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Vietnamese learners mastering english articles

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List of Appendices

		Page number
Appendix 1	Writing Task	188
Appendix 2	A graded essay	189
Appendix 3	Loudet (Proficiency test)	190
Appendix 4	Article Error Analysis test	204
Appendix 5	Pretest 1	207
Appendix 6	Pretest 2	210
Appendix 7	Posttest 1	213
Appendix 8	Posttest 2	216
Appendix 9	Traditional Grammar Lessons	219
Appendix 10	A Cognitive approach to using Determiners in English correctly	240

Appendix 1

WRITING TASK

You should spend about 60 minutes on this task.

Present a written argument or case to an educated reader with no specialist knowledge of the following topic:

*The idea of having a single career is becoming an old fashioned one.
The new fashion will be to have several careers or ways of earning
money and further education will be something that continues
throughout life.*

You should write at least 250 words.

Use your own ideas, knowledge and experience and support your arguments with examples and relevant evidence.

Appendix 2

A GRADED ESSAY

Notes: strikethrough: wrong use or insertion; underlined: omission; doublestrikethrough: use confusion; Small Cap: wrong order

Nowadays, ~~the~~ society ~~develops~~ very quickly. The ~~economies~~ of each country also changes in a positive way. To stabilize in ~~the~~ period of information technology, each person should have several careers or ways of earning money. Moreover, further education will continue throughout human beings life.

~~modern period~~. The society provides them a lot of opportunity in order to promote their position through modern technology wide relation among the countries in the world. When one person goes downtown, he can see material's life developing more and more. As a result, he must try his best to earn money so that he can buy valuable

things. Beside their professional career in offices, people can work in other places such as factories, schools, even in their house. They will have high income thanks to many ways of making money or different careers. If one person ONLY HAS one career, he may not ~~both~~ enjoy benefits ~~and~~ keep up with the progress of ~~the society~~ as well as life in modern period.

Moreover, it is very important to continue further education. ~~the society~~ develops, the more people must study. This is a way for them to merge into the development of ~~the society~~. In reality, many new things appear in human's life, so they need to comprehend these things by studying higher. However, people cannot stop studying in a certain stage but continue throughout life

because of advancement of technology. In further education, they will have the chance to approach and practise valuable invention from human. At that time, people will not be dismissed from human's society. In short, further education is always

basis for everyone to reach their wishes. In conclusion, each person should have several careers or ways of earning money in modern period. Furthermore, continuing further education should be considered purpose for people to promote their status in

~~the society~~. To avoid bad things in future, they must achieve the standards ~~the society~~ needs.

Appendix 3
Proficiency Test

LOUDET

Diagnostische test — versie september 2000

Rijksuniversiteit Groningen

Dit is een diagnostische test. De resultaten zijn slechts bedoeld om jou en ons inzicht te geven in je vooruitgang wat betreft je kennis van het Engels en hebben verder geen consequenties voor je studieresultaten.

De test bestaat uit een grammatica en een vocabulaire onderdeel. Voor beide onderdelen samen heb je ongeveer 45 minuten de tijd. De praktijk wijst uit dat dit ruim voldoende is. Blijf daarom niet te lang nadenken over een bepaald item, maar probeer zo veel mogelijk af te krijgen binnen de gestelde tijd.

Beide onderdelen bestaan uit meerkeuze vragen. Deze beantwoord je op het bijgevoegde computerformulier. Vergeet niet je naam en studentnummer op het computerformulier in te vullen.

NB: bij het onderdeel grammatica zijn er soms twee items in één tekstje gestopt. Dit is echter in alle gevallen duidelijk aangegeven. Let er wel op bij het invullen op je scoreformulier!

NB: werken met potlood maakt het mogelijk om eventuele fouten te corrigeren....

SUCCES!

A. Kies bij onderstaande items steeds het alternatief dat het beste in de context past, of dat de beste Engelse vertaling van de Nederlandse zin is.

NB: Er is per vraag slechts één antwoord mogelijk!

1. *Most of the ——— is still missing*
 - a. taken money in the "Geldnet" van hold-up
 - b. in the "Geldnet" van hold-up taken money
 - c. money taken in the "Geldnet" van hold-up

2. *"You're rude on the phone, you mismanage my diary, and now this letter is full of typos! Can't you do ——— right?"*
 - a. nothing
 - b. a thing
 - c. something
 - d. anything

3. *Supporting the company will be the Regimental Band and Buglers and a demonstration drill squad. A number of other activities ——— to be arranged to coincide with the Royal visit*
 - a. is
 - b. are

4. *A recent Treasury survey of 1,300 small and medium-sized firms (employing most of the nation's workforce) produced these alarming results: 11 per cent ——— the euro is launching in 6 months time*
 - a. knows
 - b. know

5. *Who would want to be ——— these days?*
 - a. secondary school teacher
 - b. a secondary school teacher
 - c. any secondary school teacher

6. *Peter drew himself to attention and said, 'Sir?' They had to call him "Sir"; it ——— good manners.*
 - a. was
 - b. were

7. *The global passion for Viagra tells you all ——— you need to know about male vanity.*
 - a. that
 - b. which
 - c. no pronoun needed
 - d. both a and c are correct

8. *The British have long been known for their love of ———*
 - a. the scenery
 - b. a scenery
 - c. some scenery
 - d. scenery

9. *The ——— has not yet been found*
 - a. used car for the hold-up
 - b. car used for the hold-up
 - c. for the hold-up used car

10. *Had international copyright, the royalty system and legal protection been in their present state Beethoven ——— a good living, even after he became deaf*
 a. had made b. made
 c. would have made d. would make
11. *Ik heb liever Schotse whisky dan Ierse*
 a. I prefer Scotch whisky to the Irish
 b. I prefer Scotch whisky to the Irish one
 c. I prefer Scotch whisky to Irish one
 d. I prefer Scotch whisky to Irish
12. *He was particularly interested in finding out why we weren't having a white wedding. At the wedding rehearsal the vicar told us he would write to the Bishop and tell him that he had two non-active Christians in the parish. He said that if he ——— told to marry us he would resign*
 a. would be b. were c. is d. will be
13. *I wanted to be a journalist, so I decided to do the magazine journalism course at City University, ——— was most useful in that it gave me the opportunity to come to London and start freelancing.*
 a. which b. what
 c. who d. which one
14. *This followed the postponement of the British leg of the group's Bridges to Babylon tour, ——— singer Mick Jagger claimed was due to concern at the potential loss of earnings to members of the crew*
 a. that b. which
 c. what d. a, b and c are correct
15. *Even people with friendly and sociable ——— have been known to refuse invitations if the acceptance of them conflicted with some television programme they have become attached to*
 a. nature b. natures
16. *David Blunkett, the shadow education secretary, ——— last night that he would expect half an hour homework a night for children aged seven*
 a. has said b. said c. has been saying
17. *The bill was welcomed by Fairshares, a group ——— campaigns for fair division of all assets on divorce.*
 a. who b. which
 c. no pronoun needed d. a, b and c are correct
18. *As soon as I ——— what has happened I'll let you know*

- a. will have found out
- b. find out
- c. will find out
- d. found out

19. *Ruth Wise, —— garden wall was flattened, said the scene was "like something you would see in the Wizard of Oz"*

- a. of who the
- b. of whom the
- c. whose
- d. both a and c are correct

20–21. *You will have to pencil another date in your diary: Eddie George, the Bank of England governor —[20]— baring his soul to Jimmy Young for two weeks. He was due on the show tomorrow morning. George's aides are remaining coy but hint that something very important —[21]—.*

- 20.
 - a. has postponed
 - b. postponed
 - c. both a and b are correct
- 21.
 - a. cropped up
 - b. has cropped up
 - c. both a and b are correct

22. *"I'll be out all afternoon. If anyone ——, take their number and tell them I'll call them back tonight"*

- a. called
- b. would call
- c. will call
- d. should call

23. *Janet Evans, the four-times Olympic swimming champion —— by a German television station when the bomb went off.*

- a. was interviewed
- b. was being interviewed
- c. both a and b are correct

24–25. *Letter to the Editor: Innocent masons:*

Sir - Anne Atkins gives advice to a wife whose husband —[24]— her for Freemasonry. All Freemasons should know that family —[25]— before Freemasonry, and the erring husband should be advised accordingly.

- 24.
 - a. neglects
 - b. is neglecting
 - c. both a and b are correct
- 25.
 - a. always comes
 - b. is always coming
 - c. is coming always
 - d. both a and b are correct

26. *Tottenham captain Mabbutt, who yesterday became an MBE for his services to football, will today visit a leading eye specialist with his surgeon, David James, in the hope that he —— the all-clear to go*

ahead with a double operation to have a plate removed from his cheek.

- a. is given
- b. is being given
- c. will be given
- d. b and c are correct

27. "That is why we are putting down amendments to secure this, and if those amendments _____, then I think we will vote against this bill on the third reading on Thursday"

- a. are not accepted
- b. will not be accepted
- c. will not have been accepted
- d. would not be accepted

28. The original site of Harry Ramsden's in Guiseley is in the Guinness Book of Records as _____ largest fish and chips restaurant, serving nearly one million customers a year

- a. world's
- b. the world's

29–30. Sophie, an Afghan hound, attends St Martin's veterinary surgery in West Drayton, Middlesex. At 43.7 kg, she —[29]— the equivalent of two Afghans. Sophie —[30]— on a calorie-controlled diet since mid-January, but her owner, Mrs Taylor feels guilty when forced to stop feeding her titbits.

- 29. a. is weighing
- 30. a. is
- b. weighs
- b. has been
- c. a and b are correct
- c. a and b are correct

31. At 28 Sally Herbert Frankel was appointed Professor and then Head of the Department of Economics of the University of Witwatersrand, a post which he _____ until 1946.

- a. has held
- b. had held
- c. has been holding
- d. held

32. The BBC World Service _____ yesterday that it was planning to launch a second channel in English carrying 24-hour news.

- a. announced
- b. has announced
- c. had announced

33. After a dip in the sea on Boxing Day somebody winces: 'Ee, that's the coldest _____ it in 13 years.

- a. I know
- b. I knew
- c. I've known
- d. I am knowing

34. Ever since they overran Tibet three decades ago, the Chinese _____ – to wipe out the Dalai Lama's influence in Tibet through campaigns of 'patriotic education'.

- a. are trying
- b. have been trying
- c. try
- d. both a and c

35. *The 5th lord Grey of Codnor, who has died aged 93, had the remarkable distinction of succeeding in 1989 to a peerage which — in abeyance for nearly 500 years. His predecessor, the 4th Baron, died in 1496.*
 a. had been b. has been c. was being
36. *How ——— Hong Kong continue to attract tourists now the Chinese have taken control of the city?*
 a. does b. will c. both a and b are correct
37. *Writing in his local paper, Eltham News Shopper, former minister Peter Bottomley MP discloses bold plans: 'My ambition is to become an intellectual when I ——— 50.*
 a. am b. will be c. am going to be d. would be
38. *Make sure you get to the airport in time. The only plane ——— around 6.30am, and if you miss that you could be stranded for another week.*
 a. will leave b. leaves c. is leaving d. all are correct
39. *Since I came off the Hay Diet six months ago I have been feeling irritable and lethargic. I shall try again in the New Year, but it's the same as any diet: you ——— on Monday.*
 a. always start
 b. are always going to start
 c. will always start
40. *Have you ever watched a pornographic film? ——— made me watch one about ten years ago but it certainly wasn't a turn-on.*
 a. A friend of mine b. A friend of me c. A friend from me
41. *——— the potential of a song lyric to be poetry.*
 a. Never one should overstate b. One should never overstate
 c. Never should one overstate d. both a and b
42. *———, Access to Justice, which was published in July, contains a number of recommendations to make civil justice less expensive, quicker, and more efficient.*
 a. A report of Lord Woolf b. Lord Woolf's report
43. *A resentful underclass could spell trouble for Latin America's new-found political stability and economic prosperity. ——— more apparent than in Venezuela, a founder-member of OPEC and the region's most prosperous country.*
 a. Nowhere this is b. Nowhere is this
 c. This is nowhere d. both a and c are correct

44. *While it is dangerous for a publisher to have favourites, I am particularly excited to be publishing ——— Wonder Boys.*
 a. the second novel of Michael Chabon
 b. Michael Chabon's second novel
 c. the second novel by Michael Chabon
 d. both b and c are correct
45. *He wasn't able to ——— on his exams.*
 a. concentrate himself
 b. concentrate
 c. to concentrating
46. *He was looking forward ——— to the party.*
 a. to go b. to going c. going d. both a and b
47. *——— is technically deficient as a recording, but who cares when music is being made like this?*
 a. Clemens Krauss's 1940 Beethoven Missa Solemnis
 b. The 1940 Beethoven Missa Solemnis by Clemens Krauss
 c. The 1940 Beethoven Missa Solemnis of Clemens Krauss'
 d. both a and b are correct
48. *General Iulian Vlad, head of Romania's former Securitate secret police, appealed ——— against his nine-year prison sentence for complicity in genocide.*
 a. in Bucharest yesterday
 b. yesterday in Bucharest
 c. both a and b
49. *My New Year's resolution, were I to have one, would be to give up ———.*
 a. to smoke b. smoking c. both a and b are correct
50. *You really should remember ——— tonight!*
 a. posting that letter b. to post that letter c. both a and b

B. Een snelle vocabulaire ronde. Kies bij de onderstaande items steeds het alternatief met dezelfde betekenis als het gegeven woord of de gegeven uitdrukking.

NB: slechts één antwoord is mogelijk!

- 51. abject**
a. horrifying
b. inescapable
c. miserable
d. undeniable
- 52. an adept at/in**
a. craftsman
b. genius
c. lover of
d. expert
- 53. to construe.**
a. to present
b. to interpret
c. to quote
d. to erect
- 54. contingency.**
a. eventuality
b. emergency
c. liability
d. support
- 55. to defer.**
a. to cancel
b. to prolong
c. to restrict
d. to postpone
- 56. discrepancy.**
a. mistake
b. inconsistency
c. eventuality
d. oversight
- 57. to efface.**
a. to affect
b. to distort
c. to rub out
d. to stain
- 58. fallacy**
a. mistaken belief
b. crazy idea
c. an unproved theory

d. a whim

59. to forfeit.

- a. to give up
- b. to donate
- c. to promote
- d. to purchase

60. garbled.

- a. colourful
- b. consistent
- c. confusing
- d. critical

61. to glean.

- a. to hear
- b. to gather
- c. to learn
- d. to understand

62. tenuous.

- a. close
- b. obvious
- c. weak
- d. implausible

63. to scour.

- a. to drain
- b. to haunt
- c. to search thoroughly
- d. to scrutinise

64. blatant.

- a. bold
- b. shameless
- c. emphatic
- d. outspoken

65. sanctimonious.

- a. self-righteous
- b. religious
- c. irrelevant
- d. irreverent.

66. unctuous.

- a. bold

- b. ingratiating
- c. kindly
- d. exaggerated

67. vestige.

- a. semblance
- b. trace
- c. hint
- d. appearance

68. warped

- a. strange
- b. devious
- c. twisted
- d. confused

69. scathing.

- a. scornful
- b. destructive
- c. unjust
- d. bloody

70. sacrilegious.

- a. sacred
- b. controversial
- c. criminal
- d. irreligious

71. obtrusive.

- a. fussy
- b. noticeable
- c. faded
- d. bright

72. to mesmerise.

- a. to move deeply
- b. to tantalise
- c. to thrill
- d. to hold spellbound

73. facetious.

