Yes, there are ...

687 lazy

idle

The word "lazy" means "not willing to work". For example, "My brother is so lazy; he does nothing all day!" The word "idle" usually means the same as "lazy", but only when we are describing people. For example, "Don't be so idle. Go and find a job!"

Who's the laziest person you know? The laziest ...

Does hot weather make you feel lazy? Yes, hot weather makes ... ~ No, hot weather doesn't make ...

When we're describing people, what's another word for "lazy"? When we're ..., another word ... "idle"

When we are describing things, the word "idle" means "not doing anything". For example, "The ship remained idle in the port for two years". We can sometimes use "idle" with this meaning for people but it is not very common. For example, "I hate to be idle at work; I always like to be doing something useful".

When we're describing things, what does the word "idle" mean?

When we're ..., the word ... "not doing anything"

If you parked a car outside your house and left it idle for a few months, would it get very dirty?

Yes, if I parked a car ..., it'd get ...

What do I mean if I say "The workers were idle because the machines had broken down"?

If you say ..., you mean they were not doing anything because ...

play

scene

When was the last time you went to see a play at the theatre?

The last time I ... was ...

688 Why do we always remember certain scenes in a film better than we remember others?

We always remember ... because they are very emotional or full of action

verse

chorus

Are Shakespeare's plays written mainly in verse?

Yes, Shakespeare's plays are written mainly in verse

What do we call a part of a song that is repeated more than once: a verse or a chorus?

We call ... a chorus

pray

prayer

How do people pray, and what do they usually say in their prayers?

People often pray with their eyes closed, and they usually ask for something in their prayers

combine

Tell me the name of a job that you think combines work and pleasure.

The name of ...

Idiom 26

go in one ear and out the other = be heard but then immediately forgotten

e.g. There's no use telling him anything; it just goes in one ear and out the other.

What does the idiom "go in one ear and out the other" mean?

The idiom ... "be heard ..."

689 Give me an example, please.

I've told my son a hundred times not to go out without his coat on, but it goes in one ear and out the other

heads

tails



Dictation 83

One side of a coin, we call "heads", and the other side, we call "tails". Totally by accident, he knocked the glass containing the liquid off the table onto the floor. His lips rarely part to show his teeth, even when he smiles broadly. The poor bird could hardly fly, as one of its wings was badly damaged. Before the battle began, it was expected that many of the sailors would fail to do their duty, and that, consequently, the battle would be lost.