

Mahesh Public School, Jodhpur

Class- VII

Subject- English

Topic- Articles

Introduction

The word that defines a noun either as specific or unspecific is called an article.

It can be categorized into two different categories:

- Definite articles
- Indefinite articles

Definite Article : The definite article limits the meaning of a noun to a specific thing.

“The” is called definite article.

The definite article can be used with singular, plural, or uncountable nouns.

For example,

Please pass me the bottle of water.



In this example, you are pointing to the specific bottle of water. So we are using the definite article “the”.

Indefinite Article :The indefinite article denotes a general noun rather than indicating a specific noun.

“A” and “An” are called the indefinite articles. They are used to specify non-specific objects.

Examples

- I ate an apple



- I went to buy a notebook



Use of "a"

"A" is used:

- Before a singular noun beginning with a consonant.

For example,

He owns a car.



She drives a taxi.



- Before a singular noun beginning with a consonant sound.

For example,

She is studying in a University.



The word University begins with “*Yee*” sound where “*y*” is a consonant. So we use a university.

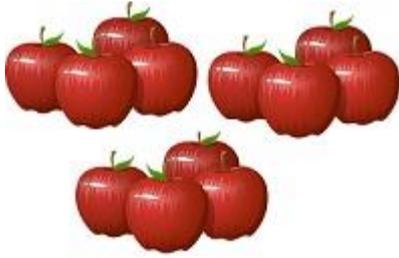
She lives in a European country.



- Before some number collectives and numbers.

For example,

A dozen of apple.



Is it safe to drink a gallon of water a day?



- With nouns to form adverbial phrases of amount or quantity

For example,

She is a bit depressed after the incident.



I am a bit disappointed by her behavior.



Use of “an”

“An” is used:

- Before a singular noun beginning with a vowel.

For example,

An Apple.



An amazing day.



An auspicious day.



I want an ice cream.



- Before a noun starting with silent “H”.
For example,
An honest man.



An hour to go.



- The nouns beginning with silent “H” begins with the O sound which is a vowel and hence we use “An” before it. An M.Tech, an MBA, an MLA, an MA, an MSc.

For example,

The above mentioned words begins with M and has an “em” sound where e is a vowel and hence we use an before the above mentioned words

Use of “the”

“The” is used:

- To denote a specific entity.

For example,

Example- Please pass me the bottle of water.



In this example, you are pointing to the specific bottle of water. So we are using the definite article “the”.

Please shut the window.



Please close the door.



- When the entity being denoted is previously mentioned.

For example,

I am going to wear the new dress that I bought yesterday.

- In this example, the dress bought the previous day is being denoted and hence we will use “The”.

Examples- I went to the market.



I like the dress you gave me.

- In a sentence having uncountable or plural form of the noun.

For example,

The curry is very delicious.



The boxes are kept in the backyard.

- To denote a group of people.

For example,

1 We should help the poor people.



Examples- 2 We should help the needy people.

3 We should try to spread knowledge among the uneducated people.

- With the names of river, sea, oceans, valleys, canals and forests

Examples- The Ganga, The Nile river, The Bay of Bengal, The Pacific ocean, The Arctic ocean.

- With the names of geographical areas.

Examples- The north, The west, the east, The north east.

Have you ever been to the Tropical rainforests?



- With the names of point on Globe.

Examples-The equator, The Tropic of Cancer, The Tropic of Capricorn, The Arctic circle.



- Name of Gulf, Forest, Peninsula, Mountain, Desert.

Examples-The Gulf of Kutch, The Sahara Desert, The Thar Desert.

- 'The' is used before the parts of the body.

Example- He got an injury in the head.

- The is used before political parties
Example- The Bhartiya Janta Party.

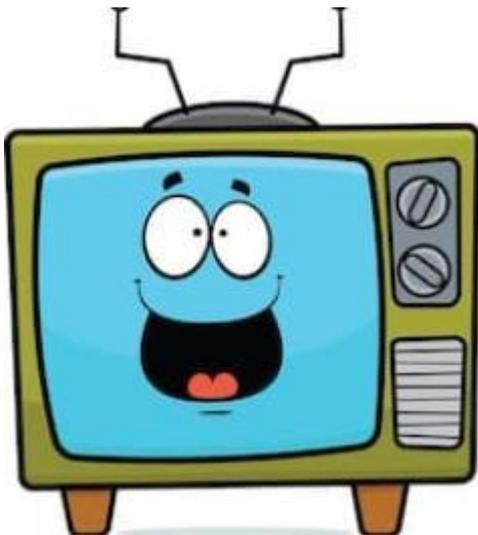


- The is used before name of musical instruments

Example- Rani plays the guitar



- 'The' is used before name of inventions,
Example- who invented the television?



- 'The' is used before superlative degrees.
Example- you are the best boy in my class.