- a. hurtful
- b. rude
- c. frivolous
- d. inconsiderate

74. exacerbate.

- a. to complicate
- b. to provoke
- c. to unsettle
- d. to aggravate

75. to enthrall
- a. to captivate
 - b. to upset
 - c. to disturb
 - d. to intrigue

76. to thwart.
- a. to reject
 - b. to undermine
 - c. to hinder
 - d. to force

77. spurious.
- a. false
 - b. worthless
 - c. dubious
 - d. pointless

C. Vocabulaire in context. Kies bij de onderstaande items steeds het alternatief dat het beste in de context past.

NB: slechts één antwoord is mogelijk

78. *A report recommended that all university lecturers should be —— to attend training courses, and said the quality of teaching was unlikely to improve until lecturers were systematically assessed, and outstanding performance was recognised and rewarded.*
- a. interested
 - b. compelled
 - c. deleted
 - d. estimated
79. *Professor Friedrich August von Hayek was born in Vienna on May 8 1899. The aristocratic 'von' derived from a minor title —— by the Emperor on his great-great-grandfather, who had introduced textile manufacture into Lower Austria.*
- a. conveyed
 - b. sent
 - c. certified
 - d. conferred
80. *Calling for "a new human order" of —— and development, the Human Development Report, presented by the United Nations, wants 20 billion a year spent on human resources like education, health and water.*

95. *Evidently undaunted by the fundamentalist fury about Martin Scorsese's *The Last Temptation of Christ*, Bernardo Bertolucci has agreed to film a life of the Buddha. The film, which has been _____ a £ 36 million budget, will begin shooting in India next year*
a. allocated b. targeted c. conformed d. shared
96. *The progress of the North Sea nations towards meeting their commitments to cut pollution will be _____ at the conference for the Protection of the North Sea, at The Hague in March.*
a. assessed b. assigned c. evoked d. weighed in
97. *Families are becoming almost as ubiquitous in election leaflets as the vacuous smiles and promises. No longer is it deemed possible for a politician's spouse not to _____: politicians' wives are less liberated today than ever before*
a. conform b. present
c. disappear d. photograph
98. *Many hunters who used to hunt otters will confess privately that maybe they did contribute to that creature's _____, although publicly they will say it was insecticides and changing habitats.*
a. decline b. comfort c. presence d. upsurge
99. *East German guards yesterday evening began to _____ a 300-yard stretch of the Berlin Wall and put up a metal fence in its place.*
a. change b. demolish c. require d. resurrect
100. *Where the concepts of God and Nature used to _____ a poetic response in the nineteenth-century reader, the modern poets rely on sex and myth to produce the same effect.*
a. insist b. evoke c. construct d. recall

Appendix 4

ARTICLE ERROR ANALYSIS TEST

QUESTIONS

1. **Decide which word or words are correct and then use the answer sheet to mark the letter of the right choice.**

1. Judy goes to _____ on the bus.
a) work b) a work c) the work
2. Can I pick _____ from your tree?. Yes, of course.
a) an apple b) some apple c) the apple
3. _____ is my favourite sport.
a) Golf b) A golf c) The golf
4. _____ starts at nine o'clock.
a) School b) A school c) The school.
5. We had _____ nice time at the disco yesterday.
a) the b) a c) x
6. Nigel opened a drawer and took out _____.
a) photos b) photo c) some photos
7. Did you learn to play _____?
a) violin b) a violin c) the violin
8. We can finish the rest of the bread for _____.
a) breakfast b) a breakfast c) the breakfast
9. While I was in hospital, they gave me _____.
a) X-ray b) a X-ray c) an X-ray
10. I might listen to _____.
a) radio b) radios c) the radio
11. We need to protect _____ from pollution.
a) environment b) some environment c) the environment
12. What did Tom buy at the supermarket? He bought _____.
a) two milk b) two cartons of milk c) two milks
13. I really ought to do _____ housework.
a) a b) many c) some
14. That shop has _____ nice sofa.
a) some b) a c) zero article
15. The gas explosion caused _____ to the flats.
a) some damages b) some damage c) a damage

2. **For each blank, choose the correct determiner. A zero (0) means no determiner is needed. Use the answer sheet for the answer.**

(1) _____ (The / 0/ A) Custom of Chewing Betel and Areca Nuts

According to (2) _____ (the / that) legend, (3) _____ (the / a) custom was popularized during (4) _____ (the / 0) Hung Vuong Era, and closely follows (5) _____ (the / a) famous fairy tale of (6) _____ "Story of the Betel and Areca Nut". (7) _____ (The / A) quid of betel consists of four materials: (8) _____ (an / 0) areca leaf (sweet taste), (9) _____ (an / 0) betel bark (hot taste), (10) _____ (a / the) chay root (bitter taste), and (11) _____ (a / 0) hydrated lime (pungent taste). (12) _____ (The / a) custom of chewing (13) _____ (the / 0) betel nut is unique to Vietnam. Old health books claim that chewing betel and areca nut makes (14) _____ (the / 0) mouth fragrant, decreases bad (15) _____ (temper / tempers), and makes digesting (16) _____ (food / foods) easy". (17) _____ (A / the) quid of betel makes (18) _____ (the / 0) people become closer and more open-hearted. At (19) _____ (the / any) wedding ceremony, there must be (20) _____ (the / a) dish of betel and areca nut, which people can share as they enjoy (21) _____ (the / a) special occasion.

During (22) _____ (0 / every) festivals or Tet Holidays, (23) _____ (this / 0) betel and areca nut is used for inviting (24) _____ (the / 0) visitors and making (25) _____ (the / 0) acquaintances. Sharing a quid of betel with (26) _____ (the / an) old friend is like expressing (27) _____ (the / 0) gratitude for (28) _____ (the / 0 / a) relationship. A quid of betel and areca nut makes (29) _____ (the / 0) people feel warm on (30) _____ (the / 0) cold winters days, and during (31) _____ (the / 0) funerals it relieves (32) _____ (a / 0) sadness. Betel and areca nuts are also used in offerings. When (33) _____ (many / 0) Vietnamese people worship (34) _____ (their / these) ancestors, betel and areca nut must be present at (35) _____ (the / 0) altar. Nowadays, the custom of chewing betel remains popular in (36) _____ (some / any) Vietnamese villages and among (37) _____ (the / 0) old.

3. Read the story about a silly mistake and decide if a determiner (the, a/an, one, some) needs to go in the space. If a word is missing, write the word. If no word is missing, write X.

This is also a true story. It shows how x plans can sometimes go wrong and how (1) _____ people can make silly mistakes. This too happened quite (2) _____ long time ago – in (3) _____ 1979, in fact. The scene was (4) _____ old people's home in (5) _____ small town in (6) _____ north of England called (7) _____ Otley. The owners of the home wanted to put (8) _____ fence around it to make it more private. The work began soon after (9) _____ Christmas when (10) _____ workmen arrived in (11) _____ lorry with planks of wood which they put up around the building. 'It was (12) _____ very nice fence,' said (13) _____ of the old people. But there was (14) _____ problem. The workmen forgot to leave a gap for the lorry to drive out through. They had to come back the next day to

knock down part of (15) _____ fence. '(16) What ____ silly mistake!' said another resident. 'It was (17) _____ funny we had to laugh. In fact it was (18) _____ most fun we've had for a long time.'

4. **All the articles (a, an, and the) have been removed from this text which describes the operation of a camera. Replace them where necessary. Use the answer sheet for the articles to be replaced. Use an X for the case where no article is needed.**

Camera is (2) piece of (3) equipment used for taking (4) photographs. (5) Camera lets in (6) light from (7) image in (8) front of it and directs (9) light onto (10) photographic film. (11) Light has (12) effect on (13) chemicals which cover (14) film and forms (15) picture on it. When (16) film is developed it is washed in (17) chemicals which make (18) picture permanent. It is then possible to print (19) picture onto (20) photographic paper.

5. **Write the announcements and headlines of the articles in a travel magazine on the basis of the cues provided. Use the spaces provided below each item for the answer.**

1. holiday / in / Bahamas

2. _____
tour / of / White house

3. _____
Harrisburg / is / capital / of / Pennsylvania

4. _____
train / to / Paris / leaves / from / Waterloo Station

5. _____
walk / along / Princes Street

Appendix 5

Pretest 1 on the English Articles

Name: _____

Undergraduate year: _____

Class: _____

Institution: _____

1. Fill in the blanks with *the*, *a/an*, or *x* (zero article).

1. ___ golf is my favourite sport.
2. ___ koala bear is becoming almost extinct.
3. ___ most valuable minerals are found in common rocks everywhere.
4. ___ origins of that fairy tale are unknown.
5. ___ train that I took yesterday was delayed.
6. ___ water in the North Sea is usually quite cold.
7. A composer can choose among many variations to express ___ anger.
8. *Cai luong*, or “Renovated Opera”, is a form of ___ drama, modeled after French comedy.
9. Climatologists say that ___ world’s climate is changing.
10. Eaten with some locally picked mint leaves or greens, the rice concoction, *gao duoc pha che*, provides ___ balanced diet.
11. He is ___ best student of the class.
12. He left for ___ capital a month ago.
13. He lives in ___ Philippines.
14. I listened to ___ radio for a while.
15. Judy goes to ___ work by bus.
16. Not all Vietnamese folk tales are based on ___ foreign influence.
17. Packing for the trip to Asia requires ___ balance between bringing all you think you will need for your visit and packing as lightly as possible.
18. Paris is the capital of ___ France.
19. The earth is made up of ___ minerals.
20. The organization’s aim is to educate ___ public about the dangers of smoking.
21. The wheel was invented by ___ Chinese.
22. The word-of-mouth form of *veø* took the place of newspapers and TV in ___ illiterate society.

23. Tom went to ___ supermarket to buy some eggs.
24. Upon hearing the first bars of the well-loved sad tune, the *voing coá*, ___ audience reacts with gasps of recognition and applause.
25. Vietnam has a rich legacy of ___ orally transmitted folk tales.
26. Visitors can take ___ boat ride along the Hau river and observe the changing landscapes and life on the river.
27. We can finish the rest of the bread for _____ breakfast.
28. We went swimming in the river. _____ water was very clear.
29. We went to ___ mountains on vacation.
30. Yesterday we went for a long walk and enjoyed ___ sights.
31. They have a cat and two dogs. _____ cat is over fifteen years old.
32. Mary stopped to look at a house. _____ door was open.
33. Sue invited Tom to visit her garden. When entering the garden, Tom uttered, “___ roses are very beautiful”.
34. How can we combine economic growth and respect for _____ environment?
35. This is ___ only remaining copy.
36. Circle the right choice: Have you broken (your / the) arm?
37. ___ novel is the most popular form of fiction writing.
38. Reading ___ novel is a good way to relax.
39. “___ Mr. Wilson wanted to see you this morning. I don’t think he is your friend since I haven’t met him.”
40. The train to Paris leaves from _____ Waterloo Station.
41. I didn’t have ___ pencil.
42. Do you have _____ penny?
43. He wants to marry _____ princess who speaks five languages.
44. Bill is _____ engineer.

The Custom of Chewing Betel and Areca Nuts

According to the legend, 45 _____ custom was popularized during 46 _____ Hung Vuong Era, and closely follows 47 _____ famous fairy tale of “48 _____ Story of the Betel and Areca Nut”. A quid of betel consists of four materials: 49 _____ areca leaf (sweet taste), 50 _____ betel bark (hot taste), chay root (bitter taste), and 51 _____ hydrated lime (pungent taste). The custom of chewing 52 _____ betel nut is unique to 53 _____ Vietnam. 54 _____ old health books claim that “chewing betel and areca nut makes 55 _____ mouth fragrant, decreases bad temper, and makes digesting 56 _____ food easy”. A quid of betel makes 57 _____ people become closer and more open-hearted. At 58 _____ wedding ceremony, there must be 59 _____ dish of betel and areca nut, which people can share as they enjoy 60 _____ special occasion.

2. Correct these sentences if necessary. Give reasons for your choices. Use the other side of the last sheet for the descriptions.

61. A computer is an important research tool.
62. The computer is an important research tool.
63. A computer has revolutionised publishing.
64. The computer has revolutionised publishing.
65. Children should be given a sense of how the business works.
66. The aerospace business actually lost \$6billion this year.
67. The corkscrew is a gadget for getting corks out of bottles.
68. She has become the important figure in Norwegian politics.
69. Circle two right choices.
There was *a rope* lying on the ground.
 - a. Bill took an end, and I took an end, and we both tugged away at the rope.
 - b. Bill took the end, and I took the end, and we both tugged away at the rope.
 - c. Bill took some ends and tied a knot in the rope.
 - d. Bill took the ends and tied a knot in the rope.
70. Circle one right choice.
How many houses are there at the corner of two streets when Peter said to Mary as follows: "I am looking for the house at the corner"?
 - a. One
 - b. More than one
 - c. Neither (a) nor (b) are possible.

Appendix 6

Pretest 2 on the English Articles

Name: _____

Class/group: _____

1. Fill in the blanks with *a*, *the* or zero (no article).

1. ____ biggest deposits of minerals are distributed unequally around world.
2. ____ black market is the illegal sale of products.
3. ____ dangers of white water rafting are underestimated.
4. ____ girl sitting over there is my neighbour.
5. ____ sand on the Mediterranean beaches is quite yellow.
6. ____ school starts at nine o'clock.
7. ____ tennis is my favourite sport.
8. ____ tiger is becoming almost extinct.
9. ____ Vietnamese eat a great deal of rice.
10. A camera lets in light from an image in front of it and directs ____ light onto photographic film.
11. A composer can choose among many variations to express ____ joy.
12. Cai luong, or "Renovated Opera", is a form of drama, modeled after ____ French comedy.
13. Cantho is a thriving commercial center, with ____ busy shipping industry.
14. Experts say that ____ earth's surface is changing.
15. He lives on ____ Princess street.
16. I listened to ____ wind blowing through the trees.
17. I really ought to eat ____ dinner
18. In addition to ____ formally penned literature, Vietnam has a rich legacy of orally transmitted folk tales.
19. Lying by ____ Hau Giang River, Cantho is a (46) junction of communication.
20. Mary went to ____ park to take the dog for a walk.
21. She is ____ only student who handed in her work on time.
22. Some Vietnamese folk tales are adaptations of ____ ancient Chinese fables.
23. That's Terry—he's the third person on ____ right.
24. The gross national product (GNP) is the total value of goods and services produced in ____ country during a specified period of time (usually a year).
25. The most valuable minerals are found in ____ common rocks everywhere.

26. There were several cars in the parking lot. ____ cars all looked rather old.
27. To make bread you need wheat flour. ____ flour needs to be ground fine.
28. We saw ____ president on TV.
29. We took a long walk through ____ woods.
30. We walked bare footed through a field. ____ grass was wet.
31. We walked over the rice fields and could see that ____ rice seedlings had been growing.
32. Yesterday I bought a new car, but ____ radio did not work.
33. Yesterday we went to the movie theatre, but ____ movie was disappointing.

During festivals or Tet Holidays, betel and areca nut is used for inviting 34 ____ visitors and making 35 ____ acquaintances. Sharing a quid of betel with 36 ____ old friend is like expressing 37 ____ gratitude for 38 ____ relationship. A quid of betel and areca nut makes 39 ____ people feel warm on 40 ____ cold winters days, and during 41 ____ funerals it relieves 42 ____ sadness. Betel and areca nuts are also used in 43 ____ offerings. When 44 ____ Vietnamese worship their ancestors, betel and areca nut must be present at 45 ____ altar. Nowadays, the custom of chewing betel remains popular in 46 ____ Vietnamese villages and among 47 ____ old.

