



: STRUCTURE :

- 11.0 Objectives**
 - 11.1 Introduction**
 - 11.2 Kinds of Articles**
 - 11.2.1 The Selection of Article ‘A’ or ‘An’**
 - 11.2.2 Use of Indefinite Article**
 - 11.2.3 Omission of Indefinite Article**
 - 11.3 Definite Article**
 - 11.3.1 Use of Definite Article**
 - 11.3.2 Omission of Article ‘The’**
 - 11.3.3 Repetition of Article ‘The’**
 - 11.4 Let Us Sum Up**
 - 11.5 Key Words**
 - 11.6 Books Suggested**
- Answers**

11.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit we shall talk about:

- the meaning and type of articles
- the selection between articles ‘a’ and ‘an’
- omission of indefinite article
- use and omission of definite article

On completing this unit, you should be able to:

- distinguish between definite and indefinite article
- know where to omit articles
- master the topic articles

11.1 INTRODUCTION

An Article is a word used to modify a noun, which is a person, place, object, or idea. Usually adjectives modify nouns through description, but articles are used instead to point out or refer to nouns. The adjectives ‘a’ or ‘an’ and ‘the’ are called articles. They play a very important role in language. They are basically demonstrative adjectives and give information about nouns. Articles make it clear whether one is talking about a specific person or thing or something in general.

11.2 KINDS OF ARTICLES

There are two types of articles.

- (1) **Indefinite Article:** An article which does not refer to any particular person or thing is known as the indefinite article.

Ex. a, an

It is used before a singular noun only.

- (2) **Definite Article:** An article which refers to a particular person or thing is known as the definite article. It can be used before a singular as well as a plural noun.

Ex. The

11.2.1 The Selection of Article 'A' or 'An'

The choice between 'a' or 'an' is determined by sound. If a word begins with a vowel sound, article 'an' is used. Some students follow the first letter of a word which leads them to make a mistake. They must follow the sound.

Ex: An honest man, an umbrella, an honourable person, an enemy, an orange, an ass, a one way street.

It should be noticed that the words honest, honourable begin with a vowel sound, as the initial consonant 'h' is not pronounced.

Before individual letters spoken with a vowel sound, article 'an' is used.

Ex. an MLA, an NSS student, an MP

If a word begins a consonant sound, article 'a' is used.

Ex : A girl, a boy, a house, a union, a European, a one way street, a unicorn, a reindeer, a one eyed man, a university.

It should be noticed that the words like union, university, and unicorn though begin with a vowel, having a consonant sound. Similarly the words one way street, one eyed man takes article 'a' because 'one' begins with consonant sound 'w'

11.2.2 Use of Indefinite Article:

1. In exclamatory sentences.

Ex.: What a beautiful flower the rose is!

Ex.: what a brave soldier he was

Ex.: what a hot day it is.

2. In expressions of price, speed, ratio etc.

Ex.: Ten thousand a month

Ten rupees a dozen

Four times a day

Sixty kilometres an hour

3. With words like little and few

Ex.: a few days

A little petrol

4. In certain expressions of quantity.

Ex.: a dozen, a couple, a quarter, a million, a thousand, a lot of, a great deal of, a great number of

5. In the sense of one.

Ex.: a pen, a book.

6. In the sense of one of a.

Ex. I read a book.

She attended a meeting

7. In the sense of all or any.

Ex.: A vehicle is to be serviced in time. Meaning all vehicles or any vehicle is to be serviced

8. To convert a proper noun in to a common noun.

Ex.: He is a Vajpayee (a great political leader)

11.2.3 Omission of Indefinite Article:

1. With a plural noun.

Ex. chairs, tables, books, boys

2. With uncountable nouns.

Ex. furniture, advice, news, baggage, luggage, business, knowledge

3. With material noun.

Ex. paper, sugar, wheat, rice, iron, wood, tea, coffee

4. With the names of meals.

Ex. breakfast, lunch, dinner

5. With abstract nouns.

Ex. fear, joy, sorrow, happiness, pleasure, love

Check Your Progress : 1

FILL IN THE BLANKS WITH ARTICLE 'A' OR 'AN'

1. Shwetang is—— M.Com from the Bombay University.
2. I met —— European yesterday.
3. Copper is ——useful metal.
4. Rustom is—— young Parsee
5. —— Honest man speaks truth.
6. Benares is—— holy city.
7. He is not—— honourable man.
8. The Ganga is—— sacred river.
9. He looks as stupid as—— owl.
10. She is ——untidy girl.
11. Vadodara is——very dear place to live in.
12. Ceylon is—— island.
13. He has been elected as—— M.P.
14. The dog is—— faithful animal.
15. She came—— hour late.

11.3 DEFINITE ARTICLE

'The' is called the definite article, because it points out some particular person or thing.

