

Types of Articles

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1.0 OBJECTIVES

Students! We begin with the most important aspect of English language - Grammar! As we get introduced to each chapter, you will realize how interesting grammar is and also how it improves your language skills.

This chapter deals with three small words 'a', 'an' and 'the' - 'yes' the articles. They have a unique importance in every sentence.

At the end of this chapter, we will be able to -

- 1) use definite and indefinite articles.
- 2) explain examples where articles are omitted.
- 3) explain nouns used in general and special sense.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Article is a word which points out at a person, thing or place spoken of. Thus article refers to the noun.

There are two types of articles. Definite and Indefinite article. Definite article tells us about a specific person or this while indefinite article speaks of any person thing or place.

In some cases, as we see ahead nouns may be referred to without any article.

1.2 TYPES OF ARTICLES

The unit at first introduces rules for correct use of articles in sentences.

There are two Articles - *a* (or. *an*) and *the*

A or **an** is called the **Indefinite Article**, as it leaves indefinite the person or thing spoken of as : A doctor, A school, A man, A woman - here *a* points out any doctor, any school or any man or woman.

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The is called the **Definite Article**, as it normally points out some particular person or thing as : He saw *the* doctor - where *the* points out some particular doctor.

The indefinite article is used before *singular countable nouns* e.g. A book, An orange, A girl The definite article is used before singular countable nouns, plural countable and uncountable nouns, for eg. *The book, the books, the milk*

A or An

The choice between *a* and *an* is determined by *sound* before a word beginning with a vowel sound *an* is used : For eg., *an egg, an orange an honest man, an hour.* *A* and *An* are used with the singular number only.

1.3 USE OF THE DEFINITE ARTICLE

1. When we talk about a particular person or thing, or one already referred to earlier,
2. When a singular noun is meant to represent a whole class
for eg. The cow is a useful animal,
The rose is the sweetest of all flowers
3. Before some proper names :
for eg., oceans and seas: *the* Pacific, *the* black sea

rivers : *the* Ganga, *the* Nile

4. Before the names of certain books :

for eg., The Vedas, the Puranas, the Ramayana

5. Before names of things unique of their kind; as

for eg., The sun, the sky, the earth

6. Before a Proper noun when it is qualified by an adjective or a defining adjectival clause :

for eg., The great Caesar, The immortal Shakespeare

7. With Superlatives

for eg., The darkest cloud has a silver lining, This is the best book of elementary chemistry.

8. With ordinals :

for eg., He was the first man to arrive, The ninth chapter of the book is very interesting.

9. Before an adjective when the noun is understood,

for eg., The poor is always with us.

10. Before a noun to give the force of a Superlative

for eg., The Verb is the word in a sentence.

11. As an Adverb with Comparatives :

for eg., The more the merrier.

12. Uncountable nouns take the *the* when used in a particular sense (especially when qualified by an adjective or adjectival phrase or clause) for eg., *The* sugar! *The* wisdom of Solomon

1.4 USE OF THE INDEFINITE ARTICLE

1. In its original numerical sense of one:

for eg., Twelve inches make *a* foot. Not *a* word was said

2. In a vague sense of a certain

for eg., One evening *a* beggar came to my door

3. In the sense of any, to single out an individual as the representative of a class: for

eg., *A* pupil should obey his teacher *A* cow is a useful animal

4. To make a common noun of a proper noun:

for eg., *A* Daniel come to judgement! (*A* Daniel - a very wise man)

1.5 OMISSION OF THE ARTICLE

1. Before names of substances, proper and abstract nouns (uncountable nouns) used in a general sense:

for eg., Sugar is bad for your teeth.

Gold is a precious metal

Delhi is the capital of India

Wisdom is the gift of heaven

2. Before plural countable nouns used in a general sense:

for eg., Children like chocolates

Computers are used in many offices

3. Before languages

for eg., We are studying English

They speak Punjabi at home

4. Before predicative nouns denoting a unique position i.e., a position that is normally held at one time by one person only:

for eg., He was elected Chairman of the Board

Mr. Mathur became Principal of the School in 1995.

1.6 Check your progress

1. French iseasy language

2. He ishonour to the profession

3. Mumbai isvery dear place to live in.

4. Which islongest river in India

5. The guide knowsway.

1.7 SUMMARY

The given chapter thus explains the significance of articles we can summarise the chapter in the following points :-

- 'a' and 'an' are called indefinite articles while 'the' is a definite article.
- Definite article points out to a particular person or a thing or place.
- Indefinite articles point out to any person, thing or place.
- Articles are omitted in case of proper and abstract nouns and plural countable nouns.

1.8 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. *High School English Grammar and Composition* by P. C. Wren, H. Martin (Edited by N.D.V. Prasada Rao)
2. *Speaking English Effectively* by Mohan Krishna and Singh N.

Please go through the lesson thoroughly .Keep learning and enjoying the time at home

Stay Safe!!!