2. Correct these sentences if necessary. Give reasons for your choices. Use the other side of the last sheet for the descriptions.

48. A computer is an important research tool.
49. The computer is an important research tool.
50. A computer has revolutionised publishing.
51. The computer has revolutionised publishing.
52. Children should be given a sense of how the business works.
53. The aerospace business actually lost \$6billion this year.
54. The corkscrew is a gadget for getting corks out of bottles.
55. She has become the important figure in Norwegian politics.
56. Circle two right choices.
There was *a rope* lying on the ground.
 - a. Bill took an end, and I took an end, and we both tugged away at the rope.
 - b. Bill took the end, and I took the end, and we both tugged away at the rope.
 - c. Bill took some ends and tied a knot in the rope.
 - d. Bill took the ends and tied a knot in the rope.

57. Circle one right choice.
How many houses are there at the corner of two streets when Peter said to Mary as follows: "I am looking for the house at the corner"?
- a. One b. More than one c. Neither (a) nor (b) are possible.

Appendix 7

Post test 1 on the English Articles

Name: _____

Class/group: _____

Student code: _____

1. Fill in the blanks with *a, the* or zero (no article).

1. _____ adventures of Moby Dick are well known.
2. Minerals are abundant in nature. The earth is made up of _____ minerals, and even the most valuable minerals are found in common rocks everywhere.
3. _____ black market is the illegal sale of products.
4. _____ boy living next door to me is 15 years old.
5. _____ Japanese make a lot of cars.
6. _____ soccer is my favourite sport.
7. _____ tiger is becoming almost extinct.
8. A composer can choose among many variations to express _____ sadness.
9. Alice bought a TV and a video recorder, but she returned _____ video recorder because it was defective.
10. *Cai luong*, or “Renovated Opera”, is a form of _____ drama, modeled after French comedy.
11. Cantho is a thriving commercial center, with _____ busy shipping industry.
12. Experts say that _____ world’s climate is changing.
13. He comes from _____ South of Vietnam.
14. He died in _____ war.
15. I feel we have to take care of _____ environment.
16. In the restaurant, all of _____ tables were set with white table cloths.
17. In 1910, farmers represented 33 percent of the U.S. work force and it took more than an hour of _____ work to produce a bushel of corn.
18. Many minerals near the earth’s surface exist in _____ small amounts.
19. Many Vietnamese folk tales explain _____ natural phenomena.
20. Mary is _____ third person on the left.
21. Mary went to the park to take _____ dog for a walk.
22. These are only two examples of the dramatic changes that have occurred in agriculture. Through the advances in science and technology, _____ modern agriculture has become one of the greatest success stories of this century.

23. The organization's aim is to educate ___ public about the dangers of smoking.
24. Population growth is not the only problem that we face in terms of the world food supply. ___ Changes in eating habits are also causing problems. .
25. To make dough you need flour and water. _____ water needs to be lukewarm.
26. Upon hearing ___ first bars of the well-loved sad tune, the *vong co*, audience reacts with gasps of recognition and applause.
27. Visitors can take a boat ride along ___ Hau River and observe the changing landscapes.
28. We walked for an hour on the beach. _____ sand got into our shoes.
29. We went to ___ mountains on vacation.
30. We were at _____ sea for three weeks.
31. While I was in _____ hospital, they gave me an X-ray.
32. Yesterday I bought _____ new computer, but the screen did not work.
33. Yesterday we went to the theatre, but ___ play was disappointing.

The Custom of Chewing Betel and Areca Nuts

According to the legend, (34)_____ custom was popularized during (35)_____ Hung Vuong Era, and closely follows (36)_____ famous fairy tale of (37)_____ "Story of the Betel and Areca Nut". A quid of betel consists of four materials: (38)_____ areca leaf (sweet taste), (39)_____ betel bark (hot taste), chay root (bitter taste), and (40)_____ hydrated lime (pungent taste). The custom of chewing (41)_____ betel nut is unique to (42)_____ Vietnam. (43)_____ old health books claim that "chewing betel and areca nut makes (44)_____ mouth fragrant, decreases (45)_____ bad temper, and makes digesting (46)_____ food easy". A quid of betel makes (47)_____ people become closer and more open-hearted. At (48)_____ wedding ceremony, there must be (49)_____ dish of betel and areca nut, which people can share as they enjoy (50)_____ special occasion. During festivals or Tet Holidays, betel and areca nut is used for inviting (51)_____ visitors and making (52)_____ acquaintances. Sharing a quid of betel with (53)_____ old friend is like expressing (54)_____ gratitude for (55) _____ relationship. A quid of betel and areca nut makes (56)_____ people feel warm on (57)_____ cold winters days, and during (58)_____ funerals it relieves (59)_____ sadness. Betel and areca nuts are also used in (60)_____ offerings. When (61)_____ Vietnamese worship their ancestors, betel and areca nut must be present at (62)_____ altar. Nowadays, the custom of chewing betel remains popular in (63)_____ Vietnamese villages and among (64)_____ old.

2. **Correct the following sentences, if necessary. Give reasons for either the sentences you have changed or the sentences you have not changed.**
 65. How does one open oneself to Zen and get the clear mind?

66. I think that this decision needs the discussion before it is applied because each student might have a different answer.
67. The manager can decide on a profitable plan for next period based on the income statement.
68. The line has the variations such as its length, bending, and thickness.
69. He came by night train.
70. He walked through woods.
71. This box is made of the wood.
72. A special award was given to film director Ingmar Bergman.
73. He lives near church on the hill.
74. He is captain of the team.
75. The book fills leisure time for many people.

Appendix 8

Post test 2 on the English Articles

Name: _____

Class/group: _____

Student code: _____

1. Fill in the blanks with *the, a/an, or zero* (x).

1. A camera lets in light from an image in front of it and directs ___ light onto photographic film.
2. There were several cars in the parking lot. ___ cars all looked rather old.
3. Yesterday I bought a new car, but ___ radio did not work.
4. He is in ___ class now.
5. We went to ___ mountains on vacation.
6. He went to ___ town yesterday.
7. ___ origins of that fairy tale are unknown.
8. ___ town is very old.
9. When I answered the phone, ___ Mrs. Wilson said she wanted to talk to you.
10. ___ class works hard.
11. We saw ___ Prime Minister on TV.
12. I feel we have to take care of ___ environment.
13. ___ Japanese make a lot of cars.
14. He usually goes by ___ bus.
15. Where's John? He's on ___ bus.
16. He comes from ___ South Vietnam
17. She comes from ___ Philippines.
18. ___ biggest deposits of minerals are distributed unequally around world.
19. The gross national product (GNP) is the total value of goods and services produced in ___ country during a specified period of time (usually a year).
20. Cantho is a thriving commercial center, with ___ busy shipping industry.
21. Minerals are abundant in nature. The earth is made up of ___ minerals.
22. *Cai luong*, or "Renovated Opera", is a form of ___ drama, modeled after French comedy.

23. Population growth is not the only problem that we face in terms of the world food supply. ____ Changes in eating habits are also causing problems.
24. These are only two examples of the dramatic changes that have occurred in agriculture. Through the advances in science and technology, _____ modern agriculture has become one of the greatest success stories of this century.
25. Many Vietnamese folk tales explain ____ natural phenomena.
26. In the restaurant, all of ____ tables were set with white table cloths.
27. ____ tiger is becoming almost extinct.
28. We were at _____ sea for three weeks.
29. Yesterday I bought _____ new computer, but the screen did not work.
- 30-31. Circle two right choices.
There was *a rope* lying on the ground.
- Bill took an end, and I took an end, and we both tugged away at the rope.
 - Bill took the end, and I took the end, and we both tugged away at the rope.
 - Bill took some ends and tied a knot in the rope.
 - Bill took the ends and tied a knot in the rope.
32. Which of the following sentences is incorrect?
- A book fills leisure time for many people.
 - The book fills leisure time for many people.
 - Books fill leisure time for many people.
33. Which of the following is correct?
- These are pencils.
 - These are some pencils.

The Custom of Chewing Betel and Areca Nuts

According to the legend, (34)_____ custom was popularized during (35)_____ Hung Vuong Era, and closely follows (36)_____ famous fairy tale of (37)_____ "Story of the Betel and Areca Nut". A quid of betel consists of four materials: (38)_____ areca leaf (sweet taste), (39)_____ betel bark (hot taste), chay root (bitter taste), and (40)_____ hydrated lime (pungent taste). The custom of chewing (41)_____ betel nut is unique to (42)_____ Vietnam. (43)_____ old health books claim that "chewing betel and areca nut makes (44)_____ mouth fragrant, decreases (45)_____ bad temper, and makes digesting (46)_____ food easy". A quid of betel makes (47)_____ people become closer and more open-hearted. At (48)_____ wedding ceremony, there must be (49)_____ dish of betel and areca nut, which people can share as they enjoy (50)_____ special occasion. During festivals or Tet Holidays, betel and areca nut is used for inviting (51)_____ visitors and making (52)_____ acquaintances. Sharing a quid of betel with (53)_____ old friend is like expressing (54)_____ gratitude for (55)_____ relationship. A quid of betel and areca nut makes (56)_____ people feel warm on (57)_____ cold winters days, and during

(58) _____ funerals it relieves (59) _____ sadness. Betel and areca nuts are also used in (60) _____ offerings. When (61) _____ Vietnamese worship their ancestors, betel and areca nut must be present at (62) _____ altar. Nowadays, the custom of chewing betel remains popular in (63) _____ Vietnamese villages and among (64) _____ old.

2. Correct the following sentences, if necessary. Give reasons for either the sentences you have changed or the sentences you have not changed.

76. How does one open oneself to Zen and get the clear mind?
77. I think that this decision needs the discussion before it is applied because each student might have a different answer.
78. The manager can decide on a profitable plan for next period based on the income statement.
79. The line has the variations such as its length, bending, and thickness.
80. He came by night train.
81. He walked through woods.
82. This box is made of the wood.
83. A special award was given to film director Ingmar Bergman.
84. He lives near church on the hill.
85. He is captain of the team.
86. The book fills leisure time for many people.

Appendix 9

Tradittional grammar lessons

Lesson 1

Part A

Ship and water: countable and uncountable nouns

A. What is the difference?

a ship

two boats

water

COUNTABLE

A countable noun (e.g ship) can be singular or Plural. We can count ships. We can say one shipp or two ships.

Here are some examples of countable nouns.

We could see a ship in the distance.

Claire has only got one sister.

I've got a problem with the car.

Do you like these photos?

I'm going out for five minutes.

UNCOUNTABLE

An uncountable noun (e.g. water) is neither singular nor plural. We cannot count water. We can say water or some water but NOT a water or two waters.

Here are some examples of uncountable nouns.

Can I have some water?

Shall we sit on the grass?

The money is quite safe.

I love music.

Would you like some butter?

B. Nouns after **the**, **a/an** and numbers

There are some words that go with both countable and uncountable nouns. One of these is **the**.

We can say **the ship** (singular), **the ships** (plural) or **the water** (uncountable).

But other words go with one kind of noun but not with the other.

COUNTABLE

A/an or one goes only with a singular noun.

I need a spoon.

UNCOUNTABLE

We do not use a/an with an uncountable noun.

NOT: *a money*.

Numbers above one go only with plural nouns. We do not use numbers with an uncountable noun

We eat three meals a day.

NOT: three moneys

C. Nouns after **some, many/much**, etc

Some and **any** go with plural or uncountable nouns. We can also use plural and uncountable nouns on their own, without **some** or **any**.

PLURAL.

UNCOUNTABLE

Tom told some jokes.

We had some fun.

Do you know any jokes?

That won't be any fun.

Tom usually tells jokes.

We always have fun.

But NOT *He tells joke.*

Many and **a few** go only with plural nouns.

Much and **a little** go with uncountable nouns.

There weren't many bottles.

I don't drink much wine.

I made a few sandwiches.

There was only a little bread left.

Exercises

1. What is the difference? (A)

Look at the underlined nouns. Are they are countable or uncountable?

- There was a car behind us *countable*

- I never eat meat *uncountable*

1 Do you play golf?

2 I had to wait ten minutes

3 Just tell me one thing

4 Love makes the world go round.

5 Good luck in your new job.

6 Power stations produce energy.

7 I'm taking a photo.

8 Would you like an apple?

2. A and some(B—C)

Laura has been to the supermarket. What has she bought? Use *a* or *some* with these words: *banana, biscuits, butter, cheese, eggs, flowers, lemon, light bulb, mineral water, magazine, soap, wine*

Ex: *some flowers; a magazine; some wine*

3. Countable and uncountable nouns (A—C)

Complete the conversation. Choose the correct form.

Jessica: What are you doing, Andrew?

Andrew: I'm writing (zero) essay / an essay.

Jessica: Oh, you've got (1) computer / a computer. Do you always write (2) essay / essays on your computer?

Andrew: Yes, but I'm not doing very well today. I've been working on my plan for about three (3) hour / hours now.

Jessica: You've got lots of books to help you, though. I haven't got as

- (4) many / much books as you. That's because I haven't got much (5) money / moneys. Quite often I can't even afford to buy (6) food / a food.
- Andrew: Really? That can't be (7) many / much fun.
- Jessica: I'd like to get (8) lob / a lob I can do in my spare time and earn (9) a / some money. I've got (10) a few / a little ideas, but what do you think I should do?
- Andrew: I know someone who paints (11) picture / pictures and sells them. Why don't you do that?
- Jessica: Because I'm no good at painting.

Part B

Nouns that can be countable or uncountable

A. A potato or potato?

Some nouns can be either countable or uncountable. For example, a **potato** is a separate, individual thing, but **potato** cannot be counted.

potatoes

COUNTABLE

*I'm peeling the **potatoes**.*

*Melanie baked **a cake** for David.*

*Vicky was eating **an apple**.*

*Someone threw a **stone** at the police.*

*There's a **hair** on your shirt.*

potato

UNCOUNTABLE

***Would** you like **some potato** ?*

*Have **some cake/a piece of cake**.*

*Is there **apple** in this salad?*

*The house is built of **stone**.*

*I must brush my **hair**.*

B. A sport or sport?

Often the countable noun is specific, and the uncountable noun is more general.

COUNTABLE

*Rugby is a **sport**. (— a particular sport)*

*That's **a nice painting** over there.*

*We heard a sudden **noise** outside.*

*John Lennon had **an interesting life**.*

UNCOUNTABLE

*Do you like **sport**? (= sport in general)*

*Paul is good at **painting**.*

*Constant **noise** can make you ill.*

***Life** is complicated sometimes.*

C. A paper or paper?

Some nouns can be countable or uncountable with different meanings.

COUNTABLE

*I bought a **paper**. (= a newspaper)*

*I'll have a **glass of orange juice**, please.*

*Have you got **an iron**? (for clothes)*

*I switched all the **lights** on.*

*I've been to France many **times**.*

*The journey was a great **experience**.*

UNCOUNTABLE

*I need **some paper** to write on.*

*I bought a **piece of glass** for the window.*

*The bridge is made of **iron**.*

*There's more **light** by the window.*

*I can't stop. I haven't got **time**.*

*He has enough **experience** for the job.*

*I run a small **business**. (= a company) I enjoy doing **business**. (= buying and selling)*
*We finally found a **space** in the car park. There's no **space** for a piano in here.*
*There are hundreds of satellites out in **space**.*

D. A coffee or coffees?

Words for drink are usually uncountable: *Coffee is more expensive than tea.*
 But when we are ordering or offering drinks, we can say either a cup **of coffee** or a **coffee**. *Two coffees, please.* (two cups of coffee)
*Would you like a **beer**?* (= a glass/bottle/can of beer)

Some nouns can be countable when we are talking about a particular kind or about different kinds.

