

CHAPTER SUMMARY

OBJECTIVE: To review and practice article usage with the goal of gaining a clear understanding and full control over this critical aspect of English grammar.

APPROACH: The text presents definite and indefinite articles and explains their use. The text provides ample opportunities for practice with both types of articles and gives guidelines for students' reference. The text also provides examples of articles as used in titles and geographic names.

TERMINOLOGY: The text uses common terminology (definite and indefinite articles) and understandable concepts (specific and general). Some students may not be familiar with the \emptyset (null) symbol to indicate no article. Some texts call using no article "the zero article." You may also want to remind students of the phrase "second mention" when they are moving from an indefinite article to a definite one, as so often happens in English. The word "determiner" is also used in many grammar texts to describe all the kinds of adjectives that can come before a noun, including definite and indefinite articles, *this / that*, possessive adjectives, and general adjectives.

PRETEST. What do I already know? Page 122.
Time: 5 minutes

Students will likely already recognize the errors included here. Always encourage them to explain what they do know, as every opportunity for spontaneous speech is valuable, particularly those that also allow students to address target material.

- Encourage students to read aloud to themselves rather than simply look for errors. They will develop good self-correction instincts if they hear the sentences in their heads.
- Review as a class.

► **EXERCISE 1.** Warm-up. Page 122.
Time: 5 minutes

- Encourage students to "define" the use of a definite article here, as this is review for students at this level.

CHART 7-1. Articles (*A, An, The*) with Indefinite and Definite Nouns. Page 123.
Time: 10–15 minutes

Articles can be a source of both confusion and frustration for even advanced speakers. Students have to choose among the indefinite, the definite, and no article at all when deciding how to use nouns. As with prepositions, because speakers can easily be understood even when they use the wrong article, speakers very rarely receive natural cues that would help them self-correct. Assure your students that article usage is one of the last things students master in becoming fluent in English, and that their frustration is natural. When students do study the rationale behind article usage, they can better correct themselves and improve the accuracy of their English.

Because articles precede concrete, specific nouns and/or hypothetical nouns, use physical realia as much as possible to demonstrate the difference. By pointing to actual objects or talking about them, theoretically, you can clearly show the specific versus general use of articles as well as for nouns without any articles.

- Begin by asking your class for a pen or pencil.
- Write your request on the board:
Can I borrow a pen or pencil?
- Once a student has supplied you with a pen or pencil, thank the student.
- Now, thank your student(s) for the pen or pencil and write your thanks on the board, using a definite article.
Thank you for the pencil.
- Ask your students to explain the difference between *a* and *the* based on this demonstration, and start the explanation by writing two column headings on the board: *Indefinite* and *Definite*.
- Put all correct student definitions and associations on the board beneath their appropriate headings.

<i>Indefinite</i>	<i>Definite</i>
<i>nonspecific</i>	<i>nonspecific</i>
<i>general, theoretical</i>	<i>concrete, physical</i>
<i>made plural with <u>some</u> or <u>a</u></i>	<i>can be plural or singular</i>
- Review the chart by having a student read example sentences (a)–(e) aloud.

- Write additional examples on the board and discuss the explanatory notes on the right.
- Ask another student to read the next set of example sentences (f)–(h), and review the explanatory notes.
- Write on the board a class version of the summary of articles by asking students questions that lead to the correct articles.

► **EXERCISE 2.** Looking at grammar. Page 123. Time: 5–10 minutes

- Engage students in the topic by asking them what nicknames are, whether they are common in their language, and whether they, themselves, have nicknames.
- Ask students whether most nicknames are positive or negative and what the pros and cons of having a nickname is.
- Write their input on the board, under appropriate headings.

Pros

*may show positive feeling and familiarity
may be chosen*

Cons

*may not know real name / may be embarrassing
may “stick” whether people like the nickname or not*

- Have students take turns reading each item aloud and deciding whether the word in blue is definite or indefinite.

► **EXERCISE 3.** Looking at grammar. Page 123. Time: 5–10 minutes

- Discuss the use of *some* with students.
- Have students take turns reading the example items aloud and adding *some* wherever it can be added.
- Review and correct as a class.

► **EXERCISE 4.** Looking at grammar. Page 124. Time: 5–10 minutes

- Ask a student to read the example item aloud.
- Give students time to complete the exercise as seatwork.
- Correct as a class.

► **EXERCISE 5.** Game. Page 124. Time: 15–20 minutes

There are many versions of My Grandfather’s Store, and this memory game is merely a way for students to choose and repeat articles. If possible, tailor even the name of the game to your class’s context.

- With one or two students, read the direction line aloud and have students read as Speakers A–D to ensure the class understands how the game works.
- If your class has more than 8 students, have students break into 2–3 smaller groups.

