

69 Using articles to generalize

“The” is the most commonly used word in the English language. It can be used in many different situations, as can the indefinite article “a,” and the zero article.

 **New language** Generic “the”

 **Aa Vocabulary** Exploration and invention

 **New skill** Using advanced articles

69.1 KEY LANGUAGE GENERIC “THE”

You can use “the” with a single countable noun to talk about a class of things in general. Inventions, musical instruments, and species of animal are often referred to in this way.



The telescope changed the way we see the night sky.

Referring to an invention,
not an individual telescope.



The violin is often the key instrument in an orchestra.

Referring to a type of musical instrument,
not an individual instrument.



The cheetah can run faster than any other land animal.

Referring to a species of animal,
not an individual animal.



69.2 CROSS OUT THE INCORRECT WORDS IN EACH SENTENCE



Look over there! There's **a / an / the** lion and her cub.

1



Apparently, **a / an / the** French horn is the most difficult instrument to play.

2



Alexander Graham Bell is often credited with inventing **a / an / the** telephone.

3



My sister has **a / an / the** saxophone that she plays in her school orchestra.

4



A / An / The blue whale is the largest animal that has ever lived on Earth.



69.3 ANOTHER WAY TO TALK ABOUT A CLASS OF THINGS

You can also use a plural countable noun without an article to talk about a class of things.



Telescopes changed the way we see the night sky.

Referring to the invention, not a particular group of telescopes.



Violins are often the key instruments in an orchestra.

Referring to the type of musical instrument, not a particular group of violins.



Cheetahs can run faster than any other land animal.

Referring to the species of animal, not a particular group of cheetahs.



69.4 REWRITE THE SENTENCES, CORRECTING THE ERRORS

Thomas Edison is widely acknowledged as the inventor of a moving picture.



Thomas Edison is widely acknowledged as the inventor of the moving picture.

1 I enjoy playing a piano, but I hated having lessons as a child.



2 Mountain gorilla are one of the most endangered species on Earth.



3 In 2007 a Russian lawyer paid nearly \$4 million for the violin.



4 Sloth is a slow animal, but the Galápagos tortoise is even slower.



5 Steve Wozniak designed and built a 1976 Apple I computer.



6 This concert is incredible. I love the sound of trumpet.



69.5 KEY LANGUAGE DEFINITE AND INDEFINITE ARTICLES WITH NAMES

You normally use the zero article with the name of a person.

You can use the definite article before a person's name to differentiate them from another person with the same name.

You can use the indefinite article when the focus is on a particular name, rather than the person.

This is my uncle, Neil Armstrong.



In this case, "the" is pronounced "thee."

He's not **the Neil Armstrong, is he?**

[He isn't the famous person with that name, is he?]



I'm afraid there isn't a "Joseph Bloggs" on the list.

[The particular name given is not on the list.]

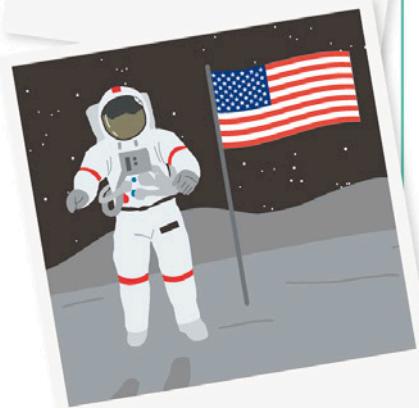


69.6 FILL IN THE GAPS USING THE CORRECT ARTICLES, LEAVING A GAP FOR THE ZERO ARTICLE

The Space Race produced two truly iconic moments in the history of humankind. The first happened on April 12, 1961, when Yuri Gagarin became the first human in space. The entire Vostok 1 mission, including one orbit around Earth, lasted only 1 hour 29 minutes. Gagarin's voyage changed how people all over the world thought about the space.



Just over eight years later in July 1969, the Neil Armstrong, "Buzz" Aldrin, and Michael Collins traveled to space in the Apollo 11 space craft. On July 20, 1969, Armstrong stepped onto the Moon's dusty surface. What he actually said next is an interesting story in itself. For many years he argued that he had said, "That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind." After listening to repeated transmission recordings, however, he admitted that he may have dropped the indefinite article "an." Either way, it was the huge step for mankind.





69.7 LISTEN TO THE AUDIO AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS



A radio show is reviewing a museum exhibition about women in space.

The reviewer states that only women will like this exhibition. **True** **False**

- 1 The exhibition is being held in the City Museum. **True** **False**
- 2 All of the exhibits in "There's Space for Women" are replicas. **True** **False**
- 3 Valentina Tereshkova was the first female cosmonaut in 1992. **True** **False**
- 4 Jan Davis and Mark Lee flew in space when they were married. **True** **False**
- 5 The first person in space from South Korea was a woman. **True** **False**
- 6 An astronaut is definitely visiting the exhibition this month. **True** **False**
- 7 You can book tickets for the exhibition online. **True** **False**

69 ✓ CHECKLIST

Generic "the"

Exploration and invention

Using advanced articles

☛ REVIEW THE ENGLISH YOU HAVE LEARNED IN UNITS 66–69

NEW LANGUAGE	SAMPLE SENTENCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	UNIT
"HAVE / GET SOMETHING DONE"	Did you get your software updated ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	66.1
COMPLEX SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT	The team is getting a new manager next year. The team are feeling excited about the news.	<input type="checkbox"/>	67.1, 67.3, 67.6
"SO" AND "SUCH"	The trial was such a success. The reaction is so dangerous.	<input type="checkbox"/>	68.1, 68.3, 68.5
GENERIC "THE"	The telescope changed the way we see the night sky.	<input type="checkbox"/>	69.1
ARTICLES WITH NAMES	He's not the Neil Armstrong, is he? I'm afraid there isn't a Joseph Bloggs on the list.	<input type="checkbox"/>	69.5