

## Grammar: Definite and Indefinite Articles

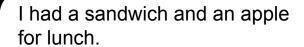




# Identifying articles



How many **articles** can you see?



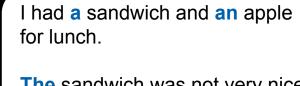
The sandwich was not very nice, but the apple was lovely.



## Using articles



**Four**... Why does Julie start with **a/an** and then use **the**?



The sandwich was not very nice, but the apple was lovely.



### Definite and Indefinite articles



#### Because...

... this is the *first* time she talked about the sandwich and the apple

I had **a** sandwich and **an** apple for lunch.

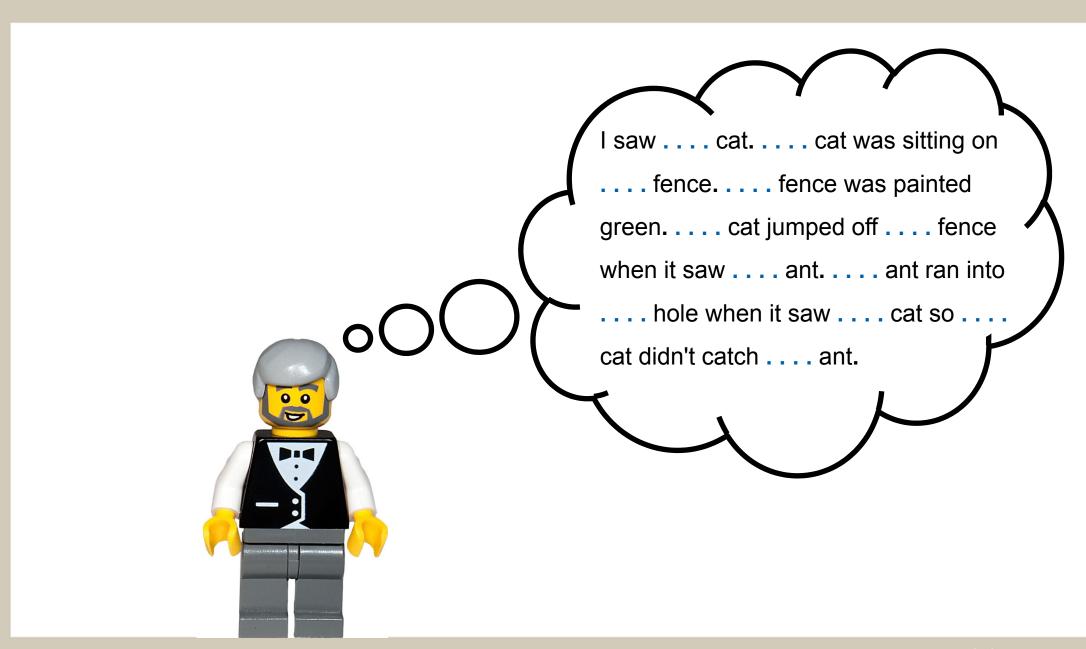
**The** sandwich was not very nice, but **the** apple was lovely.

... Lucy *now knows* which sandwich and which apple Julie is talking about



### Definite and Indefinite articles





## Using articles



#### Use the **indefinite article** (a/an) if:

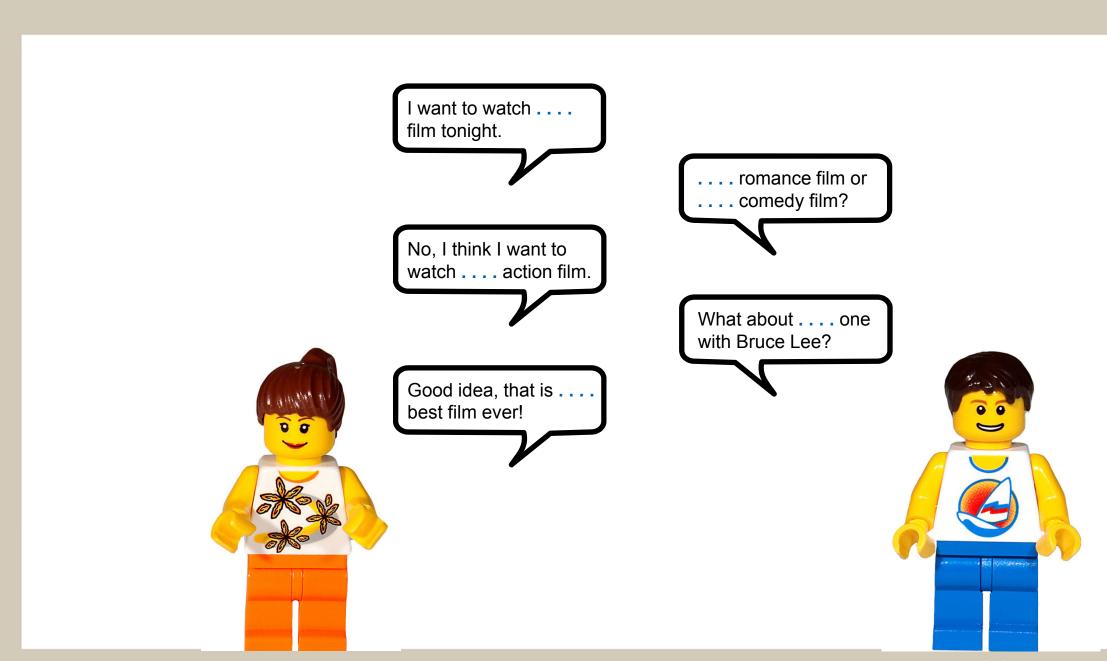
- You think the person reading your essay *doesn't know* the 'identity' of the noun
- You are writing about something in general (not unique, non-specific)