*Chianti is **an Italian wine**.* (a kind of Italian wine)
*The use of **plastics** has greatly increased.* (= the use of different kinds of plastic)

Exercises

1. A potato or potatoes? A sport or sports? (A—B)

Complete the conversations. Choose the correct form.
 Ex: Can I pick an apple from your tree? Yes, of course.

- 1 I think sport / a sport is boring. Me too. I hate it.
- 2 We ought to buy some potato / some potatoes. -- OK, I'll get them.
- 3 I think painting / a painting is a fascinating hobby. Well, you're certainly very good at it.
- 4 Did you hear noise / a noise in the middle of the night? -- No, I don't think so.
- 5 Is there cheese / a cheese in this soup? Yes, a little.
- 6 I had conversation / a conversation with Vicky last night. Oh? What about?
- 7 Shall I put a chicken / some chicken in your sandwiches? -- Yes, please.
- 8 Are you a pacifist? Well, I don't believe in war / a war, so I suppose I am.
- 9 It isn't fair. -- No, life / a life just isn't fair, I'm afraid.
- 10 What's the matter? -- You've got some egg / some eggs on your shirt.

2. A paper or papers? (C)

Complete the conversations. Put in these nouns: *business* (x2), *experience* (x2), *glass*, *iron*, *light*, *paper*, *space*, *time*. Put *a/an* or *some* before each noun.
 Ex: Harriet: Did you manage to park in town?

Mike: It took me ages to find *a space*. And all I wanted was to buy *some paper* to wrap this present in.

- 1 Sarah: Are you busy tomorrow?
 Mark: I'm meeting someone in the office. We've got..... to discuss.
- 2 Trevor: Do you think I need to take..... with me for my shirts?

- Laura: Oh, surely the hotel will have one.
- 3 Vicky: I was going to have some juice, but I can't find
- Rachel: If you turned on, you might be able to see properly.
- 4 Claire: I've never met your brother.
- Mark: Oh, he's usually very busy because he runs But he's been ill recently. The doctor has ordered him to spend resting.
- 5 Daniel: How did your interview go?
- Emma: Well, I didn't get the job. I think they really wanted someone with of the work, and that's what I haven't got. So it was a bit of a waste of time. And the train coming back was two hours late. That'sdon't want to repeat.

3. Countable or uncountable? (A—B)

Complete Claire's postcard to her sister. Choose the correct form.

The island is very peaceful. (0) Life / A life is good here. Everybody moves at a nice slow pace. People have (1) time / a time to stop and talk. It's (2) experience / an experience I won't forget for a long time. There aren't many shops, so I can't spend all my money, although I did buy (3) painting / a painting yesterday. Now I'm sitting on the beach reading (4) paper / a paper. The hotel breakfast is so enormous that I don't need to have lunch. I've just brought (5) orange / an orange with me to eat later. I've been trying all the different (6) fruit / fruits grown in this part of the world, and they're all delicious.

Lesson 2

A/an and The

A. Introduction

1. Read this true story about an American tourist in Britain.
A man from California was spending *a month* in Britain. One day he booked into *a hotel* in Cheltenham, *a nice old town* in *the West* of England. Then he went out to look around *the place*. But *the man* didn't return to *the hotel*. He disappeared, leaving *a suitcase* full of clothes behind. *The police* were called in, but they were unable to find out what had happened to *the missing tourist*. It was *a mystery*. But two weeks later *the man* walked into *the police station* in Cheltenham. He explained that he was very sorry, but while walking around *the town*, he had got lost. He had also forgotten *the name of the hotel* he had booked into. So he had decided to continue with his tour of *the country* and had gone to visit *a friend* in Scotland before returning to pick up *the case* he had left behind.
2. Answer the following questions based on the reading:
 - a. With what kind of nouns do you use 'a/an' and 'the'?
 - b. When do you use 'a/an'?
 - c. When do you use 'the'?

B. Basic Uses

1. Fill in the blanks with appropriate articles:
 - a. When the story first mentions something, the noun has _____.
 - b. The noun phrases '*a man*' or '*a hotel*' in *A man booked into a hotel in Cheltenham* are ___(old/ new)___ information. We do not know which man or which hotel.
 - c. The noun has _____ when the same thing is mentioned again. The noun phrases like '*the man*' and '*the hotel*' in *The man didn't return to the hotel*' are ___(old / new))___ information. Now we know which man or which hotel.
 - d. We use _____ when it is clear which one we mean.
 - e. We use _____+noun or someone/something when we aren't saying which one.
 - f. We use _____ + noun or _____/ _____/ *it* when we know which one.
2. With a partner, explain the difference between two sentences in each set with reference to the use of 'the' and 'a'.
 - g. Would you like to see *a show*?
Would you like to see *the show*?
 - h. The cyclist was hit by *a car*.
Whose is *the car* outside?
 - i. In the office *a phone* was ringing.
I was in bed when *the phone* rang.
 - j. Has Melanie got *a garden*?
She was at home in *the garden*.

- k. The train stopped at *a station*.
Turn left here for *the station*.
- l. We took *a taxi*.
We went in *the car*.
- m. We could hear *a noise*.
We could hear *the noise* of a party.
- n. I wrote the number on *an envelope*.
I wrote it on *the back* of an envelope.

C. The sun, etc:

1. Study the following examples and explain why 'the' is used in these examples:
 - a. *The sun* was going down.
 - b. *The government* is unpopular.
 - c. A drive in *the country* would be nice.
 - d. We shouldn't pollute *the environment*.
2. What do you think of the following nouns: earth, moon, ozone layer, Prime Minister, sea(side), sky, weather? What kind of articles should be used with?
3. The following nouns are also used with 'the': *cinema, theatre and (news)paper*. Can you explain why?
4. Note that we say *a/the police officer* but *the police*.
A police officer came to the hotel. NOT ~~A police~~ came to the hotel.
The police came to the hotel (=one or more police officers).

D. A nice day, etc.

1. Do you think the following sentences are well-formed when 'the' is used?
 - a. It was the lovely day.
 - b. Cheltenham is the nice old town.
 - c. It's the big hotel.
 - d. This is the better photo.
 - e. The play was the comedy.
 - f. My sister is the secretary.
 - g. Nick is the car salesman.
 - h. The man's disappearance was the mystery.
2. Do you think you can use 'the' in the following sentences?
 - a. It's the biggest hotel in town.
 - b. This is the best photo.
3. From (1) and (2) can you draw some rules about the use of 'the' and 'a/an'?

E. A or an?

Use *a* or *an* with the following nouns or phrases:
cup; aspirin; poster; egg; shop; umbrella; one-way street; uniform; open door;
holiday; hour; U-turn; MP.

Exercises

1 The use of *a/an* and *the*

Complete this true story. Put in **a/an** or **the**.

A man decided to rob (1) ... bank in the town where he lived. He walked into (2) ... bank and handed (3) ... note to one of (4) ... cashiers. (5) ... cashier read (6) ... note, which told her to give (7) ... man some money. Afraid that he might have (8) ... gun, she did as she was told. (9) ... man then walked out of (10) ... building, leaving (11) ... note behind. However, he had no time to spend (12) ... money because he was arrested (13) ... same day. He had made (14) ... mistake. He had written (15) ... note on (16) ... back ... of (17) ... envelope. And on (18) ... other side of (19) ... envelope was his name and address. This clue was quite enough for (20) ... detectives on the case.

2 A man/he and the man/someone (C)

Replace the sentences which contain an underlined word. Use **a/an** or **the** with the word in brackets.

Ex. We didn't have much time for lunch. David made something for us. (omelette) David made an omelette for us.

- 1 They ran the race before they held the long jump. Matthew won it easily. (race)
- 2 The driver turned left. Suddenly someone ran into the road. (child)
- 3 Vicky was lying on the sofa. She was watching something on television. (film)
- 4 I had to take a train and then a bus. It was half an hour late. (bus)
- 5 A shoplifter tried to steal some clothes. 'The camera videoed her.' (thief)

3 The use of *a/an* and *the*

Complete the conversations. Put in **a/ an** or **the**.

Laura: Look outside. The sky is getting very dark.

Trevor: I hope there isn't going to be a storm.

1. Mike I'm going out for walk. Have you seen my shoes?
Harriet: Yes, they're on floor in kitchen.
2. Melanie: Would you like tomato? There's one in fridge.
David: Oh, yes, please. I'll make myselfcheese and tomato sandwich.
3. Sarah: If you're going into city centre, can you post these letters for me?
Mark: Yes. I'll take them to main post office.

4. Rita: I've got problem with my phone bill. Can I see someone about it?
Receptionist: Yes, go to fifth floor. lift is along the corridor.
5. Tom: I didn't know Melanie had dog.
David: It isn't here. She's just taking it for a walk while owner is away.
6. Vicky: I've got headache. I've had it all day.
Rachel: Why don't you go to health center? It's open until six.
7. Andrew: Guess what. I found€50 note on the pavement this morning.
Jessica: You really ought to take it topolice station, you know.

4. Complete these sentences about pollution and the environment. Put in a/an or the.

Ex There was a programme on television about dangers to the environment.

- 1 There was also article about pollution in paper.
2.ozone layer will continue to disappear if we don't find ... way to stop it.
- 3world's weather is changing. Pollution is having.effect on our climate.
- 4 Last week,oil tanker spilled oil intosea, damaging wildlife.
5. Some professors have signedletter of protest and have sent it to.....government.
- 6 If earth was..... human being, it would be in hospital.

5. Complete the conversations. Put in a/an or the.

Ex: David:How was your trip to *the coast*?

Trevor: Wonderful. *The sun* shone all day. We had a great time.

1. Henry: Would you like cigarette?
Nick: No, thanks. I've given up smoking. It's ... bad habit.
2. Sarah: What's your brother doing now? Has he got ... good job?
Laura: Yes, he's ...soldier. He's in ...army. He loves it. It's ...great life, he says.
3. Rita: I went to see Doctor Pascoe yesterday. She's ... best doctor I've ever had.
Harriet: She's very nice, isn't she? You couldn't meet ...nicer person.
4. Rachel: You were long time at ... supermarket.
Vicky: Yes, I know. There was enormous queue. I was thinking of complaining to manager.
5. Mark: Why were you late for your meeting?
Sarah: Well, first I had to go to ...hotel I'd booked into. I took. ... taxi from airport, and ...driver got completely lost. It wasterrible nuisance. ... man was ... complete idiot.
6. Matthew: Is this book you were telling me about?

Emma: Yes, it's ... really interesting story.

Matthew: What did you say it's about?

Emma: I knew you weren't listening to me. It's .. science fiction story.
It's about ... beginning of. .. universe.

6. A or an? Put in the abbreviations with *a* or *an*.

- Ex a National Broadcasting Company reporter an *NBC* reporter
1 a Disc Jockey
2 a Very Important Person
3 an Irish Republican Army member
4 a Personal Computer
5 a Los Angeles suburb
6 an Unidentified Flying Object
7 an Annual General Meeting
8 a Member of Parliament

Lesson 3

SOME and ZERO ARTICLE with Plural and Uncountable nouns

I. Some

- A. Consider the following sentences in which 'some' is used.
1. *Some furniture* arrived for you this morning.
 2. Would you like to hear *some good news*?
 3. *Some teachers* never seem to get bored with being in the classroom.
 4. I enjoy *some modern music*.
- B. Circle the right choice:
1. We use 'some' in affirmative sentences and questions with plural and uncountable nouns when we talk about (*limited/ unlimited*), but (*definite/ indefinite*) or (*known / unknown*) numbers or quantities or things. When we use 'some' in this way, we pronounce it with its weak form /səm/.
 2. We also use 'some' to talk about particular, but (*specified / unspecified*), people or things. When we use it in this way, we pronounce 'some' with its strong form /sʌm/.

II. Zero article

- A. Compare the following sentences:
1. I always like getting *good news*.
Would you like to hear *some good news*?
 2. *Furniture* is a costly item when you are setting up a home.
Some furniture arrived for you this morning.
 3. *Teachers* like having long holidays.
Some teachers never seem to get bored with being in the classroom.
 4. I enjoy *modern music*.
I enjoy *some modern music*.
 5. We need *food, medicine, and blankets*.
There are *some old blankets* in the wardrobe. Shall I throw them out?
 6. *A post office* is a place where you can buy stamps.
I'd like *some stamps*, please.
- B. From the observations, fill in the blank in the following sentence about the use of zero article.
We use *zero article* with uncountable and plural nouns when we talk _____ about people or things.

III. Some vs. Zero; Some vs A/an

Read the use descriptions in column A, and match them with the examples in column B.

Uses	Examples
a. When we want to emphasize that we can't say exactly which person or thing we are talking about because we don't know or can't remember, we can use 'some instead of a/an with a singular noun. When it is used in this way, some is pronounced /s^m/. We use the phrase some .. or other in a similar way.	1. Some 80% of all those eligible took part in the vote.
b. We sometimes use some or zero article with very little difference in meaning.	2. I was asked a really difficult question by some student in class two.
c. <i>Some</i> is used before a number to mean 'approximately'.	3. Before serving, pour (some) yoghurt over the top.
	4. I bought them from some shop or other in the High Street.
	5. There were some 20,000 people at the protest march.
	6. 'Where were you last week?' 'I was visiting (some) friends.'

Exercises

1 Put *some* in the spaces where necessary. If no word is needed, write --.

- 1 I read about his death in *The Post*, but newspapers didn't report it at all.
- 2 My uncle bought valuable new stamps for his collection.
- 3 It is now known that cigarettes can seriously damage your health. 4 Don't disturb me. I've got really difficult homework to do.
- 5 I know that parents work so hard they don't have time to talk to their children, but Roy and Amy aren't like that.
- 6 My hobby is making candles.
- 7 As we all know, air is lighter than water.
- 8 Did you hear that monkeys escaped from the zoo last night?
- 9 I prefer cooking with oil, as it's better far you than butter.
- 10 We first met in restaurant in London, but I can't remember what it was called.
- 11 Although most left early, students stayed to the end of the talk.
- 12 I don't think I've ever met a child who doesn't like chips.

Look again at the sentences where you have written some. If these were spoken, which would have the strong form of some /sʌm/ and which the weak form /səm/?

2 Add *some* to these sentences where necessary, or put *a* /if they are already correct.

- 1 Can you smell gas?
- 2 Medicines can be taken quite harmlessly in large doses.
- 3 I can't drink milk. It makes me feel ill.
- 4 Water is a valuable commodity. Don't waste it!
- 5 You should always keep medicines away from children.
- 6 Do you like my new shirt? It's made of silk.
7. I'm really thirsty.' 'Would you like water?'
- 8 There are people here to see you.
- 9 Books for young children are rather violent and not suitable for them at all.

3 Decide whether the following phrases mean approximately the same thing (write same), or mean something different (write different). (A, B & C)

- 1 I bought *some oranges* / *oranges*, but forgot to get the apples you asked for.
- 2 *Some sports clubs* / *Sports clubs* do not allow women members.
- 3 There are *some examples* / *examples* of this on the next page.
- 4 *Some wild animals* / *Wild animals* make very good pets.
- 5 *Some metal alloys* / *Metal alloys* made nowadays are almost as hard as diamond.