- Once students begin the game, move around the room to encourage and facilitate article use.
- Allow the game to continue for 15 minutes or so, as long as students seem very engaged.
- Ask the class to share the oddest or most unusual item named by a classmate.

► **EXERCISE 6.** Looking at grammar. Page 124. Time: 10 minutes

- Give students time to complete as seatwork.
- Review as a class after students have completed the exercise.
- Write any challenging items on the board, and refer back to the chart to make sure students can see the rules and practices referred to.

► **EXERCISE 7.** Listening. Page 125. Time: 10–15 minutes

- Be provisioned for the listening task, with the audio ready to play.
- Inform students that it can be hard to hear articles and that often they become reduced, or absent, when pronounced.
- After playing the audio, correct with your students using the listening script as needed.

Optional Vocabulary

rich in	leftovers
receive	makes my eyes water

► **EXERCISE 8.** Warm-up. Page 125. Time: 5 minutes

- Give students a chance to fill in the blanks with the correct numbers.
- Have students read the completions aloud.
- Ask students to explain which cantaloupe, box, and piano is being discussed.

CHART 7-2. Articles: Generic Nouns. Page 125. Time: 10–15 minutes

- Moving from the warm-up, ask students to think about why we use generic nouns. Why and when do we need to use generic nouns? How often do we need to use them? Help students understand that they most frequently need to use generic nouns when describing their own preferences.

Ask students to explain what foods, movies, or music they like and dislike, and write some of their responses on the board. For example:

Luiz loves seafood, fruit, and ice cream. He doesn’t like nuts, and he never eats pork.

Amalia likes romantic novels, but she dislikes nonfiction.

Pei Hsu cannot stand jazz but enjoys classic rock.

- Ask a student to read example sentences (a) and (b) aloud, and then ask another student to read the explanatory notes on the right hand side of the chart.

- Have another student read examples (c)–(f) aloud, and then refer to the explanatory notes to the right.
- Ask yet another student to read example sentences (g) and (h) aloud.
- Explain that *the* + adjective (but without actually using the word *people*) is a common construct when making statements about groups of people and very often of socioeconomic classes.

► **EXERCISE 9.** Looking at grammar.

Page 126. Time: 10 minutes

- Read the direction line aloud.
- Have students complete the chart on their own as seatwork.
- Review as a class.

► **EXERCISE 10.** Looking at grammar.

Page 126. Time: 10 minutes

- Have students take turns reading each sentence aloud.
- Decide as a class whether the noun is generic and/or the statement is a generalization.

► **EXERCISE 11.** Looking at grammar.

Page 126. Time: 10 minutes

- Put students into small groups of 3–4 students.
- Have students decide whether each sentence is about a specific lion or lions.
- Correct as a class.

► **EXERCISE 12.** Let's talk. Page 126.

Time: 10 minutes

- Students can remain in the same groups, or you can switch the groups in order to better engage students.
- Have students follow the direction line, and circulate while students are sharing their generalizations with the group.
- Ask students to also provide reasons for why they have chosen the animals and inventions they have shared statements about. Also ask students to discuss how accurate or universal the generalizations they have made are.
- Come together again as a class and share the generalizations.

► **EXERCISE 13.** Game. Page 127.

Time: 15–20 minutes

- Have students continue to work in small groups.
- Have students complete the sentences with the nouns that make the most sense. Remind them that they need to know whether the noun is count or noncount and how to correctly make general statements with the correct nouns.

► **EXERCISE 14.** Game: What am I?

Page 127. Time: 15–20 minutes

- Read the direction line aloud.
- Have students work in pairs.
- Correct as a class and discuss all possibilities (is there more than one noun that could be the answer?)

Optional Vocabulary

calories	drinkable
protein	fierce
scarce	roar

► **EXERCISE 15.** Warm-up. Page 128.

Time: 5 minutes

- Discuss what constitutes a reasonable excuse for missing an appointment, class, or work.
- Have students compare the two conversations and articulate the differences found.

CHART 7-3. Descriptive Information with Definite and Indefinite Nouns. Page 128.

Time: 10–15 minutes

The difference between this chart and the first in this chapter is the inclusion of descriptive information. Some adjective clauses make a noun specific, and some give us more information about the noun's category but do not define the noun. This is the case with an adjective clause that describes only one possible individual or when using a superlative. In these cases, there can be only one and thus, definite articles are required.

