

ARTICLES (5)

Definite Article 'the' (02) – Part B: Medium

In context

2 min

What is a definite article?



the phone



the papers

'the' is a definite article.

Definite Article 'the'

13 min

'The' is a definite article: it is used before a particular or definite object. It can be singular or plural.

Examples:

This is **the** cat, which caught **the** rat.

These are **the** cats, which caught **the** rats.

The woman who talked to me is **the** Minister's wife.

We also use 'the' before an object or a person of which there is only one. This includes the names of seas, rivers, chains of islands, mountain ranges (but not mountains), and countries when their name includes a noun (such as state, kingdom...).

Examples:

The earth rotates around **the** sun.

The river Thames flows into **the** North Sea.

He travels from **the** United States to **the** United Kingdom every year.

'The' is used before superlatives.

Examples:

The most expensive object is not necessarily **the** best.

She was **the** first woman from here to become a doctor.

The nearest bakery is down the street.

'The' also refers to a class of people or objects.

Examples:

The nene is the official state bird of Hawaii.

Alexander Graham Bell invented **the** telephone.

Certain restrictions caused unrest among **the** workers.

Language Tips about the Pronunciation of 'the'

5 min

We write "the" but can say "the" or "thee".

We say "the" when the next word begins with a consonant sound.

Examples:

the car

the boy

We say "thee" when the next word begins with a vowel sound.

Examples:

the apple (we say "*thee* apple")

the image (we say "*thee* image")

It is the sound that matters, not the letter we write. So we say "thee" before a vowel sound, not necessarily before a vowel. Likewise, we say "the" before a consonant sound, not necessarily before a consonant.

Examples:

the house

the hour (we say "*thee* hour")

When we wish to place emphasis on a particular word, 'the' is pronounced "thee", whether or not the next word begins with a consonant or vowel sound.

Example:

This is *the* (pronounced "thee") best brownie I have ever had!

Writing Exercise with the Teacher

5 min

Complete these sentences with 'a', 'an', or 'the', and read them to your teacher.

1. I need _____ pen to write my paper.
2. I hope you know _____ address to go to the hospital.
3. Can you give me _____ umbrella that is in the car please?
4. Mike has _____ bicycle.
5. This is _____ bicycle I want for my birthday.
6. Do you have _____ email address?
7. Can you see _____ email address on the brochure?
8. Would you like _____ apple?
9. _____ phone is ringing in the bedroom.
10. He is speaking to _____ man I don't know.

Reading Exercise with the Teacher

5 min

Read these words to your teacher.

1. the honest person
2. the unit
3. the urban legends
4. the hotel
5. the yacht

Watch the Video!

5 min

In this video lesson, you will review the difference between definite and indefinite articles.

Watch the video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jHi2gRNsTxg&feature=related>

Watch it again and choose the correct answer.

1. What category do articles belong to?
 - a. determiners
 - b. adverbs

c. demonstratives

2. What does the definite article refer to?

- a. no particular or definite entity
- b. a particular or definite entity
- c. the verb

3. What is the letter 'y'?

- a. a vowel
- b. a consonant
- c. a diphthong

Answers: 1a, 2b, 3b

Quiz

10 min

True or False?

1. 'the' is an indefinite article.
2. We use 'the' before an object or a person of which there is only one.
3. We only pronounce "thee" when the next word begins with a vowel.
4. When we wish to place emphasis on a particular word, 'the' is pronounced "thee".

Put the words in the list in the correct columns:

hour, house, honor, CIA, United States, urbanization, FBI, ferry

"the" is pronounced "the"	"the" is pronounced "thee"

Complete the sentences with 'a', 'an' or 'the':

1. Would you mind taking _____ metro?
2. Would you mind calling _____ cab for me, please?
3. It was _____ honest mistake.
4. This nation is _____ newest UN member.