Lesson 4

The, zero article and a/an: 'things in general'

1. In generalisations we use zero article, but not the, with *plural* or *uncountable nouns*:

- Before you put them on, always check your shoes for spiders.
- I'm studying geography at university.
- I can smell smoke!

When we use the with a plural or uncountable noun, we are talking about specific things or people:

- The books you ordered have arrived.
- All the information you asked for is in this file of papers.

Compare these pairs of sentences:

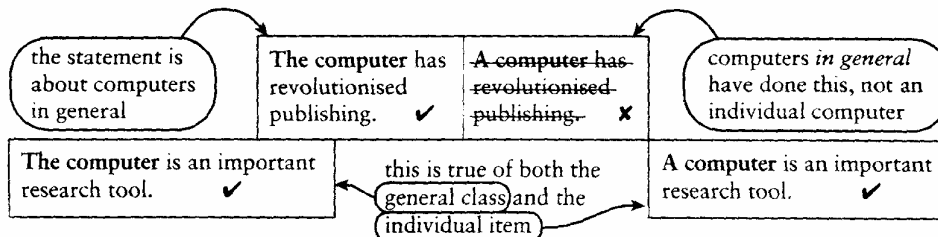
- Flowers really brighten up a room.
The flowers you bought me are lovely.
- Industry is using computers more and more.
The tourism industry is booming in Malaysia.
- Children should be given a sense of how business works.
The aerospace business actually lost \$6 billion this year.
- She's an expert on Swedish geology.
She's an expert on the geology of Sweden.

2. We can use *the* with a *singular countable noun* to talk about the general features or characteristics of a class of things or people rather than one specific thing or person. In

- Nowadays, photocopiers are found in both the office and the home.
we are talking about *offices* and *homes* in general rather than a particular *office* and *home*. Notice that we could also say 'in both offices and homes' with little difference in meaning. Compare the use of *the* and *a/an* in these sentences:

<i>talking about a general class</i>	<i>talking about an unspecified example</i>
The novel is the most popular form of fiction writing. (or Novels are...)	Reading a novel is a good way to relax. (or Reading novels is...)
The customer has a right to know where products are made. (or Customers have...)	When the phone rang, I was busy serving a customer.

- Study the use of the and a/an in these sentences:



Notice that when we define something we generally use *a/an* rather than *the*:

- A Geiger counter is a device for detecting and measuring the intensity of radiation.
- A corkscrew is a gadget for getting corks out of bottles.

Exercises

1. Complete these sentences using one of these words. Use the where necessary. Use the same word in both (a) and (b) & each pair. (A)

advice coffee food French history magazines music teachers

- a all over the world have published photos of the royal baby.

b Emily left ... we asked for on the table.
- a played a very important part in his life.

b I thought used in the film was the best part.
- a I've forgotten most of I learnt at school.

b I'm learning at night school.
- a I'll always be grateful for he gave me.

b I asked my father for about the problem.
- a Put ... you bought straight into the fridge.

b at that new Indonesian restaurant was excellent.
- a I never did enjoy studying

b I'm reading a book about of the New Zealand Maori.
- a The world price of has reached a record high.

b we got last week from the Brazilian café was excellent.
- a In my opinion, deserve to be better paid.

b need to have enormous patience.

2. Delete any phrase which can be used to form a correct sentence. (B)

- 1 The white rhinoceros/A white rhinoceros is close to extinction.
- 2 The bicycle / A bicycle is an environmentally friendly means of transport.
- 3 The development of the railway / A development of the railway encouraged tourism throughout Europe.
- 4 The fridge / A fridge is today considered an essential in most homes.
- 5 Writing the letter / a letter is often cheaper than telephoning.
- 6 Laszlo Biro is normally credited with having invented the ball-point pen/a ball-point pen.
- 7 The experienced test pilot / An experienced test pilot earns a considerable amount of money.
- 8 The Jumbo Jet/A Jumbo jet has revolutionized air travel.
- 9 The credit card / A credit card is a convenient way of paying for purchases.

Lesson 5

Part A People and Places

I. Particular uses of 'the':

- A. Zero article is usually used before the names of particular people. Here are some examples:
- President Clinton is to make a statement later today.
 - The name of Nelson Mandela is known all over the world.
- B. However, there are cases in which 'the' will be used instead. As an exercise, match the uses of 'the' in column A with the examples in column B.

Uses of 'the': We use 'the':	Examples
1. when there are two people with the same name and we want to specify which one we are talking about:	a. The late (=dead) Buddy Holly; the wonderful actor Harrison Ford;
2. when we want to emphasize that a person is the one that everyone probably knows; when it is used this way, the is stressed and pronounced /ði:/	b. The Robinsons are away this weekend.
3. with an adjective to describe a person or their job:	c. That's not the Stephen Fraser I went to school with.
4. when we talk about a family as a whole:	d. Do they mean the Ronald Reagan, or someone else?
	e. the Aboriginal writer Sally Morgan; the artist William Turner

- C. Consider the following examples, and with your partner, explain why 'a/an', or sometimes 'zero article', is used:
- Jane plays tennis well, but she'll never be (a) Steffin Graf.
 - There's a Dr Kenneth Perch on the phone.

II. Hospital vs. The hospital.

- A. Study these examples and with a partner give explanations about their differences.

They say he'll have to stay in hospital for six weeks.	Tom's mother goes to the hospital to see him every day.
Sue's at university studying French.	Frank works as a security guard at a university.
School should be a place where children are taught to enjoy learning.	They're building a school at the end of our street.
She usually stays in bed till late at the weekend.	'Have you seen my socks?' 'You left them on the bed.'
I try to go to the cinema at least once a week.	We usually go to the cinema in New Street.
Not many children enjoy opera.	

- B. Fill in the blanks in the following sentences by using the cues provided:
a form of art – in general – particular – intended purpose – Institutions
1. We use zero article when we talk about _____ such as hospital, university, prison, school, college, or church being used for their _____: medical treatment in hospital, studying in university, and so on.
 2. We use articles when talk about those institutions as _____ places or buildings.
 3. When we talk about cinema, opera or theatre _____, or when we refer to a building where this type of entertainment takes place, we use *the*. However, if we are talking about a _____, we generally prefer zero article.

Exercises

1. Put *a/an, the* or *zero* article in the spaces. If two answers are possible, give them.

1. Are we talking now about ... John Smith who led the Labor Party?
2. We're going to a barbecue with ... Simpsons.
3. There's ... Linda Jones to see you.
4. A special award was given to ... film director Ingmar Bergman.
5. The prize is to be given each year in memory of ... late Ayrton Senna.
6. We met our old friend ... Romey Thompson in Sydney.
7. That surely can't be ... Jenny Watson we knew in Zimbabwe.
8. I found myself sitting next to ... Boris Yeltsin!. Not ... Boris Yeltsin, of course, with the same name.
9. I didn't realize how rich he was until I heard that he owns ... Picasso.
10. He's really keen on football. He likes to think of himself as ... Paul Gascoigne.
11. Have you heard that ... Woodward are moving house?

2. Write the where necessary in these sentences. If the sentence is already correct, put a tick next to it.

1. Can I drive you to (*the*) university? It's on my way.
2. When I'm, in London, I always go to theatre.
3. Margaret believes that all children should go to church every Sunday.
4. In Sweden, children start school when they are six or seven.
5. Jim's been in hospital for six weeks now.
6. He lives near church on the hill.
7. She's going to university to do French.
8. There was a fire at school in Newtown.

9. Even her most dedicated fans wouldn't call her new play a great work of theatre.
10. Have you heard hospital is going to close?
11. It's time the children went to bed.
12. He's been in and out of prison since he left school.

Look again at those in which **zero** article is correct before the place or institution. Which of them could have **the**? What would be the difference in meaning?

Part B

Holidays, times of the day, meals, etc.

We often use **zero** article with the names of holidays, special times of the year, or with the names of months and days of the week:

- **Easter Ramadan New Year's Day September Monday**

But compare:

- I'll see you on **Saturday**. (= next Saturday)
- We met on **Saturday**. (= last Saturday)
- They arrived on **a Saturday** as far as I can remember. (= we are only interested in the day of the week, not which particular Saturday)
- They arrived on **the Saturday** after my birthday party. (= a particular Saturday, specifying which one)

With **winter, summer, spring, autumn**, and **New Year** (meaning the holiday period), we can often use either **the** or **zero** article:

- In **(the) summer** I try to spend as much time in the garden as I can.
- In Scotland, they really know how to celebrate **(the) New Year**.

We use *the* when it is understood which summer, spring, etc. we mean:

- 'When did you meet Beth?' 'In **the summer**.' (= last summer)
- 'When are you going to university?' 'In **the autumn**.' (= next autumn)
- I first went skiing in **the spring** of 1992.

We say 'in **the New Year**' to mean at or near the beginning of next year:

- I'll see you again in **the New Year**.

When we want to describe the features of a particular holiday, season, etc., we use **a/an**:

- That was **a winter** I'll never forget.

We use **the** and **a/an** in the usual way when we talk about the morning/afternoon/evening of a particular day:

- I woke up with a sore throat, and by **the evening** my voice had disappeared.
- We're going in **the afternoon**.
- 'You look upset.' 'Yes, I've had **a terrible morning**.'

However, we use **zero** article with **at night** and **by night**. Compare:

- She kept us awake all through **the night**. *and*
- I don't like driving **at night**.

We use **zero** article with **midnight, midday, and noon**:

- If possible, I'd like it finished by **midday**.

We usually use **zero** article when we talk about meals:

- What have we got for **dinner**?
- I don't like drinking coffee at **breakfast**.

We wouldn't say, for example, 'I had a/the breakfast before I went out'. However, if we want to *describe* a particular meal, then we can use an article:

- We didn't get up until 10 o'clock and had **a late breakfast**.
- **The dinner** we had at Webster's restaurant was marvellous.

When we talk about a formal dinner or lunch for a special occasion, we use 'a dinner' or 'a lunch':

- We're having **a dinner** to welcome the new manager.

Exercises

1. Put *a/an, the* or *zero* article, whichever is most likely, in the spaces in these sentences. In some cases, you can use either *the* or *zero* article (write *the/x*).

- She starts work on ... Monday next week.
 - I last saw her in town earlier in the year. I'm sure it was ... Monday, because that's when I go shopping, but I can't remember the exact date.
 - They phoned on ... Monday before the accident.
- I remember when Frank was last here. It was.... Christmas I got my new bike.
 - It was... Christmas to remember.
 - We're returning after ... Christmas.
- The race is always held in ... June.
 - We last saw Dave ... June your mother was staying with us.
 - Even though it was March, the weather reminded me of ... hot June day.
- With the wedding and the new job, it was ... summer she would always remember.
 - There was a long drought in South Africa in ... summer of 1993.
 - I'm hoping to visit Italy in ... summer.
- We had a really good time over ... New Year.
 - Have ... happy New Year!
 - I'll contact you in ... New Year.

2. Study these extracts from newspapers. Decide which of them need an article (*the* or *a/an*) with the highlighted word.

- ...They had to spend **night** in a hotel because the flight was delayed...
- ...will be able to wake up in **morning** and find their video-recorder...
- ...was often kept awake at **night** by their song which floated up through the window...
- ...or are old people who go to bed in **afternoon** because they can't afford to heat their houses ...
- ...until deliberations were completed. On Saturday **morning**, the jury embarked on its most difficult task...

6. ...be put into the sculpture itself; lights can be used at **night** which focus on the works; better alarms at the ...
7. ...storm area grew and drifted southwards during **afternoon**, while other storms developed over the North...
8. ...can doze off in the sunshine, or wander out at **night**. Single parents are, particularly on holiday, out on their...
9. ...reflect the pain of the story. But, then, it was **evening** of celebration. It all ended with audience...
10. ...because in my head was a dream I had during **night** and I wanted to continue that dream to...

APPENDIX 10

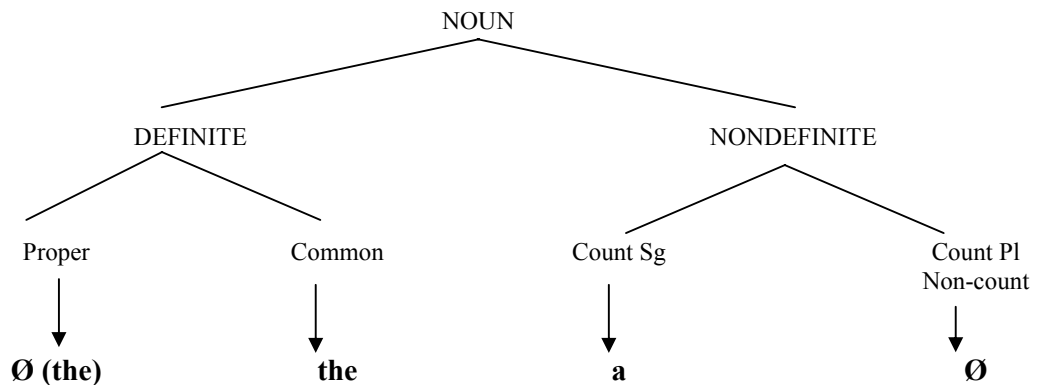
A COGNITIVE APPROACH TO USING DETERMINERS IN ENGLISH CORRECTLY

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November 2003

The basic “rules” for using the article correctly are actually rather simple, but the problem is that there are confusing cases. We will first start with the “basic” rules and then later go into the problem areas.

To find out which article to use, you first have to know whether the noun is used in a definite sense or not. If it is, you must use the definite article *the*, unless it is a Proper Noun or not. (Proper nouns usually do not have a definite article, but there are some exceptions.)

If the noun is not used in a definite sense, you have to ask yourself a second question. Is the noun Count and Singular? If yes, you must use the indefinite article “a”. If not, you must use the “zero” article. The following figure shows the choices.



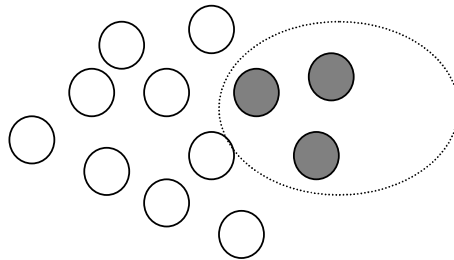
EXAMPLE:

Tom¹ went to the supermarket² next door and bought rice³ and vegetables⁴.

1. Tom is a Proper Noun: NO article.
2. Supermarket is a Common Noun used in a definite sense because it is identified by “next door”: use THE
3. Rice is a Common Noun, not used in a definite sense because the exact kind or quantity of rice is not known. It is not a singular Count Noun but a Non-Count Noun: use NO article.
4. Vegetables is a common noun, not used in a definite sense because the exact kind or quantity of vegetables is not known. It is not a singular Count Noun, but a plural Count Noun: use NO article.

Another way to illustrate the use of articles is with the help of the following picture. Suppose a Speaker (Richard) wants someone else (Steven), who can see the balls too, to pick up some of the balls. Richard, however, only wants three balls and they have to be black. What would be the most efficient and appropriate way for Richard to express this in English in this situation? What do the other constructions mean?

- a. Please pick up black balls.
- b. Please pick up the black balls.
- c. Please pick up the three black balls.
- d. Please pick up three black balls.



Answers:

With (a) Richard means: “Pick up some black balls, which could be two, three or more.” So Steven may hand him either two or three black balls.

With (b) Richard means: “Pick up the whole set of black balls that you and I can see (we can identify as the only ones).” Steven will therefore pick up all three black balls.

With (c) Richard means: “Pick up the whole set of three black balls that you and I can see (we can identify as the only three that can be meant).” So Steven will pick up the whole set of three black balls.