Ex: I met the teacher; meaning some particular teacher.

11.3.1 Use of Definite Article:

The definite article 'the' is used

1. When the object or group of objects is unique or thought to be unique:
Ex: The Sun, the Stars, the Sea, the Earth
2. with certain proper names of seas, rivers, group of islands, chains of mountains and oceans
Ex: The Himalaya lie to the North of India,
The Ganga is considered holy by the Hindus.
The Atlantic | the Red Sea | the Indian Ocean
London is on the Thames
The Atlantic Ocean
The Himalayas, the Alps, the Aravalli
3. Before directions.
Ex: The North | South Pole
The East, the West, the North, the South.
4. When we speak of a particular person or thing.
Ex: The hotel in which you want to stay is closed.
The book you want is out of print
Let us go to the seminar.
5. With persons or things mentioned for the second time.
Ex. I met a soldier. The soldier was very brave
I have a pen. The pen writes very smoothly
6. When a singular noun is meant to represent a whole class:
Ex: The reindeer is the ship of desert
The horse is a noble animal
The cow is a useful animal
The rose is the king of flowers
7. Before the names of certain books:
Ex.: The Mahabharata, the Quran, the Geeta, the Bible, the Puranas, the Vedas
8. With superlatives
Ex: The Ganga is the longest river of India
Simla is the coolest hill station
The darkest cloud has a silver lining.
9. As an adverb with comparatives or to make a sentence of double comparison, 'the' is used twice.
Ex: The more I see you, the more I love you,
The harder you work, the better results you get.
The more the expectations are, the more the frustrations are.
10. Before an adjective when the noun is understood:
Ex: We should help the poor
The brave should be respected

The rich should help the needy

11. With ordinals:

Ex: We were the first to dare to live there

The fifth chapter is very difficult

12. Before musical instruments:

Ex: Darshan plays the guitar

She can play the flute very nicely

13. With historical buildings:

Ex. the Red Fort, the White House, the Great Wall of China, the United Kingdom, the Taj Mahal

14. With some news papers and magazines.

Ex.: The Times of India, the Hindu, and the Indian Express

15. With nationalities, sects and communities.

Ex.: The Indians, the Japanese, the Americans, the Eskimos.

16. With names of trains, ships and aeroplanes.

Ex.: the Rajdhani Express, the Titanic, the Sagar Samrat, the Spice Jet

17. With the persons or things understood from the context.

Ex.: She returned the book. (That I gave her)

I called the typist. (That is in my office)

18. With proper noun used as common noun

Ex. Ahmedabad was the Manchester of India

Kashmir is the Switzerland of India

19. Before famous historical events.

Ex. The Independence Day, the Republic Day, the Industrial Revolution.

11.3.2 Omission of Article 'The':

Article 'The' cannot be used:

1. Before proper nouns

Ex. America, Narendra Modi, India, Newton, Amitabh, Tagore, Sachin Tendulkar

2. Before abstract nouns

Ex.: virtue, honesty, pleasure, beauty, poetry, essay, grammar, childhood

But Article The can be used if the above qualities are assigned to people.

Ex.: The childhood of Amitabh

The honesty of political leaders

The poetry of Tagore

3. Before common nouns

Ex. man, woman, book, flower, house

4. Before names of materials

Ex.: gold, cotton glass, bread, marble, copper, silver

5. Before languages
Ex.: English, Hindi, Gujarati, French
6. Before names of buildings
Ex. school, college, university, hospital, church, temple, market, prison
But Article the can be used if one refers them as definite place
Ex. The college is very far from my house.
7. Before names of relations
Ex. father, mother, sister, uncle, aunt, brother
8. Before names of colours.
Ex. white, green, yellow
9. Before phrases which take a preposition before
Ex. in debt, at evening, at sight, by train, on demand, on foot, in hurry, at lunch, above ground, by day, at sunset
10. Before those phrases consisting of a transitive verb followed by its object
Ex.: to give battle, to bring word, to leave office, to lose heart
11. Before names of meals.
EX. breakfast, lunch, supper, dinner
12. Before names of games
EX. cricket, football, tennis, chess
13. Before names of diseases
Ex. cancer, AIDS, malaria

11.3.3 Repetition of Article 'The':

- (1) When two or more adjectives qualify one noun and are connected by 'and', article 'the' is used with the first adjective only
Ex.: I have a black and blue pen.
It means I have a pen that is partly black and partly blue.
- (2) When two adjectives qualify different nouns, article 'the' is used before both adjectives
Ex.: I have a black and a blue pen.
It means two Pen. One black and the other blue.
- (3) When two or more nouns refer to the same person or things, 'the' article is used before the first
Ex.: I met the Director and Registrar.
It means both posts are held by one person.
- (4) When two or more nouns refer to different persons or things, 'the' article is used before each.
Ex.: I met the Director and the Registrar.
It means the two posts are held by two persons.