- Refer back to the warm-up and ask students to give more examples of specific and unspecific nouns. Use as many concrete examples from the classroom environment as you can (as suggested at the beginning of the chapter).
- Ask a student to read example sentences (a)–(d) aloud.
- Write either the examples from the chart or similar examples on the board, contrasting the noun of the first, indefinite sentence with that of the second.
- Review the explanatory notes with students. Reiterate that additional descriptive information in all four of the sentences are included. However, the definite article must be used when there is no doubt which specific person, place, or thing is being described.
- Ask another student to read sentences (e)–(g) aloud.
- If you need to, create new sentences that clearly illustrate a thing / person / place as opposed to one thing / person / place.
- Ask students to create pairs of such phrases with you and reiterate the differences as often as needed.
- Ask a student to read (h)–(k) aloud.
- Explain that *there is* / *there are* states the existence of something.

► **EXERCISE 16.** Reading and grammar.

Page 128. Time: 10 minutes

- Clarify the direction line.
- Give students time to read through as seatwork.
- Have students decide which nouns in blue are specific and find a reference in Chart 7-3 to justify their choices.
- Correct as a class by having students share their responses.

► **EXERCISE 17.** Looking at grammar.

Page 129. Time: 10 minutes

- Read the direction line aloud.
- Ask students which article they anticipate when the meaning is “one in many.”
- Have students determine their responses, and correct as a class.

► **EXERCISE 18.** Looking at grammar.

Page 129. Time: 10 minutes

- Review the direction line and example with students.
- Have students compare and provide appropriate articles for each of the sentences in each set.

► **EXERCISE 19.** Grammar and speaking.

Page 129. Time: 10 minutes

- Read the direction line and have students complete as seatwork.
- Correct by having students take turns reading their completions aloud and discussing whether they agree or disagree (*yes* or *no*) with each sentence.
- Ask questions to engage students in speaking spontaneously about topics and vocabulary.

Optional Vocabulary

absence	commit suicide
trained	witness
suffer	

► **EXERCISE 20.** Warm-up. Page 130.

Time: 5 minutes

- Ask students to read the examples aloud.
- Remind them to “hear” what sounds natural and correct.
- Ask students to articulate how and why the second conversation is correct.

CHART 7-4. General Guidelines for Article Usage. Page 130. Time: 10–15 minutes

The guidelines for article usage presented here are not new to students. However, they may have found prior study of article usage to be unhelpful because their general grasp of English was poorer at the time. Though so much of this grammar is review, this review provides a new opportunity for students

to reverse long-standing article errors through self-correction and reminders from you. Take the time to interrupt and correct overtly and immediately after presenting this chart, and explain that you are doing so to assist students in breaking habits that inhibit them sounding more like native speakers.

Some further comments on these guidelines follow. Students don't have to be able to explain these rules perfectly, but their recognition of them will support their accurate use of articles. The general rule is that the first mention of a noun is indefinite, and all subsequent references to this noun are definite and take *the*. However, very often the second mention of the noun may be a synonym. For example:

We had fish, rice, and scallops. The seafood was outstanding.

Some nouns have definite articles even if they have not been mentioned in the preceding sentence or clause. These nouns are unique objects / people / places that are known to everyone. For example:

The dean gave everyone extra time off for the holiday.

The Northern Lights are said to be spectacular.

This is also and always true for superlatives. For example:

Meggie is the smartest kid in the class.

- Ask a student to read the sentences in (a) aloud and then the guideline.
- Discuss “second mention,” which is a concept students are familiar with even if they do not know this term. Ask a student to read the examples in (b) and then the guideline.
- Write paraphrased examples (both correct and incorrect) for example items (c) and (d) on the board. Review the associated guideline.
- Stress that knowing whether the noun is count or not is critical to article usage because a singular count noun always has some sort of determiner first.
- Reiterate all that follows in (e) by writing examples on the board and going over the guideline repeatedly.

► **EXERCISE 21.** Looking at grammar.

Page 130. Time: 10 minutes

- Give students time to work through the completions as seatwork.
- Correct as a class and take the time to make very overt and immediate corrections while also referring to the chart above.

► **EXERCISE 22.** Grammar, listening, and speaking. Page 131. Time: 15–20 minutes

Part I

- Be provisioned for the listening task by having the audio ready.
- Ask students to complete the conversation, capitalizing as necessary.

- Play the audio.
- Have students correct their initial completions after listening to the audio.

Part II

- Have students work with a partner and create a conversation about one of the two items pictured.
- Ask students to perform their conversations.
- Encourage students to be as authentic and specific as possible.

Optional Vocabulary

bent swerved pothole

► EXERCISE 23. Check your knowledge. Page 131. Time: 10 minutes

- Have students locate the errors, and give the corrections needed by having students take turns reading items aloud.
- As always, encourage students to try to hear the grammar mistakes.
- Put any challenging items on the board for further discussion.

► EXERCISE 24. Let's talk. Page 132. Time: 10–15 minutes

- Read the direction line aloud.
- Put students into pairs to order the sentences.
- Review as a class.