With (d) Richard means: “Pick up any three black balls.” With that he implies that there are more than three black balls. So Steven will pick up three black balls, but he will look around for more black balls. He will be confused and wonder if he has understood Richard correctly.

Of these four constructions, both (b) and (c) would be appropriate, but (b) would be more efficient. The word “the” already means “the ones you and I can see or know about”, so the word “three” is not necessary.

In the following lessons, we will first make clear what is meant with “definiteness” and “non definiteness” and which determiners can be used in these cases. Then we will explain how to determine whether a noun is Count or Non-count. The final lesson is about Proper Nouns.

1. Definiteness

A noun is used in a definite sense when both the Speaker and Hearer (or writer and reader) know exactly which one(s) is/are meant. In other words, when a Speaker thinks that the Hearer can identify it as unique or the only ones, he/she will mark a common noun with the definite article (or another definite determiner, which will be discussed later).

There are four cases in which the Speaker assumes that the Hearer knows exactly which one(s) is/are meant.

- When there is only *one* in our world (general world or immediate surroundings),
- When there is only *one* that can be meant in the immediate context (text or conversation),
- When only *one* can be logically meant,
- When a class as a *whole* is referred to (this is also called a generic sense).

Uses of 'The'

A. There is only one in our world or immediate surroundings

1. There is only one in our world.
 - a. *The sun was shining.* (There is only one sun in the world).
 - b. *We must take care of the environment.* (There is only one general ecological environment in our world.)
2. There is only one in our immediate surroundings (in our country, our neighbourhood, our house, and so on)
 - a. *The roses are beautiful.* (The Speaker is referring to the roses in the immediate surroundings, e.g. the garden or a vase, which the Hearer can see or knows about.)
 - b. *There is a vase of flowers on the television.* (The Speaker assumes that the Hearer knows exactly which television set is meant.)
3. Even though there may be more than one in the area, we use *the* in English with *park, cinema, movies, bus* and *train* because we can figure out that it is the one closest or most convenient to us, or the one we usually go to.

- a. *I took the bus to town.* (Here the Speaker assumes that the Hearer understands that *the bus* refers to a bus on a particular route, namely the one from my house to town.)
- b. *I went to the park yesterday.* (The Speaker assumes that the Hearer knows which park is meant. In this case, the Hearer may not know exactly which one, but he/she will know that it is one in the Speaker's neighbourhood or one that the Speaker goes to more regularly.)

B. The person or thing is identified enough in the text (or conversation) through what has been mentioned or what is going to be mentioned so the reader knows "which specific one" is meant.

1. Text-reference back

- a) I bought a TV and a video recorder, but *the video recorder* did not work after it was connected to *the TV*.
- b) *I took a taxi to the airport today and the driver told me that the planes were running late.* (From this context we know that the driver is the driver of the taxi, the airport is the one in the area, and the planes are the ones arriving and departing from that airport).

2. Text-reference forward

- c) *She is studying the history of Europe.* (History, which is a very general subject, is limited to the history of Europe.)
- d) *How did you get the mud on your coat?* (This question implies that both the speaker and listener are aware of the fact that there is mud on the coat, so that is the mud the speaker is referring to. If the speaker had said "How did you get mud on your coat, he would imply that he does not think that the hearer is aware of the mud.)

C. There is only one person or thing that can be meant logically. In this case a word like *only, most, least, first, or last* makes clear that only one can be meant.

- a) *He is the most popular student in my class.* (Only one student can be the *most* popular, so therefore there is only one.)
- b) *Mary banged herself on the forehead.* (Mary has one forehead.)

D. The class as a whole is referred to. In this case one exemplar stands for the whole class; as a result, 'the' is generally used with count singular nouns. This use is often called a "generic" use.

- a) *The cat is a feline.* (Here the word *cat* refers to the whole class of cats, and there is only one such class in the world.)
- b) *Life would be more quiet without the telephone.* (Here the word *telephone* refers to the whole class of telephones, and there is only one such class in the world.)

EXERCISE 1. In the following sentences, explain why the definite article is used: a (there is only one in world or surroundings), b (in the context only one can be meant), c (there is only one that can be meant logically), or d (the class as a whole is referred to).

1. *He is always talking about the past.*
2. *I always eat sticky rice in the morning.*
3. *I always watch the news on television.*
4. *Many people try to see the first show.*
5. *More help should be offered to the old and the unemployed.*
6. *My friend has written a book on the definite article in English.*
7. *My sister goes to the cinema very often.*
8. *No one knows precisely when the wheel was invented.*
9. *She learned to play the violin.*
10. *The atmosphere is very pleasant.*
11. *The best student in the class will receive a prize.*
12. *The cat has disappeared.*
13. *The president will address the population today.*
14. *The roses are beautiful.*
15. *The sun was shining.*
16. *There is a vase of flowers on the television.*
17. *There were huge cracks in the ground.*
18. *We must take care of the environment.*

EXERCISE 2: In the following passage, explain why the underlined nouns are used in a definite sense. Identify with A (only one in the world/surroundings), B (the noun is identified in the text), C (only one can be meant logically), or D (a class as a whole is meant),

Pho is the most popular food among the Vietnamese population. Pho is commonly eaten for breakfast, although many people will have it for lunch or dinner. Anyone feeling hungry in the small hours of the morning can also enjoy a bowl of hot and spicy pho to fill their empty stomachs.

Like hot green tea, which has its particular fragrance, pho also has its special taste and smell. Preparations may vary, but when the dish is served, its smell and taste is indispensable. The grated rice noodle is made of the best variety of fragrant rice called *Gao Te*. The broth for Pho Bo (Pho with beef) is made by stewing bones of cows and pigs in a large pot for a long time. Pieces of fillet mignon together with several slices of ginger are reserved for Pho Bo Tai (rare fillet). Slices of well done meat are offered to those less keen on eating rare fillets.

The soup for Pho Ga (pho with chicken meat) is made by stewing chicken and pig bones together. The white chicken meat that is usually served with Pho Ga is boneless and cut into thin slices. You could consider Pho Bo and Pho Ga Vietnam's special soups. Pho also has the added advantage of being convenient to prepare and healthy to eat.

Summary:

‘The’ is used with a noun phrase to show that something is definite. If something is definite, it can be identified by both the Speaker and the Hearer as the only one within their shared knowledge of their world (general, immediate, imagined, written text, conversation, and so on). “The” with a singular noun can also be used to denote a class as a whole.

2. Non-definiteness

In the preceding lesson, you saw that nouns are used in a definite sense when they refer to one person or thing (or a definite number of persons or things) that both the speaker and hearer (or writer and reader) can identify uniquely because of their shared knowledge.

If the speaker does not expect the hearer to be able to identify the person(s) or the thing(s) referred to uniquely, he or she will mark the noun as non-definite by putting "a" before a singular count noun or no article (zero) before a plural count noun or a non-count noun .

	Singular Count	Plural Count	Non-count
a/an	a toy shop a factory		
zero		toy shops carpets	education factory furniture furniture gold love

One thing that is confusing to many students is that something can be specific, but still non-definite. English does not mark whether something is specific or not; it marks only definite versus non-definite. Read the following example.

EXAMPLE:

Allan and Barbara have bought a TV. When they talk together, both know exactly which TV is meant and will refer to it as a definite one:

Allan to Barbara: *The TV sure has a clear picture.* (Specific and Definite)
However, when Allan talks to his friend Collin, who has not seen the TV yet and does not even know about its existence, Allan will refer to the TV as a non-definite one (even though it is a specific one):

Allan to Collin: *I bought a TV yesterday.* (Specific and Non-Definite).

Later on, after Collin knows Allan is talking about the TV he just bought, Allan can refer to the TV as a definite one:

Allan to Collin: *The TV was not expensive.* (Specific and Definite)

A noun is used in a non-definite sense in the following cases:

1. The noun refers to one or more specific, actual members of a class (but one(s) that the hearer/reader cannot identify exactly). In the case of a non-count noun, the hearer/reader cannot identify the exact quantity or kind.
2. The noun refers to any arbitrary member of a class.
3. The noun names a class to which a person or thing belongs.

A. In the case of a count noun, the noun refers to a specific, actual member (or members) of a class, but the hearer is not expected to know exactly which one(s). In the case of a non-count noun, the hearer is not expected to know the exact kind or quantity.

A(n) + NOUN =	A certain or particular NOUN.
NOUN + s	= Some NOUNs
Zero + noun	= Some NOUN.

Singular

1. *I bought a TV and a video recorder.* (At the store there were many TVs and video recorders, and I bought a particular member of that class; however, I don't expect the hearer to identify it.)
2. *The police are looking for a man who was in the bank at the time of the robbery.*
3. *Tom got a job at last.*
4. *At the restaurant, I ordered a dish of hot and spicy food.* (The speaker mentions a dish of hot and spicy food that he knows, but he does not expect the hearer to identify it.)
5. *A Mr. Smith called to see you this morning.* (There are many people whose last names are Smith. There is a person who belongs to the class 'Smith', and this person called to see you. I (speaker) do not think you (hearer) are able to identify him).

Plural

1. *The zoo has just bought (some) new dolphins.*
2. *I've bought melons but not grapes.*

Non-count

1. *There's cheese in the fridge.* (some cheese of some kind)
2. *Could you please serve tea for breakfast?* (some tea of some kind)

B. The noun refers to any arbitrary member(s) of a class.

Singular

1. *A zebra has stripes.* (Any representative member of the class of zebra has stripes).

2. *A whale is a mammal.* (Any whale is a member of xxx).
3. *As a professor, Derek should know better.* (As a member of the class of professors, Derek, should know better).
4. *You can never find a paper clip in this office.* (You cannot find any representative member of the class of paper clips in this office).

Plural

1. *Cigarettes are bad for your health.* (Any members of the class of cigarettes)
2. *Cars must be fitted with safety belts.* (Any members of the class of cars)
3. *Those aren't dolphins-they're whales.* (Those do not belong to the class of dolphins but to the class of whales.)

Non-count

1. *Hydrogen is lighter than oxygen.* (Any substance that belongs to the class of hydrogen is lighter than any substance that belongs to the class of oxygen.)
2. *I would like to eat rice for breakfast.* (any kind of rice).
3. *Research (some research of a non-definite kind) shows that it is the elderly who are the prime victims of inflation.* (some inflation of a non-definite degree)

C. The noun names a class or category to which a person or thing belongs.

1. *Mozart was a great musician.* (Mozart is classified as belonging to the class of great musicians).
2. *Mary became a doctor.* (Mary became a member of the class of doctors).
3. *He isn't a doctor.* (He is not a member of the class of doctors).

Plural

1. *They have become vegetarians.* (They have become members of the class of vegetarians.)

Noun Count

1. *It's sugar* (It belongs to the class of sugar).
2. *These shoes are made of leather.* (Something that belongs to the class of leather.)

NOTE: A second mention of nouns in the A examples becomes definite, but only if it refers back to that/those particular one(s); however, second mention of the nouns in the B examples always remains non-definite (=never 'the').

1. *The zoo has just bought a new dolphin. The dolphin is very young.*
2. *The zoo has just bought a new dolphin. If I had a dolphin of my own, I would communicate with it.*
3. *Minerals are abundant in nature. The earth is made up of minerals, and even the most valuable minerals are found in common rocks everywhere.*

If you look back at the ball example in the introduction, you will understand that a definite sense implies a very definite number. When a noun is used in a definite sense, the article the (or another definite determiner) must be used. But if the number is vague, no 'the' is used.

EXERCISE 3: In the following passage, explain why the underlined nouns are used in a "non-definite" sense.

- a. The noun refers to one or more specific, actual members of a class (but one(s) that the hearer/reader cannot identify exactly).
- b. The noun refers to any arbitrary members of a class.
- c. The noun names a class or category to which a person or thing belongs.

Pho is the most popular food among the Vietnamese population. Pho is commonly eaten for breakfast, although many people will have it for lunch or dinner. Anyone feeling hungry in the small hours of the morning can also enjoy a bowl of hot and spicy pho to fill their empty stomachs.

Like hot green tea, which has its particular fragrance, pho also has its special taste and smell. Preparations may vary, but when the dish is served, its smell and taste is indispensable. The grated rice noodle is made of the best variety of fragrant rice called *Gao Te*. The broth for Pho Bo is made by stewing bones of cows and pigs in a large pot for a long time. Pieces of fillet mignon together with several slices of ginger are reserved for Pho Bo Tai. Slices of well done meat are offered to those less keen on eating rare fillets.

The soup for Pho Ga (pho with chicken meat) is made by stewing chicken and pig bones together. The white chicken meat that is usually served with Pho Ga is boneless and cut into thin slices. You could consider Pho Bo and Pho Ga Vietnam's special soups. Pho also has the added advantage of being convenient to prepare and healthy to eat.

Forget old rules!!

One "rule of thumb" that many students have learned is that a noun followed by a phrase or clause is used in a definite sense. However, this rule is not always correct. Compare the following two sentences, both of which are correct, and look at the figures below it.

- a. *The boys in the room next door are noisy.*
- b. *Boys in the room next door are noisy.*

In both sentences, the noun "boys" is followed by the phrase "in the room next door", but it is possible to use the definite article as in (a) or not as in (b). The difference in meaning is symbolised in the pictures below. In (a) "the whole definite set of boys" and in (b) "a vague number of boys" is referred to.

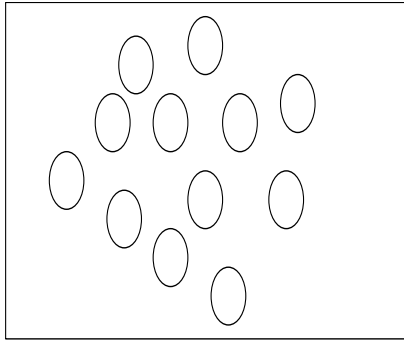


Figure a.

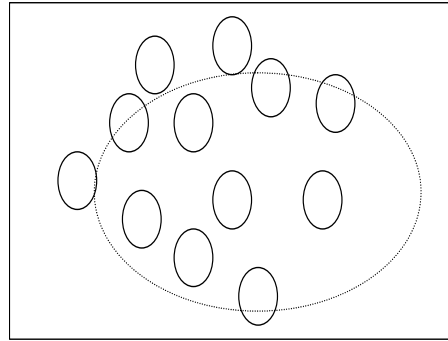


Figure b.

EXERCISE 4: Explain why the underlined nouns (except number 9) are used in a non-definite sense, even though they are followed by a prepositional phrase or other modifier.

Traditional costumes

Traditional COSTUMES¹ of the Vietnamese people tend to be very simple and modest. Men wear brown shirts and white trousers. Their headgear is simply a PIECE² of cloth wrapped around the head and their footwear consists of a PAIR³ of plain sandals.

