

Definite, Indefinite, or No Article?

Teacher's Notes

Level: Intermediate

Description: Articles are, quite arguably, one of the trickier aspects of the English language for many students to master, as in some languages they do not actually exist, and even if they do, their usage is not always the same. Through the written and communicative exercises in this activity, students can practise these somewhat perplexing parts of speech in a varied and enjoyable manner.

Aim: To practise Articles through a variety of written and communicative exercises.

Procedure: Give each student a copy of the two-page activity sheet.

Exercise A: Students begin by completing the sentences, writing 'DA' for Definite Article, 'IA' for Indefinite Article, or 'NA' for No Article.

answer key:

1. IA 2. DA 3. NA 4. IA 5. DA 6. IA 7. DA 8. DA 9. NA 10. DA

Exercise B: Next, students read the passage and circle the correct choices.

1. a 2. the 3. the 4. -- 5. the
6. a 7. the 8. -- 9. -- 10. the

Exercise C: Students then complete the sentences, writing 'a', / 'an', 'the', or '--'.

answer key:

1. My aunt lives in -- New York. She lives on **the** third floor of **an** old building in -- SoHo.
2. Although I am afraid of -- dogs, I don't mind **the** dog next door. He is **a** friendly puppy.
3. I don't like -- beer, but I love -- wine. I drank **a** whole bottle -- last night!
4. What **a** beautiful day! Shall we go to **the** park and have **a** picnic?
5. Jim's cousin lives in **the** Netherlands, so he only sees him **a** few times **a** year.

Exercise D: Students go on to the match sentence halves, writing 'the' or '--' where necessary. After this, they talk with a partner and decide whether each "fact" is true or false.

answer key:

1. The Nile is the longest	f. river in the world.
2. The Sahara Desert is the world's	h. driest desert.
3. The capital of -- Australia	j. is -- Sydney.
4. -- Mt Kilimanjaro	b. is the highest mountain in -- Asia.
5. -- Algeria is	i. the largest country in -- Africa.
6. The country which produces	g. the most coffee is -- Brazil.
7. The continent with the most	a. countries in it is -- Europe.
8. The Pacific Ocean is	c. bigger than the Atlantic.
9. -- Mount Everest is part of	e. the Himalayas.
10. The saltiest sea in the world	d. is the Mediterranean.

1. true	2. false (The Atacama is)	3. false (It's Canberra)	4. false (It's in Africa)
5. true	6. true	7. false (It's Africa)	8. true
9. true	10. false (It's the Red Sea)		

Exercise E: Lastly, students work with their partner and come up with geographical "facts" of their own, some true and some false, and write them in the space provided. Once they have done this, they find another partner to read their "facts" to, and see if they can guess which are true or false.