Unit 75

The 3 (children / the children)

A

When we are talking about things or people in general, we do *not* use **the**:

- I'm afraid of **dogs**. (*not* the dogs)
  (**dogs** = dogs in general, not a specific group of dogs)
- **Doctors** are usually paid more than **teachers**.
- Do you know anybody who collects **stamps**?
- **Crime** is a problem in most big cities. (*not* The crime)
- **Life** has changed a lot in the last thirty years. (*not* The life)
- Do you like **classical music** / **Chinese food** / **fast cars**?
- My favourite sport is **football/skiing/athletics**.
- My favourite subject at school was **history/physics/English**.

We say '**most** people / **most** books / **most** cars' etc. (*not* the most ...):

- **Most shops** accept credit cards. (*not* The most shops)

B

We use **the** when we mean specific things or people.
Compare:

In general (without **the**)	*Specific people or things* (with **the**)
Children learn from playing. (= children in general)	We took **the children** to the zoo. (= a specific group, perhaps the speaker's children)
I couldn't live without **music**.	The film wasn't very good, but I liked **the music**. (= the music in the film)
All **cars** have wheels.	All **the cars in this car park** belong to people who work here.
Sugar isn't very good for you.	Can you pass **the sugar**, please? (= the sugar on the table)
English people drink a lot of tea. (= English people in general)	**The English people I know** drink a lot of tea. (= only the English people I know, not English people in general)

C

The difference between 'something in general' and 'something specific' is not always very clear.
Compare:

In general (without **the**)	*Specific people or things* (with **the**)
I like working with **people**. (= people in general)	I like **the people I work with**. (= a specific group of people)
I like working with **people who say what they think**. (not all people, but 'people who say what they think' is still a general idea)	
Do you like **coffee**? (= coffee in general)	
Do you like **strong black coffee**? (not all coffee, but 'strong black coffee' is still a general idea)	I didn't like **the coffee we had after dinner**. (= specific coffee)

The 1–2 → Units 73–74 The + adjective (**the young** / **the English** etc.) → Unit 76

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Exercises

75.1 Choose four of these things and write whether you like them or not:

bananas	boxing	cats	crowds	fast food	horror movies
~~hot weather~~	maths	opera	snow	supermarkets	zoos

Begin each sentence with one of these:

I like ... / I don't like ... **I don't mind ...**
I love ... / I hate ... **I'm interested in ... / I'm not interested in ...**

1 I don't like hot weather very much.
2 .....
3 .....
4 .....
5 .....

75.2 Complete the sentences using the following. Use **the** where necessary.

~~(the) basketball~~	(the) grass	(the) patience	(the) people
(the) questions	(the) meat	~~(the) information~~	(the) hotels
(the) history	(the) water	(the) spiders	(the) lies

1 My favourite sport is basketball .
2 The information we were given wasn't correct.
3 Some people are afraid of .....
4 A vegetarian is somebody who doesn't eat .....
5 The test wasn't very difficult. I answered ..... without difficulty.
6 Do you know ..... who live next door?
7 ..... is the study of the past.
8 It's better to tell the truth. Telling ..... usually causes problems.
9 We couldn't find anywhere to stay in the town. ..... were full.
10 ..... in the pool didn't look very clean, so we didn't go for a swim.
11 Don't sit on ..... . It's wet after the rain.
12 You need ..... to teach young children.

75.3 Choose the correct form, with or without **the**.

1 I'm afraid of dogs / ~~the dogs~~. (dogs *is correct*)
2 Apples / The apples are good for you.
3 Look at apples / the apples on that tree! They're very big.
4 Women / The women live longer than men / the men.
5 I don't drink tea / the tea. I don't like it.
6 We had a very good meal. Vegetables / The vegetables were especially good.
7 Life / The life is strange sometimes. Some very strange things happen.
8 I enjoy holidays / the holidays by the sea.
9 How much money does the government spend on education / the education?
10 Who are people / the people in this picture?
11 What makes people / the people violent? What causes aggression / the aggression?
12 All books / All the books on the top shelf belong to me.
13 Don't stay in that hotel. It's very noisy and rooms / the rooms are very small.
14 A pacifist is somebody who is against war / the war.
15 First World War / The First World War lasted from 1914 until 1918.
16 I don't like films / the films that don't have happy endings.
17 Someone gave me a book about history / the history of modern art / the modern art.
18 Rob and Louise got married, but marriage / the marriage didn't last very long.
19 Most people / The most people believe that marriage / the marriage and family life / the family life are the basis of society / the society.

→ Additional exercise 29 (page 319)

LIVEWORKSHEETS