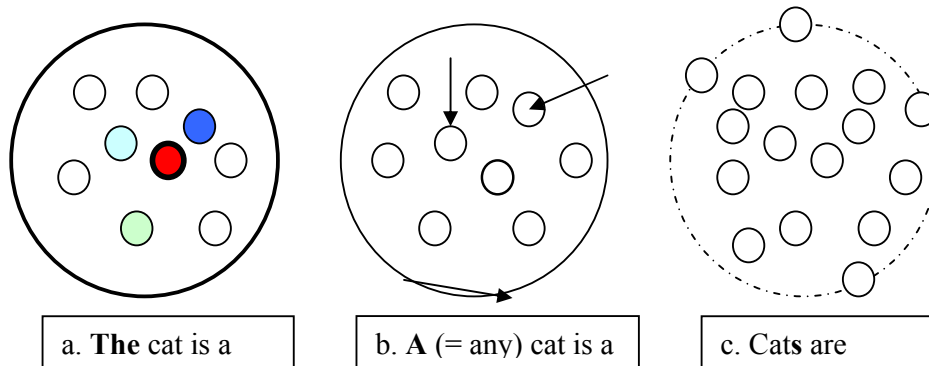
For formal ceremonies men would have two additional items, a long GOWN⁴ with slits on either side, and a TURBAN⁵, usually in black or brown made of cotton or silk. In feudal times, there were strict dress codes. Ordinary people were not allowed to wear CLOTHES⁶ with dyes other than black, brown or white. COSTUMES⁷ in yellow were reserved for the King. Those in purple and red were

reserved for high ranking court officials, while DRESSES⁸ in blue were exclusively worn by petty court officials. Men's dress has gradually changed along with social development.

The traditional SET⁹ of a long gown and turban gave way to more modern looking suits, while business shirts and trousers have replaced traditional long sleeved shirts and wide trousers. Traditional costumes still exist and efforts are increasingly being made to restore traditional FESTIVALS and ENTERTAINMENT¹⁰ which incorporate traditional costumes.

Different ways to express generic use

You have seen so far that there are different ways to express that a noun is used generically to stand for a class as a whole. Although these different ways are somewhat similar in meaning, they cannot all be used the same way. First, try to understand the subtle differences in meaning with the help of the figures below. The small circles represent cats, and the large circle, the class of felines.



In example (a) one cat stands for the class of felines as a whole; in (b) any cat is a member of the class of felines. In (c) all individual members are members of the class of felines.

As you can see, the constructions still have their basic meaning. The definite article as in (a) is very definite and allows no single exception. The indefinite article as in (b) is non-definite and expresses any individual member. The plural construction as in (c) is the vaguest and allows for possible exceptions that might exist.

When the definite article is used, we talk about the class as a whole, without any exception, so this type of construction can be used only for very general statements that are true for all members.

The novel is the most popular form of fiction writing.

The customer has a right to know where products are made.

The computer has revolutionized publishing.

The following example is incorrect because it would imply that you are reading the whole class of novels at one time to relax!

INCORRECT: *Reading the novel is a good way to relax.*

In this context, it would be fine to use the indefinite article or the plural. The indefinite article would imply that reading any one novel (no matter which one) at any one time is a good way to relax. The plural would imply that novels (no matter which ones) are usually (at different possible times) a good way to relax.

Reading a novel is a good way to relax.

Reading novels is a good way to relax.

In definitions, the (b) construction with the indefinite article is most common:

A feline is an animal of the cat family.

A novel is an imaginative prose narrative of some length, usually concerned with human experience and social behavior.

A computer is a machine designed to carry out complex operations very rapidly.

In general statements that may not necessarily be true for all members in all cases, the plural construction is usually preferred.

Felines move very graciously.

Novels are fun to read.

Computers make life easy.

3. Other determiners

Besides *the*, *a(n)* and *zero* (= no article) other determiners like *this*, *that* and so on may be used with English nouns. There are different determiners for nouns used in a definite or non-definite sense. In each case of these cases, there are also different determiners for Count and Non-Count nouns.

A Count Noun may be preceded by a determiner that implies a specific number (like *a*, *both*, *each* and *every*) or that implies more than one (like *two*, *three*, *these*, *those*, *few*, *many* or *several*). A Non-Count Noun may not use these.

Determiners for nouns used in a definite sense		Determiners for nouns used in a non-definite sense	
for Count Nouns	for Non-count Nouns	for Count Nouns	for Non-count Nouns
the	the	"vague quantity"	"vague quantity"
this	this	all	all
that	that	any	any
these		enough	enough
those		little	little
		more	more
my	my	most	most
your	your	much	much
his	his	no	no
etc.	etc.	other	other
		some	some
both			
each			
either		"implying a specific number"	
every		a	
		an	
		another	
		few	
		many	
		neither	
		one	
		two	
		three	
		etc.	

NOTE: Whenever a determiner is followed by OF, you must use THE.

Most people	Most OF THE people
Both boys	Both OF THE boys
Each day	Each OF THE days
Either week	Either OF THE weeks
Every month	Everyone OF THE months
All day	All OF THE day
Any book	Any OF THE books
Enough time	Enough OF THE time
Little ice cream	Little OF THE ice cream
More bread	More OF THE bread
Most students	Most OF THE students
Much noise	Much OF THE noise
No time	none OF THE time
Some day	Some OF THE day
etc	etc

EXERCISE 5. In the following excerpt all nouns have been underlined. Determine whether they are used in a definite or non-definite sense and explain why.

Definite: A (there is only one in world or surroundings), b (in the context only one can be meant), c (there is only one that can be meant logically), or d (the class as a whole is referred to).

Non-definite: E (the noun refers to one or more specific, actual members of a class, but one(s) that the hearer/reader cannot identify exactly); F (the noun refers to an arbitrary member or arbitrary members of the class); or G (the noun names a class to which another entity belongs).

A snake is a reptile without legs. A reptile usually has scales, lays eggs, breathes air, and doesn't spend much time taking care of its babies. It is also cold-blooded, which means that its body doesn't stay the same temperature all the time. (Our bodies stay at 98.6 F all day.) Snakes get very cold on winter days and very hot in the summer. Because of this, snakes usually stay in burrows during very hot and cold weather. A burrow is a hole in the ground where they can live.

All snakes are carnivores or meat-eaters. There are no snakes that can eat people in Florida. Small snakes eat bugs and frogs. Larger ones eat fish, birds, mice, and rabbits. They use sharp teeth and strong muscles to catch the prey. If the prey animal is bigger than the snake's mouth, the snake can dislocate its bottom jaw to fit the big animal in.

Venom is a poison the snake puts into its prey through its fangs. This either kills the prey animal or makes it so the prey can't move. Once venom gets into the prey, it is easy for the snake to eat it. Some venomous snakes have bright colors or patterns which can warn us. Rattlesnakes have rattles to scare away animals or people that might hurt them.

4. Count versus Non-count Nouns

If a noun is used in a definite sense, it does not matter much whether it is Count or Non-count, because both take *the* as article, but when used in a non-definite sense, it is very important to know whether it a Count Noun or a Non-Count Noun. A singular Count Noun must be preceded by *a(n)* or another non-definite determiner, but a plural Count Noun or a Non-Count Noun do not have to be preceded by an article or determiner.

Why is the distinction between Count and Non-Count Nouns so difficult for many learners? To use articles and classifiers correctly in Vietnamese or other Asiatic language, you often need to know whether an entity⁸ is a human, an animal, a concrete thing or an abstract thing. For example, in Vietnamese the following distinctions may be made:

- a human
- an animal
- a concrete thing
- an abstract thing

In determining what kind of determiner to use in English, the conceptual distinction between humans, animals, concrete things and abstract things is not made. In English, entities are mainly classified according to whether they are construed⁹ as "bounded" or "unbounded" (no matter whether they are concrete or abstract).

When an entity is construed as "bounded", it will be referred to with a Count Noun such as *a house* and when construed as "unbounded" with a Non-Count Noun such as *water*. Therefore, to help you understand which nouns are used as Count Nouns or Non-count Nouns, we will explain the notions of "bounded" and "unbounded".

4.1. Bounded entities

With the term "bounded" we mean "delimited", "enclosed", or "clearly a separate entity". Some good examples of bounded entities are persons, animals or things. A typical bounded entity has distinct, separate parts that together make up the entity. A BICYCLE is a good example of a bounded entity. It consists of wheels, a seat, a handle bar, and so on. All the parts together constitute a bicycle, but none of the parts by themselves constitute a bicycle. For example, the handlebar is not a bicycle. The wheel is not a bicycle. Only when (almost) all the parts are in place,

⁸ The term "entity" stands for a person, animal or thing (concrete or abstract)

⁹ to "construe" something means to "think of or see as" as

do we call the entity a bicycle. In other words, when you have a part of the bicycle (for example, the handlebar), you do not have a bicycle.

Other good examples of bounded entities are HOUSE, DOOR , GIRL, BOY, DESK, TABLE, TREE, and so on. When a bounded entity is named, it is a Count Noun. In the case it is unspecified, it is preceded by an indefinite article if it is singular and no article is used when the noun is plural .

BOUNDED ENTITY	
naming one (unspecified)	naming more than one (unspecified)
<i>I see a house.</i> <i>I see a door</i> <i>I see a girl.</i> <i>I see a boy.</i> <i>I see a desk</i> <i>I see a table.</i> <i>I see a tree.</i>	<i>I see houses.</i> <i>I see doors.</i> <i>I see girls.</i> <i>I see boys.</i> <i>I see desks.</i> <i>I see tables.</i> <i>I see trees.</i>

HOUSE, DOOR, BICYCLE, and so on are typical examples of bounded entities because they consist of clearly different parts. Other bounded entities do not necessarily have clearly different parts, but are also construed as bounded because they are things with clear beginnings and ends (boundaries) in time or space. For example SPOT, which is a small area, is clearly bounded in space. BEEP, which is a short high sound, is a sound bounded in time. Entities denoting an event like TRICK, BIRTH, or SACRIFICE are also bounded because they have clear beginnings and ends in time. See the table for more examples of entities that are usually considered bounded.

EXERCISE 6: Identify whether the following entities are bounded in time (T) or space (S). Some are bounded in both time and space.

1. apartment
2. attack
3. beep
4. birth
5. climate
6. crop
7. field
8. intermission
9. journey
10. operation
11. phrase
12. pond

- 13. province
- 14. row
- 15. sacrifice
- 16. shadow
- 17. spot
- 18. temperature
- 19. trick
- 20. wall

4.2 Unbounded entities

Some good examples of unbounded entities are substances like WATER, AIR, and GOLD. An unbounded entity usually has no distinct separate parts. Suppose you have a lake with water and you take some water out in a bucket, you still have water in the lake and in the bucket, and it is impossible to see the difference between the water in the lake or in the bucket. Even though water is made up of separate molecules, we cannot perceive them separately with the naked eye. GRASS and DUST are like WATER because we usually do not see GRASS as separate little blades, but as one whole green entity. In other words, an unbounded entity is not seen as having clear separate parts and one small part of it is the same as the whole.

Other good examples of unbounded entities are DUST, SAND, CORN, GRASS, TILE, STONE, and so on. An unbounded entity is named with a Non-Count Noun and when used in a non-definite sense, it is not preceded by an article. If you want to indicate the quantity of the entity, you have to add a quantifier like *some*, *a lot of*, *a little*, or a partitive construction like *a pile of* or *a heap of*.

UNBOUNDED ENTITY	
naming an unspecified quantity	Naming a specified quantity
<i>I see water.</i> <i>I see gold.</i> <i>I see dust.</i> <i>I see sand.</i> <i>I see grass.</i> <i>I see stone.</i>	<i>I see some water.</i> <i>I see a bar of gold.</i> <i>I see a lot of dust.</i> <i>I see a heap of sand.</i> <i>I see a great deal grass.</i> <i>I see a pile of stone.</i>

EXERCISE 7: Indicate whether the following entities would be normally construed as bounded or unbounded. In other words, are these nouns Count or Non-count? Which ones could be used as either a Count Noun or a Non-Count Noun? Illustrate the difference in meaning with a short sentence.

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. animal | 11. lake |
| 2. baby | 12. meat |
| 3. beer | 13. paint |
| 4. book | 14. ring |
| 5. brandy | 15. soap |
| 6. bus | 16. spot |
| 7. cake | 17. sugar |
| 8. cat | 18. tea |
| 9. fur | 19. week |
| 10. ink | 20. wool |

Nouns referring to typically "bounded" entities and usually used as Count Nouns			
<p>persons actor adult artist baby boy brother captain child daughter doctor driver father friend girl husband judge king lady man member sister son student teacher woman</p> <p>body parts chest ear eye head face finger foot hand head heart mouth neck</p> <p>groups of people class club crowd party</p> <p>pieces of clothing coat dress hat shirt</p>	<p>places address beach camp city corner Country edge field garden hall hill island kitchen lake nation office park path river road room stream street town valley</p> <p>buildings apartment bank bridge castle church* factory farm hospital* hotel house library prison* school* shop station tent university*</p> <p>plants and animals bird cat dog horse</p>	<p>things account article bag ball bell bill boat book bottle box card case chapter cigarette computer cup desk door engine gate gun handle key line list machine magazine model motor newspaper page picture product ring spot star window</p> <p>pieces of furniture chair table bed*</p>	<p>units of time day hour minute month week year</p> <p>events bounded in time accident answer battle dream effect election film idea issue job journey meeting message method mistake plan problem project</p> <p>scheme shock smile task tour walk programme question</p> <p>vehicles bus* car* plane* ship*</p>

These nouns may also be used in a Non-Count sense. More about that later.

4.3. Construing the same thing as either bounded or unbounded

The distinction between "bounded" and "unbounded" is very useful, but one problem is that people can see the same thing in different ways. Therefore, some entities may in some cases be considered "bounded" and in other cases "unbounded". Compare the following two sets of sentences:

- (a) *This house is made of stone.*
- (b) *This stone is heavy.*

- (a) *People can survive on water and bread.*
- (b) *I bought two breads today.*

- (a) *Coats made of fur are nice and warm.*
- (b) *I bought a nice fur to make a coat.*

In the (a) examples, the words *stone*, *bread* and *fur* refer to the substance in general and are construed as unbounded entities and are therefore realized as Non-count Nouns. In the (b) examples, on the other hand, *stone*, *bread*, and *fur* refer to bounded entities made of that material and are realized as Count Nouns. The stone is "a piece of stone", the bread is a "loaf of bread", and the fur is "a piece of fur". So in the (b) cases, a specific instantiation of the substance is referred to and has clear boundaries in space.

In a similar way, a distinction can be made between an entity in its general sense and a specific instantiation or kind of that entity.

- (a) *Rain is good for our crops.*
- (b) *That was a heavy rain.*

In (a) the noun *rain* refers to the unbounded entity of water falling from the sky at any time, but in (b) *rain* denotes a bounded time period in which rain occurred.

- (a) *Vegetarians do not eat meat.*
- (b) *Pork is a white meat.*

In (a) *meat* refers to any instantiation of meat. In (b) *meat* refers to a separate category of meat. In fact, the article *a* means something like "a kind of".

- (a) *We used a lot of paper today.*
- (b) *We read two papers today.*

In (a) *paper* refers to any instantiation of the substance PAPER, but in (b) *paper* is used in a different sense, namely an essay or other type of document.

EXERCISE 8: In the following sentences indicate whether the underlined nouns refer to an entity that is construed as bounded and therefore realized as Count Nouns or unbounded and realized as Non-count Nouns. In your own words, try to explain WHY.

1. I saw a fish in the lake.
2. Fish is good to eat.
3. Time is a valuable commodity.
4. I saw him one time.
5. We should respect the institution of marriage.
6. There was not a good marriage.
7. Do not use too much paper.
8. I have to work on a paper for my English class.
9. She has beautiful hair.
10. I found a hair in my soup.

EXERCISE 9: Indicate whether the following nouns indicate a bounded (B) entity or an unbounded (U) entity. Some nouns can refer to both. If so, illustrate the difference in meaning by giving two short example sentences.