#### Use the **definite article** (the) if:

- The person reading your essay *knows* the 'identity' of the noun
- The noun was mentioned earlier in your sentence/paragraph/essay
- The noun being 'identified' is obvious (واضح ) or unique (فريد) or specific (محدد

### Definite and Indefinite articles





### The Indefinite Article



Use the **indefinite article** (a/an)

1

To refer to something for the **first** time e.g.:

"I had a sandwich and an apple for lunch."

2

To say what job somebody does e.g.:

"My brother is an engineer." "My mother is a doctor at Tiwam hospital"



We can only use a/an with singular countable nouns e.g.:

I like to eat  $\emptyset$  apple every day.

I like to drink  $\emptyset$  water. I like to eat  $\emptyset$  rice.

#### The Definite Article



#### Use the **definite article** (the)

- If the reader *knows* the noun you are writing about e.g.:

  The table below shows... The second effect I will discuss is... The first key reason I will focus on is...
- With superlatives e.g.:

  the best the longest the most beautiful the worst
- When the noun is obvious (واضح or unique (فريد) or specific (محدد) e.g.:

  the sun the Government the President the world the 1970s
- With some proper nouns e.g.:

  Nationalities the British the Emiratis

  Some countries the UK the UAE

  Rivers the Nile the Ganges

  Seas/Oceans the Arabian sea the Indian ocean

#### The Zero Article



Use the **zero** article ( $\emptyset$  i.e. nothing)

With plural and uncountable nouns and also, when writing about a noun in general: " Gold is expensive these days" " Scientists are clever"

With certain proper nouns e.g.:

**Continents** Europe, Africa Most countries Japan, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait

Cities, Emirates and Towns London, Tokyo, New York, Doha Fujairah Al Ain

Mountains Everest, Jebel Hafeet

Companies Toyota, Nissan, Etisalat, Apple, Samsung



(But <u>not</u> specific company products: *the Nissan Patrol, the Samsung Galaxy SIII*)

## Fill in the gaps using, 'the' or 'a'/'an' or 'Ø'



[Please use capitals when necessary.]

..... table below provides some facts and figures on two cars, they are ..... Nissan Patrol and ...... Toyota Landcruiser. In this report I am going to compare and contrast ..... similarities and ...... differences between them.

## Fill in the gaps using, 'the' or 'a'/'an' or 'Ø'



[Please use capitals when necessary.]

My brother, who is ..... accountant, said to my sister, who is ..... company director, that his friend from ..... Tunisia read a very interesting book. ..... book was called War and Peace. However, my friend from ..... New Zealand, who lives here in ..... UAE, said that ..... book is actually quite boring!

# Fill in the gaps using, 'the' or 'a'/'an' or 'Ø'



[Please use capitals when necessary.]

There are many mountains in Europe . . . . tallest is . . . . Mount Blanc. . . . . Pico De Europa is . . . . highest mountain in Spain. . . . river Danube, in . . . . . Germany is longer than . . . . river Thames in . . . . . UK, but shorter than . . . . Voga river. . . . . Voga river is . . . . longest in all of . . . . Europe.

## &c. articles are very common in English



"the" is the 5<sup>th</sup> most common word in the English language

"a" is the 6<sup>th</sup> most common word in English ["an" is 32<sup>nd</sup>]

- > use "a" if the noun starts with a consonant
- > use "an" if the noun starts with a vowel [a, e, i, o, u]