Check Your Progress : 2

INSERT ARTICLE 'THE' WHERE NECESSARY

1. European whom I met was in need of my help.
2. Sun shines brightly.
3. Reindeer is a native of Norway.
4. French defeated Germans.
5. Let us discuss matter in detail.
6. Japanese are the peace loving people.
7. We should not hate handicapped.
8. The feet of Indian are washed by Indian Ocean.
9. Manek chauri is busiest street in Ahmedabad.
10. If you meet him, give him message.
11. Boy you want to meet today is absent.

Check Your Progress : 3

(A) INSERT ARTICLES WHERE NECESSARY.

1. My mother reads Bhagvat Gita every day.
2. Banyan is kind of fig tree.
3. Cat loves comfort.
4. Rose is sweetest of all flowers.
5. His car struck tree, you can still see the mark on tree.
6. Less one speaks, more he can impress.
7. Higher the speed of your vehicle is, more the chances of accidents are.
8. The guide knows way
9. John got best price.
10. You are fool to say that.
11. The brave soldier lost arm in battle.
12. Sun sets in West and rises in East.
13. The doctor says it is hopeless case.
14. Have you never seen elephant?
15. What nice child Mitesh is!
16. Who wishes to take walk with me?
17. Get pound of sugar from nearest shop.
18. Draw map of India.
19. The musician was old Parsee.
20. Only best quality is sold by us.
21. Man cannot live by bread alone.
22. April is fourth month of year.
23. It was proudest moment of my life.
24. Time makes worst enemies friends.

(B) FILL IN THE BLANKS WITH SUITABLE ARTICLES.

1. Iron is.....a useful metal
2. He reads.....Bible daily
3. We never saw suchterrible accident
4. Shirisha is.....attractive girl.
5. Which is.....tallest tower in our city.
6. Sanskrit is.....difficult language.
7. My friend isEuropean.
8. I met Mr. Kumaryear ago.
9. Do you look atblue sky?
10. Tirupathy isholy place.
11. I bought pair of shoes.
12. I saw movie last night.
13. They are staying at hotel.
14. Look at woman over there! She is a famous actress.
15. I do not like basketball.
16. That is girl I told you about.
17. night is quiet. Let's take a walk!
18. price of gas keeps rising.
19. Juan is Spanish.
20. I read amazing story yesterday.
21. love is such beautiful thing.
22. I live in apartment. apartment is new.
23. I would like piece of cake.
24. I was in Japanese restaurant. restaurant served good food.
25. Sara can play guitar.

11.4 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you have learnt

- The meaning and two types of articles
- To distinguish between articles a and an
- To omit articles where not necessary

11.5 KEY WORDS

Adjective: a word that expresses an attribute of something.

Noun: a word that can be used to refer to a person, place, thing, quality or action.

Vowel: a speech sound made with the vocal tract open.

Consonant: a speech sound that is not a vowel.

11.6 BOOKS SUGGESTED

1. Raymond Murphy : Murphy's English Grammar:Cambridge University Press, 2004

2. Jayanthi Dakshina Murthy:Contemporary English Grammar:Book Palace, 2003
3. A.J.Thomson & A.V.Martinet:A Practical English Grammar:Oxford University Press,1997
4. Wren and Martin:High School English Grammar:Oxford University Press

Answers

Check Your Progress 1.

- | | | | | |
|-------|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| 1. an | 2. a | 3. a | 4. a | 5. an |
| 6. a | 7. an | 8. a | 9. an | 10. an |
| 11. a | 12. an | 13. an | 14. a | 15. an |

Check Your Progress 2.

1. The European
2. The sun
3. The reindeer
4. The French, the Germans
5. The matter
6. The Japanese
7. The handicapped
8. The Indian Ocean
9. The busiest
10. The message
11. The boy

Check Your Progress 3. (A)

1. The Bhagvat Gita
2. A kind
3. The cat
4. The rose, the sweetest
5. A tree, the tree
6. The less, the more
7. The higher, the more
8. The way
9. The best
10. A fool
11. An arm
12. The sun, the west, the east
13. A hopeless case
14. The elephant
15. A nice child
16. A walk
17. A pound, the nearest shop

18. The map
19. An old Parsee
20. The best
21. A bread
22. The fourth
23. The proudest
24. The worst

Check Your Progress 3. (B)

1. a
2. the
3. a
4. an
5. the
6. a
7. a
8. a
9. the
10. a
11. a
12. a
13. the
14. the
15. the
16. the
17. the
18. the
19. a
20. a
21. the, a
22. an, the
23. a
24. a, the
25. the