



Learning Outcomes

- Students will learn the correct usage of definite (the) and indefinite articles (a, an).
- They will identify and avoid errors in article usage in various contexts.
- They will understand exceptions to article rules and their application.



Lead in

Here are some nouns. Can you put **a**, **an** or **the** before each correctly?

(a)



_____ kangaroo

(b)



_____ umbrella

(c)



_____ Sun

Articles

There are three articles in English Grammar — **a**, **An** and **The**.

Normally articles are **Demonstrative Adjectives**.

Articles are used to point out nouns. So, these are used before nouns.

A and **an** are called **Indefinite Articles** and **the** is called **Definite Article**.

Use of Indefinite Article A/An

- ★ **A** and **an** are used before countables in the singular number.

a book

a cap

a dog

an orange

an umpire

an apple

The words pen, mango, bag, orange, elephant and ice-cream are all countables in the singular number.

It is evident that we cannot say a water, a happiness, an oil since water, happiness and oil are not countable. Likewise we cannot say an oranges, an elephants or an aeroplanes.

Oranges, elephants and aeroplanes are countables but they are in the plural number.

- ★ **A** is used before singular nouns beginning with consonant sounds.

Examples: **a** book, **a** deer, **a** fox, **a** star, etc.

- ★ **An** is used before singular nouns beginning with vowel sounds.

Examples: **an** orange, **an** eagle, **an** axe





- ★ A is used before a word starting with a vowel but not giving a vowel sound.

Examples : a European a university a one rupee

(yoo sound) (yoo sound) (w sound)

- ★ Words with a silent **h** takes **an** with them.
an hour, an heir, an honest person
- ★ In abbreviations, if consonants begin with a vowel sound they take **an** with them.
an MLA an M.P.



Grammar Byte

- ⦿ The consonant **m** in **MLA** and **MP** is pronounced as **em**, so it begins with a vowel sound.

A. Fill in the blanks with **a** or **an** where necessary.

- Lakshadweep is _____ island.
- He is not _____ European but _____ Indian.
- Is she looking for _____ job?
- Mother gave me _____ one rupee coin.
- I have got _____ watch.



Skills/Level
WRITING/A2



Use of The

We use **the**

- **To speak about a particular person or thing or something already referred to**

Example : The painting made by Mr Joshi is the loveliest of all.

- **Before uncountable nouns to identify and describe them specifically**

Example : The water in the lake is blackish.

- **Before singular countable nouns used to refer to a whole class of something**

Example : The cow is a useful animal.

- **Before adjectives used as noun to refer to a whole class of something**

Example : Do not speak ill of the dead.

- **Before the superlative form of adjectives**

Example : Rahul is the tallest boy in our class.

- **With ordinal numbers**

Example : The second boy in the first row is my best friend.

- **Before things that are unique**

Example : The Earth is our home planet.

- **With the names of :-**

- ⦿ **Name of a newspaper :** The Hindustan Times
- ⦿ **Rivers :** the Godavari, the Nile
- ⦿ **Seas and oceans :** the Arabian Sea, the Pacific Ocean
- ⦿ **Mountain ranges :** the Alps, the Himalayas



- ⊙ **Monuments** : the Taj Mahal, the Red Fort
- ⊙ **Holy books** : the Gita, the Quran, the Bible
- ⊙ **Trains , ships, aeroplanes** : the Shatabdi Express, the Titanic, the Boeing 767
- ⊙ **The directions** : the south, the north
- ⊙ **The whole family** : the Sharmas, the Franks
- ⊙ **Countries with a common noun** : the USA, the UK, the UAE

B. Fill in the blanks with **a, an or the**.

1. _____ cow is a useful animal.
2. I saw _____ elephant at the zoo.
3. Once, _____ king ruled over Banaras.
4. _____ eagle was flying in the sky.
5. I saw _____ man go into the neighbour's house.



Omission of Articles

Articles are not used :

- **Before proper nouns like names of people, cities, countries, continents, etc.**
Example : We are leaving for Delhi tomorrow.
- **Before names of substances and uncountable abstract nouns**
Example : Salt is harmful for patients of blood pressure.
- **Before plural countable nouns that are used in the general sense**
Example : Books are stocked in a library.
- **Before names of meals**
Example : Is lunch ready ?
- **Before names of languages and subjects**
Example : Mathematics is a hard subject.
- **Before the words such as school, college, bed, table, hospital, market, prison, etc.**
Example : I go to school by school van.
- **Before names of relatives such as father, mother, brother, sister, etc.**
Example : Father went on a world tour.



Spot the Error

- ⊙ *The English is spoken all over the world. (x)*

C. Rewrite the sentences using an article where necessary.

1. He is good farmer.
2. Please bring me glass of water.
3. Toys at shop are on discount.
4. What amazing painting !





D. Pick out the articles that should not have been used in the following sentences.

1. I ate a banana for the lunch.
2. My son plays the football.
3. The coffee is bad for you.
4. He bought the salt from the market.



Points to Remember

- There are three articles in English Grammar— **A, An and The**.
- A** is used before singular nouns beginning with **Consonant Sound**.
- An** is used before singular nouns beginning with a **Vowel Sound**.
- A** is used before a word starting with a vowel, but not giving a **Vowel Sound**.
- Words with a silent **h** takes **an** with them.
- We use **the** to speak about a particular person or thing.
- We use **the** with the names of newspaper, rivers, seas and oceans, monuments, holy books, directions, etc.



My Activity Corner

Tick (✓) the correct option.

1. To indicate a noun that is unique, we use:
(a) a or an ☐ (b) the ☐
2. When we speak of something or someone for the first time we use:
(a) a or an ☐ (b) the ☐
3. Indefinite articles are used before singular nouns that are:
(a) specified ☐ (b) unspecified ☐
4. The indefinite article **a** is used before a:
(a) consonant sound ☐ (b) vowel sound ☐



My EeeBee Interactive Activities



Listening



Speaking



Reading



Writing



Grammar



Vocabulary

WRITE YOUR SCORE

Practice your LSRW Skills



on Communication Lab