► EXERCISE 25. Looking at grammar. Page 132. Time: 10–15 minutes

- Read the direction line and two example items aloud.
- Have students continue the exercise on their own as seatwork.
- Correct as a group, putting any particularly challenging items on the board.

► EXERCISE 26. Listening. Page 133. Time: 10–15 minutes

- Ensure you are provisioned by having the audio ready.
- Have students listen to the talk with books closed.
- Students open their books and listen a second time, completing the numbered cloze exercise.
- Have students take turns reading the completions aloud.
- Put any challenging items on the board.

► EXERCISE 27. Interview. Page 133. Time: 15–20 minutes

One of the best ways to manage this activity is using rotating pairs, having students face each other in two lines. After a few minutes, instruct the person at the end of one of the lines to move to the first position in his/her line, and all others move down, thus, giving all students a new partner.

The rotating pairs energy can be enhanced by playing music while students are speaking with one another and then stopping the music when it is time for a switch of partners, like in “musical chairs.” Though the rotating pairs and musical chairs may seem artificial gimmicks, they do tend to break up the normal energy in a positive way.

- Give students time to work with one another.
- If it works for your group, circulate and fully participate as much as possible, while also taking notes on common article mistakes.
- After students have exchanged information while interviewing, ask every student to share one thing they had learned about someone else in the class. (Ensure that there is a comment about every student in the class; don't leave anyone out.)
- Review as a class, and allow the discussion to follow any tangents that arise (similarities in experiences, preferences, etc.).

► EXERCISE 28. Warm-up. Page 133. Time: 15–20 minutes

- Ask students to complete the sentences, and discuss any observations that they make.

Chart 7-5. Using *The* or \emptyset with Titles and Geographic Names. Page 134.

Time: 15 minutes

As the chart explains, the use of articles with geographical names has some general patterns, but they are not necessarily predictable (e.g., rivers have definite articles but lakes don't). However, it is useful for students to review these general rules while also recognizing that repetitive use of real geographical terms will be most helpful for students to master this particular aspect of article usage.

- Have students take turns reading the sets of example sentences (a)–(l) aloud.
- Review the explanatory notes on the right-hand side of the chart.

► EXERCISE 29. Trivia Game. Page 134. Time: 15–20 minutes

- Put students into teams.
- Ask teams to work together to provide the correct places along with the appropriate article or no article.
- Review as a class. The group with the most correct responses (facts and articles) wins.

► **EXERCISE 30.** Looking at grammar.
Page 135. Time: 10–15 minutes

- Ask students to think about places they would like to travel to, and discuss the value of travel. As an expansion, prepare a set of specific questions for students to first engage them in the topic. These can include a discussion of why they themselves want to travel, what they want to see, and also what tourists specifically want to see when they visit the countries students are from.
- Give students time to complete this exercise as seatwork.
- Correct as a class.
- Encourage students to allow the conversation to follow any tangents that produce spontaneous conversation.

► **EXERCISE 31.** Speaking and writing.
Page 135. Time: 15–25 minutes

- In order to have students get the most of out of this exercise, ensure that students have had ample time to discuss places they would like to travel.
- Whether students work individually or in a group, have them follow the direction line to create a brochure based on the example in the text.
- Ask students to complete their brochures as homework.

► **EXERCISE 32.** Reading and grammar.
Page 136. Time: 10–15 minutes

Part I

- Have students read the passage on their own as seatwork.
- For additional article practice, have students then take turns reading sentences or paragraphs aloud.

Part II

- Ask students to respond to the questions in complete sentence form as seatwork.
- Remind students to check article patterns before writing their responses.
- Have students take turns reading the questions aloud and then comparing their complete sentence responses.

Optional Vocabulary

container ship	human food chain
freak	toxic
crashing	harm
wildlife	litter
petroleum	uphill battle
molecule	voyage
ingest	destination

► **EXERCISE 33.** Check your knowledge.
Page 136. Time: 10 minutes

- Have students read through the sentences aloud and visually, identifying errors as they do so.
- Ask other students to provide corrections.

► **EXERCISE 34.** Reading, grammar, speaking, and writing. Page 137.
Time: 10–20 minutes

Students benefit from discussing the process of second language learning. This BlueBookBlog feature by author Stacey Hagen gives students a chance to use their language to reflect on being a language learner, while also using the target grammar.

Part I

- Have students read the blog entry as seatwork.
- Ask students to take turns reading aloud to gain practice.

Part II

- Have students work in groups and discuss the specific questions about language learning.

Part III

- Assign students to write about their own experience as language learners and then edit their writing.

Optional Vocabulary

surroundings
shy
technique
background noise
effortlessly
“aha” moment