- | | | | |
|----------|-----------|----------------|-----------|
| 1. acid | 6. cream | 11. lamp | 16. paper |
| 2. book | 7. field | 12. literature | 17. rain |
| 3. bread | 8. food | 13. meat | 18. shoe |
| 4. cap | 9. glass | 14. milk | 19. snow |
| 5. coat | 10. horse | 15. music | 20. time |

With substances like WATER, GOLD, or STONE, it is relatively easy to understand why they are construed as unbounded, but with other types of entities, especially abstract entities, it may be more difficult. Try to keep in mind that in English something is construed as unbounded when it does not really have clear separate parts or clear limits in time or space.

We will discuss quite a few examples of entities that can be considered either bounded or unbounded and what the difference is in meaning between the two. Do NOT try to memorize the lists or examples, but try to UNDERSTAND the differences in meaning, so that you can develop some intuition about whether a noun is Count or Non-Count.

Mass (natural) entities	
usually unbounded	sometimes bounded (which may also occur in plural)
atmosphere china (dishes made of porcelain) earth electricity energy flesh fur grass hair ice nature salt sand snow soil water weather	fire flood ground paper rain wind wine

As you saw earlier, mass entities (substances) are usually construed of as unbounded. The entities in the left-hand column usually occur as Non-count Nouns as in *Have you bought some new china?*. The entities in the right-hand column, however, may be construed as bounded or unbounded. Some examples of the different senses are given below.

- a. *Fire is dangerous.* (general phenomenon of combustion)
- b. *There were three fires in my town last night.* (specific bounded occurrences of the general phenomenon)

- a. *He owns a great deal of ground.* (land, the surface of the earth)
- b. *The grounds are very well kept.* (a bounded area around a building)

- a. *Wine contains about 6% alcohol.* (the substance in general)
- b. *South Africa produces many good wines.* (kinds of wine)

Human values, emotions or mental states			
usually unbounded		usually unbounded, but may also have a bounded sense (these nouns may be used in the plural)	
anger	loneliness	(im)purity	language
confidence	luck	absence	pleasure
courage	magic	beauty	power
duty	mercy	comfort	reality
evil	patience	death	security
existence	poverty	depression	strength
faith	pride	fear	thought
freedom	respect	joy	
fun	safety		
happiness	silence		
health	spite		
independence	status		
intelligence	violence		
justice	worth		

Because human emotions or states of mind are rather vague, abstract entities, they are usually considered unbounded. For example, what exactly is "confidence"? You cannot say that one particular thing is an example of "confidence". It is a whole range of mental attitudes and behavior a person may have. In other words, like water, confidence does not exist of clear separate parts. They do not have clear beginnings or ends.

- a. *She has confidence.*
- b. *They have courage.*
- c. *We want freedom and justice.*

Note, however, how some of these emotions or mental states may occur in a bounded sense:

- a. *He suffers from depression.*
- b. *He has had many depressions* (Separate, bounded, periods in which he suffered from depression).
- a. *This never happens in reality.*

- b. *People may have different realities.* (A bounded sense of reality occurs as each reality pertains to separate people)
- a. *Vietnam is a Country of great beauty.* (the state of being beautiful in general)
- b. *Among those horses, there are three real beauties.* (specific, separate horses that are beautiful)
- a. *Is human thought influenced by language?* (both the notion of thought and language are used in their general sense, encompassing all kinds of thought and any instantiation of language)
- b. *Many thoughts went through his mind.* (thought is used here in the sense of separate ideas)
- c. *How many languages does he speak?* (specific languages that are spoken in separate countries.)

Food	
usually construed as unbounded	construed as bounded or unbounded
pork beef	chicken food meat lamb

Nouns like school and hospital are used in an unbounded sense when referring to their function, but bounded when referring to the actual building. Meat is unbounded when it refers to food in general, but bounded when it refers to kinds of meat. Compare the following sets of sentences.

- a. *I like chicken.* (= chicken meat)
- b. *I saw a few chickens in the road.* (= animals)

Acts or action (Nouns related to verbs)		
Entities usually construed as unbounded		entities usually construed as unbounded, but may also have a bounded sense (these nouns may be used in the plural)
advice attention design behaviour help labour teaching transport trust	Waste work education insurance pollution protection relief research sleep	concern experience growth trade training travel access

Many nouns refer to acts or actions and are related to verbs; for example, the noun *sleep* is related to the verb *sleep*. When used in their verb like sense, to refer to a range of actions that do not have clearly separate parts, these nouns are Non-Count. But again, many of these nouns have different senses, some of which may be Count.

NOTE: *Advice*, *research*, and *work* are always used in an unbounded sense and are therefore always Non-Count.

- a. *He gave me good advice.* (NOT: A gave me a good advice.)
- b. *He has done a great deal of research.* (NOT: He did a research.)
- c. *He has work. He has gone to work.* (NOT: He has a work.)

Some of the other nouns may be used in either a bounded or unbounded sense.

- a. *People need about eight hours of sleep per night.* (= the general activity of sleeping)
- b. *I had a very good sleep.* (= a bounded period of sleep)

- a. *This problem is of great concern.* (= a matter that worries all of us)
- b. *A concern of mine is that I will not pass the test.* (= a specific worry for a particular person)

- a. *He has a lot of experience in working with horses.* (experience in a general sense, not bounded in time)
- b. *He had three bad experiences while working with horses.* (separate events)

Human institutions	
usually construed as unbounded	construed as bounded or unbounded
Education health wealth welfare	school hospital temple university development government industry power society tradition

A noun like "education" refers to an entity that has no clear separate parts. What is "education"? Is it the books you read or the classes you take? Obviously, the concept of education is rather vague and therefore construed as unbounded. The nouns in the right hand column may have a bounded or unbounded sense.

- a. *These Countries have shown a great deal of development.*
(progress)
- b. *What are the recent developments in politics?* (specific events)
- a. *We do not want any industry in our area because it may cause pollution.* (factories in general)
- b. *This area has three main industries.* (kinds of industry)
- a. *We go to school early every day.* (= general place to study)
- b. *We visited the school my friend goes to.* (= the building)
- a. *He went to temple yesterday.* (= place to worship)
- b. *The tourist admired the beautiful temple* (= the building)

The lists above were meant to give you an idea of the different types of words that may be used in unbounded senses and also to show you how an unbounded and bounded sense of the same word may differ. However, the lists are by no means complete and when in the future you wonder about a particular word, you should look it up in a good learner's dictionary.

EXERCISE 10: In the following sentences, decide whether the underlined noun is used in a bounded or unbounded sense. Try to explain why.

1. All humans have the capacity for language.

2. English is a difficult language to learn.
3. Is thought dependent on language?
4. I will give you a penny for your thought.
5. Vietnam has a rich culture.
6. Does language affect culture?
7. I approached the lion with fear.
8. One of my fears is to be stuck in an elevator.
9. There are many problems in society.
10. There are many problems in this society.

EXERCISE 11: In the following passage decide whether the underlined noun is used in a bounded (= Count) or unbounded (= Non-Count) sense.

The question of whether or not language affects the thought and culture of the people who use it remains to be answered. Even if we were to agree that it does, we would have difficulty calculating the extent to which the language we use influences our society. There is no doubt, on the other hand, that a language reflects the thoughts, attitudes and culture of the people who make it and use it. A rich vocabulary on a given subject reveals an area of concern of the society whose language is being studied. The choice between positive and negative terms for any given concept (as, for example, in the choice between *freedom fighter* and *terrorist*) reveals the presence or absence of prejudicial feelings toward the subject. The presence of taboo reveals underlying fears and superstitions of a society. The occurrence of euphemism (*passed away*) or dysphemism (*croaked*) reveals areas which the society finds distasteful or alarming.

EXERCISE 12: Read the text below and decide (1) if the noun is used in a definite sense. If yes fill in *the*. (2) If not, decide if the noun is Count or Non Count. If the noun is Count Singular, fill in *a*. If not, leave the blank blank.

A camera is _____ piece of _____ equipment used for taking _____ photographs. The camera lets in _____ light from _____ image in front of it and directs _____ light onto _____ photographic film. The light has _____ effect on _____ chemicals which cover _____ film and forms _____ picture on it. When _____ film is developed it is washed in _____ chemicals which make _____ picture permanent. It is then possible to print _____ picture onto _____ photographic paper.

EXERCISE 13 : Read the text below and decide (1) if the noun is used in a definite sense. If yes fill in *the*. (2) If not, decide if the noun is Count or Non Count. If the noun is Count Singular, fill in *a*. If not, leave the blank blank.

Mineral resources

_____ minerals are abundant in _____ nature. _____ earth is made up of _____ minerals, and even _____ most valuable minerals are found in _____ common rocks everywhere. Nevertheless, many of _____ minerals near _____ earth's surface

exist in _____ small amounts. As a result, they cannot be mined economically. Only _____ big deposits can be mined at a reasonable cost. _____ biggest deposits of _____ minerals are distributed unequally around _____ world. Some minerals, like _____ iron in the Mesabi Mountains in Michigan, are almost gone. Others, like _____ copper, cobalt, and _____ petroleum, are located under the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and the Persian Gulf.

We have already taken many of _____ mineral deposits that were easy to mine. Today _____ companies have to look harder and deeper to find _____ minerals, and _____ cost of _____ minerals reflects this. Unless _____ exploration and _____ technology keep up with our use of _____ resources. _____ cost of _____ minerals will increase dramatically.

Groups of islands: *the Bahamas, the Philippines*
Ranges of mountains: *the Himalayas, the Alps*

Names with the compass points in them:

The North, the North West, etc.

Names consisting of a common noun with post modification.

The House of Commons, the District of Columbia, the Ohio University Press, the British Broadcasting Company

Names of water ways, big bodies of water, and ships:

Rivers: *the Avon, the Hau River, the Mississippi*
Seas and oceans: *the North Sea, the Pacific (ocean)*
Canals: *the Panama Canal, the Suez Canal*
Other geographical features of coastline: *the Gulf of Mexico, the Cape of Good Hope, the Isle of Wight.*
Ships and airplanes: *the Victory, the Spirit of Saint Louis*

Some public institutions and facilities (usually with a common noun as part of the name):

Hotels and restaurants: *the Grand (Hotel), the Waldof Astoria*
Theatres, opera houses, cinemas, and clubs: *the Pathé, the Globe (Theatre)*
Museums, libraries, hospitals, etc.: *the British Museum, the National Museum, the Bodleian (Library), the Middlesex Hospital.*
Names of newspapers and periodicals: *The Economist, The New York Times, The Observer.*
Names of religious books: *the Bible, the Koran*

Names of peoples to refer to the people of that country in a general sense:

The Vietnamese, the Chinese, the French, the English, the Dutch

EXERCISE 14: Write the announcements and headlines of the articles in a travel magazine on the basis of the cues provided. Use the spaces provided below each item for the answer.

holiday / in / Bahamas

tour / of / White house

Harrisburg / is / capital / of / Pennsylvania

train / to / Paris / leaves / from / Waterloo Station

walk / along / Princes Street

EXERCISE 15: Read the story about Banh chung and decide (1) if the noun is a proper noun. If yes, do NOT use an article unless it involves one of the exceptions mentioned above. (2) If it is a common noun, decide if it is used in a definite sense. If yes, fill in *the*. (3) If not, decide if the noun is Count or Non Count. If the noun is Count Singular, fill in *a*. If not, leave the blank blank.

Banh chung

Banh chung or _____ New Year's rice cakes, _____ specialty for Tet, are _____ moist rice squares wrapped in _____ banana leaves, which give _____ desired light green color to _____ rice. In _____ south, _____ cakes are called _____ Banh Tet and are round. _____ Vietnamese attribute their victories in _____ historic battles to _____ Banh chung, _____ present-day equivalent of C-rations (*nhung khau phan tien loi*). For _____ days, in either _____ hot or cold weather, _____ rice packet remains unspoiled. Eaten with some locally picked mint leaves or greens, _____ rice concoction (*gao duoc pha che*) provides _____ balanced diet. In _____ battle of _____ Dong Da, for example, _____ individual portions of Banh Chung tied around _____ soldiers' waists allowed emperor Quang Trung (Nguyen Hue) to travel quickly, and thus surprise _____ Chinese—lending further _____ credibility (*uy tin*) to _____ adage (*ngan ngu*) that _____ army does, indeed, travel on its stomach.

EXERCISE 16: Read the story about Cantho and decide (1) if the noun is a proper noun. If yes, do NOT use an article unless it involves one of the exceptions mentioned above. (2) If it is a common noun, decided if it is used in a definite sense. If yes fill in *the*. (3) If not, decide if the noun is Count or Non Count. If the noun is Count Singular, fill in *a*. If not, leave the blank blank.

_____ Cantho

Situated 112 miles southwest of _____ Ho Chi Minh City in _____ Cantho province. Cantho is _____ main rice-producing area of _____ country. _____ rice planting takes place in July; _____ rice seedlings are transplanted a month later.

Lying by _____ Hau Giang River, Cantho is _____ junction of _____ communication. It is _____ thriving commercial center, with _____ busy shipping industry.

_____ visitors can take _____ boat ride along _____ the Hau river and observe _____ changing landscapes while observing _____ life on _____ river. Also of _____ interest in _____ Cantho are _____ tours of _____ Song Hau State Farm and _____ Fruit Plantation, _____ Orchid Gardens, _____ Cantho University, _____ Medical School and hospital, and _____ Museum of _____ Ninth Military Zone.

EXERCISE 17: Correct article errors, if necessary.

1. Sri Lanka has the wonderful climate.

2. The organization's aim is to educate the public about the dangers of smoking.

3. We need an environment free from pollution.

4. She has worked in a fashion industry since she left school.

5. The wind is blowing dust all the way from Africa.

6. We can look forward to a warm southerly wind this weekend.

7. The USA is a country with the high level of immigration.

8. How can we combine economic growth and respect for an environment?

9. Car exhaust emissions are having a major effect on a world's climate.

10. That's Terry—he's the third person on the right.

5. Proper nouns and names

(adapted from Quirk et al. pages 292-297)

Proper nouns and names are basically names of specific people (*George Bush*), place names (*Vietnam, King's college*), months (*June*), days (*Monday*), festivals (*Easter*), names of magazines, books (*Time*), names of meals (*breakfast, lunch and dinner*), names of sports and games (*football, tennis, Monopoly, chess, etc.*).

Usually proper nouns and names, which are often used in a definite sense because they are unique, do NOT take an article. However, in some cases these proper nouns and names may be used as a common noun and receive an article. Compare the examples below.

Mr. Wilson is absent from work today. (normal use)

I also know a Mr. Wilson. (There are many persons by the name of Mr. Wilson and I also know one of those.)

I met a Mr. Wilson yesterday. (meaning a person called Mr. Wilson.)

Names of sports:

I like to play tennis. (Here tennis is used as the name of a sport.)

Tennis is an invigorating sport. (Here tennis is used as the name of a sport.)

The tennis played by John McEnroe was stimulating. (Here “the tennis” stands for “the kind of tennis”)

Names of meals

Breakfast is served at 9. (Breakfast is used as the name of a meal.)

I had breakfast at 8 this morning. (Breakfast is used as the name of a meal.)

I had eggs and sausage for breakfast. (Breakfast is used as the name of a meal.)

I had a good breakfast. (Here “a breakfast” stands for “a kind of breakfast”.)

I liked that hotel for the breakfast they served. (Here “the breakfast” stands for “the kind of breakfast”.)

Temporal names and seasons:

I moved here in January. (Here January is used as a name. It means either the January of this year or any January in the past.)

I moved here in the January of 1993. (Here a particular January is meant.)

Most proper nouns and names do NOT have an article, but sometimes “the” is part of the name. Below you will find a list of examples.

Plural names:

Countries: *The Netherlands, the Midlands, the United States, the British Isles*