- 'The' is used before names of mountain ranges.
Example- The Himalayas

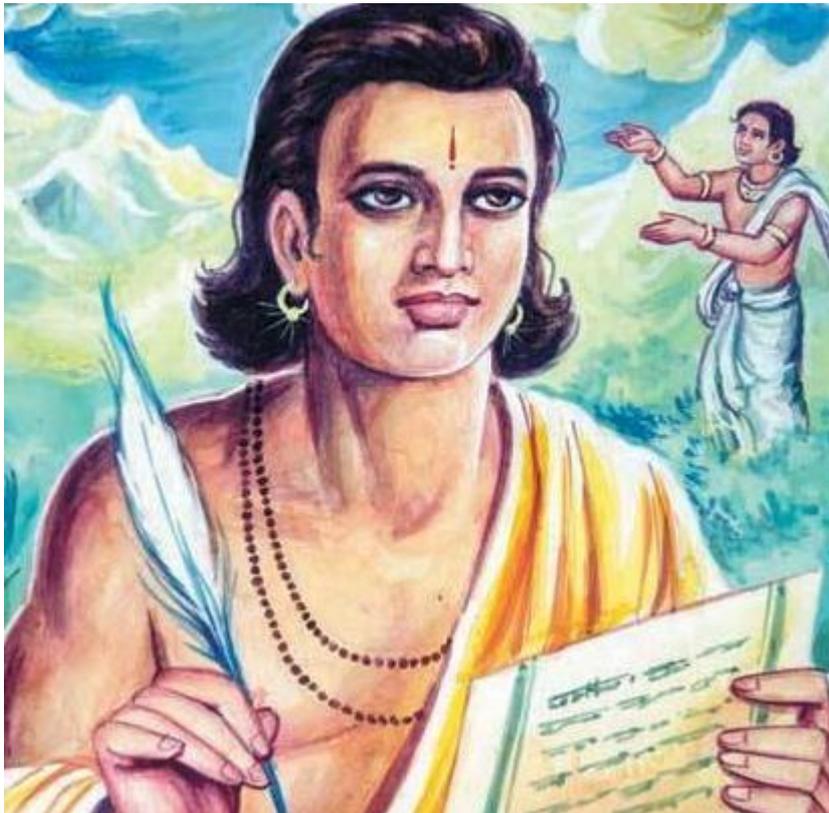
Note- Never use 'the' before names of single mountains or hills



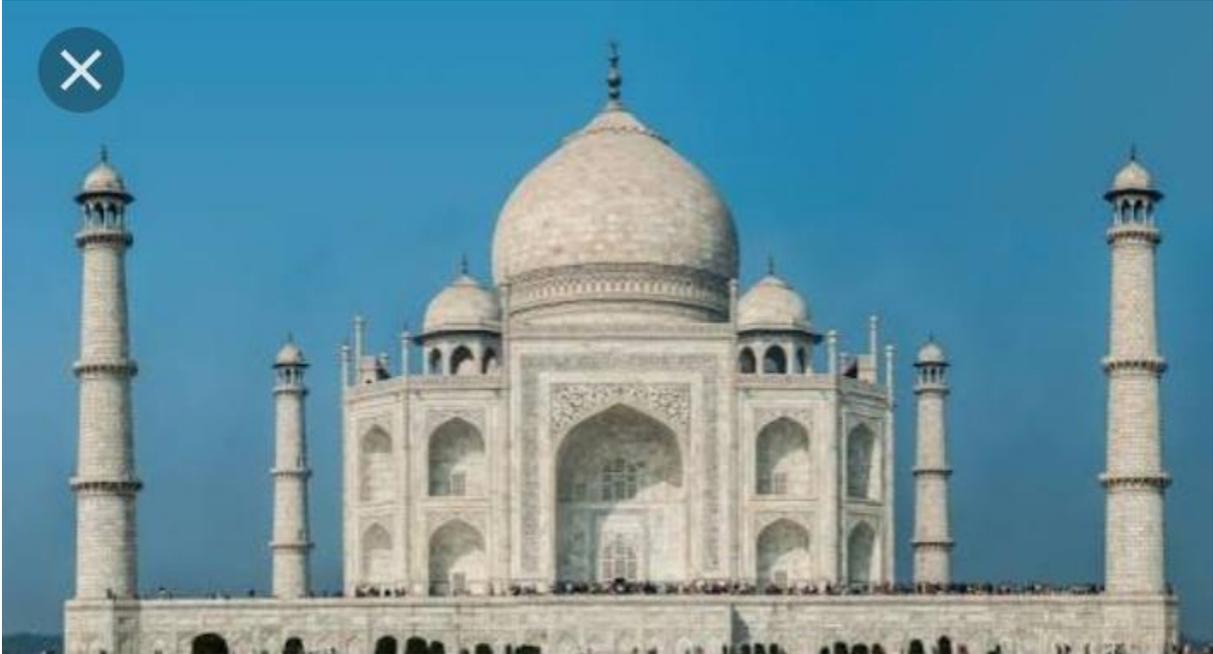
**Example – Montblanc(not the Montblanc)
Everest(not the Everest)**

- ‘The’ is used before proper nouns, Material nouns and Abstract nouns to make them common nouns,

Examples- Kalidas is the Shakespeare of India.



