A brief guide
What’s the difference?

- There is a school at the end of the road.
- The school was built in 1951.
- My son is only 11, he’s still at school
• A school because it has not been mentioned before.
• The school because we now know which one we mean. (The one at the end of the road)
• No article because we are referring to school as a general idea or concept.
• We use *a/an* with countable nouns.

• We use *a/an* when we are not referring to a particular thing.

• We use *a/an* to say what kind of thing something is. e.g. a good driver
A or An or nothing?

- Dog
- Cat
- Drink
- Meal
- Food
- Animal
- Hospital
- Xerox machine

- University
- Uniform
- Policeman
- Egg
- Water
- Mountain
- SOS call
- MP3 player
• We use **a** for words which begin with a consonant *sound*. E.g. a university!

• We use **an** for words which begin with a vowel *sound*. E.g an X-ray
The

• We use *the* for particular, defined things.

• Or if the thing we mean is clear from the situation. e.g. “turn off the light”

• When there is only one of something. e.g. the sun. 🌞

• We say “the sky” “the sea” “the country”

• However we say “the radio” BUT “television”
  - e.g. I like listening to the radio but my wife prefers watching television.
• We use **The** with seas,
  - e.g. The Mediterranean, The Pacific, The North Sea.
• We use **The** with mountain *ranges*,
  - e.g. The Alps, The Andes, The Himalayas
• We use **The** with rivers
  - e.g. The Amazon, The Thames.
• We use **The** with nationality adjectives to mean the people of that country.
• We do **not** use **The** with: countries, single mountains, cities, towns, continents and regions.
  - E.g. France, Everest, Stockholm, Bournemouth, Africa, Dorset etc.