- 'The' is used before the names of newspaper , religious books, famous buildings, ships, historical events .
Example- The Taj is famous for its beauty.



- 'The' is used before the names of races or nations
Examples- The Indians are found in almost all the countries.
The English exploited the Indians.
Holi is a festival of the Hindus.



- 'The' is used before common nouns which are names of things unique of their kind

Examples- The Earth is our planet.

The world is a pleasant place.

The Sun gives us life.



Article Before an Adjective

Sometimes an article modifies a noun that is also modified by an adjective. The usual word order is article + adjective + noun. If the article is indefinite, choose *a* or *an* based on the word that immediately follows it. Consider the following examples for reference:

Examples- Eliza will bring a small gift to Sophie's party.

I heard an interesting story yesterday

Indefinite Articles with Uncountable Nouns

Uncountable nouns are nouns that are either difficult or impossible to count. Uncountable nouns include intangible things (e.g., information, air), liquids (e.g., milk, wine), and things that are too large or numerous to count (e.g., equipment, sand, wood). Because these things can't be counted, you should never use **a** or **an** with them—remember, the indefinite article is only for singular nouns. Uncountable nouns can be modified by words like *some*, however. Consider the examples below for reference:

Incorrect- Please give me a water.

Water is an uncountable noun and should not be used with the indefinite article.

Correct- Please give me some water.

However, if you describe the water in terms of countable units (like bottles), you can use the indefinite article.

Correct- Please give me a bottle of water.

Incorrect- Please give me an ice.

Correct- Please give me an ice cube.

Correct- Please give me some ice .

Note that depending on the context, some nouns can be countable or uncountable (e.g., hair, noise, time):

Correct- We need a light in this room.

Correct- We need some light in this room.

Using Articles with Pronouns

Possessive pronouns can help identify whether you're talking about specific or nonspecific items. As we've seen, articles also indicate specificity. But if you use both a possessive pronoun and an article at the same time, readers will become confused. Possessive pronouns are words like *his*, *my*, *our*, *its*, *her*, and *their*. Articles should not be used with pronouns. Consider the examples below.

Incorrect- Why are you reading the my book?

The and *my* should not be used together since they are both meant to modify the same noun. Instead, you should use one or the other, depending on the intended meaning:

Correct- Why are you reading the book?

Correct- Why are you reading my book?

- **Omission of articles:**

Before uncountable nouns

We do not use articles before uncountable and abstract nouns used in a general sense.

- **Honey** is sweet. (NOT The honey is sweet.)
- **Sugar** is bad for your teeth.
- **Wisdom** is better than riches.
- **Virtue** is its own reward.

Note that uncountable nouns take the article **the** when used in a particular sense.

- Would you pass **the sugar**? (= the sugar on the table)

Before plural countable nouns

We do not use articles before plural countable nouns used in a general sense.

- **Children** usually rush about.
- **Computers** are useful machines.

Note that plural nouns take the article **the** when they are used in a particular sense.

- Where are the children? (Which children? Our children)

Before proper nouns

We do not use articles before the names of countries, people, continents, cities, rivers and lakes.

- India is a democratic country. (NOT The India ...)
- Paris is the capital of France. (NOT The Paris ...)

Before the names of meals

We do not use articles before the names of meals.

- Mother is cooking **lunch**.
- **Dinner** is ready.

We use **a** when there is an adjective before breakfast, lunch, dinner etc. We use **the** when we are talking about a particular meal.

- I had **a late dinner** yesterday.
- **The lunch** we had at the restaurant was very good.

Before languages

We do not use articles before the names of languages.

- Can you speak **English**? (NOT Can you speak the English?)
- They speak **French** at home.

Before school, college, university, church, bed, hospital, prison etc.

- His dad is still in **hospital**.
- We learned English at **school**.
- He is at **university**.

The is used before these words when the reference is to the building or object rather than to the normal activity that goes on there.

- I met her at **the church**. (Here the reference is to the building and not to the activity that is going on there.)
- I went to **the hospital** to see my friend.

Practice Question:

Q1 Choose the correct (and most natural-sounding) response to complete each sentence:

1. _____ Swedish is a difficult language to learn.

- a) NO ARTICLE
 - b) The
 - c) A
2. _____ general's army attacked the city at night.
- a) NO ARTICLE
 - b) The
 - c) A
3. I like to play _____ basketball.
- a) NO ARTICLE
 - b) the
 - c) a
4. My parents gave me _____ basketball for my birthday.
- a) ARTICLE
 - b) the
 - c) a
5. She is _____ prettiest girl in the school.
- a) NO ARTICLE
 - b) the
 - c) a
6. I have _____ idea! Let's go bowling.
- a) NO ARTICLE
 - b) the
 - c) an
7. I have borrowed _____ money from her before.
- a) NO ARTICLE
 - b) the
 - c) a
8. My first apartment was on _____ Orange Street.
- a) NO ARTICLE
 - b) the
 - c) an
9. _____ dress she is wearing is blue.
- a) NO ARTICLE
 - b) The
 - c) A
10. He is _____ real gentleman.
- a) NO ARTICLE
 - b) the
 - c) a

