

## A/an

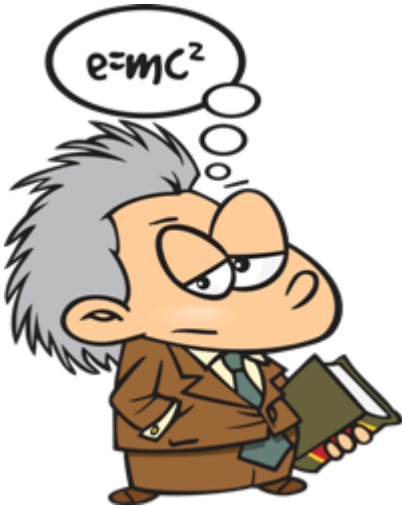
We use **a/an** for nouns that are *not* specific, when we can refer to *any one* of a certain kind of thing. For example, imagine your uncle just made cookies. You say:



I want a cookie!

(You want *any one* of the cookies he has made, not a specific cookie. So, you use **a**.)

The word “cookie” begins with a consonant sound, so we use **a**. If the word begins with a vowel sound, we use **an**. For example:



The scientist had **an** idea.

(We do not know anything about the idea, so it is not specific. The word “idea” starts with a vowel sound, so we use **an**.)

## The

We use **the** for *specific* nouns, when we know *exactly which* thing we are talking

about. We use **the** for singular or plural nouns.

For example:



Jack fell asleep in **the** green chair.  
(We know *exactly which specific* chair we are talking about.)



Eric and Adam are coloring **the** eggs.  
(We know *exactly which specific* eggs we are talking about.)

We also use the when there is *only one* of a thing.

For example:



**The** sun is shining today!  
(There is *only one* sun.)

### **The vs. A/an**

The first time we mention something in a story, we use **a/an**. After that, we use **the**.

For example:



Anna told Rick **a** secret. **The** secret was a big surprise! Rick told **the** secret to Angela later.

(We use **a** the first time we mention the secret. After that, we use **the** because we know *exactly which specific* secret we are talking about.)

## No Article

Remember that in some cases, we do not use an article. When we are talking about something *in general* or when we mention *a city or country*, we do not use an article.

For example:



Parties are a lot of fun!  
(Parties *in general* are fun.)



I went to Australia last year.  
(Australia is *a country*, so we do not use an article.)

So, this is how we use **a/an**, and **the** in English. Now, let's practice!

### Exercise A: A or an?

Look at the pictures, then complete the sentences with **a** or **an**.

1.



Bradley gave his teacher \_\_\_\_\_ apple.

2.



She is holding \_\_\_\_\_ pencil.

3.



Emily is in \_\_\_\_\_ garden.

4.



There is \_\_\_\_\_ fountain in the middle of the park.

5.



They had \_\_\_\_\_ accident!

**Exercise B: A, an, the, or no article?**

Look at the pictures, then complete the sentences with **a**, **an**, **the**, or no article.

1.



We visited \_\_\_\_\_ Taj Mahal in June.

2.



He is giving her a ring. \_\_\_\_\_ ring is very expensive!

3.



Harold is upset. He is having \_\_\_\_\_ argument!

4.





John is looking at \_\_\_\_\_ yellow map.

5.



Dave is listening to \_\_\_\_\_ song in his car.

6.



James is pulling a rabbit from his magician's hat. \_\_\_\_\_ rabbit does not look



happy!

7.



\_\_\_\_\_ toys are important for children.

8.



She is wearing \_\_\_\_\_ dress.

9.



She likes \_\_\_\_\_ books.

10.



Caroline is running \_\_\_\_\_ race.

### Answer Key

#### Exercise A: A or an?

1. Bradley gave his teacher **an** apple.
2. She is holding **a** pencil.
3. Emily is in **a** garden.
4. There is **a** fountain in the middle of the park.
5. They had **an** accident!

#### Exercise B: A, an, the, or no article?

1. We visited **the** Taj Mahal in June.
2. He is giving her a ring. **The** ring is very expensive!

3. Harold is upset. He is having **an** argument!
4. John is looking at **the** yellow map.
5. Dave is listening to **a** song in his car.
6. James is pulling a rabbit from his magician's hat. **The** rabbit does not look happy!
7. --- toys are important for children.
8. She is wearing **a** dress.
9. She likes --- books.
10. Caroline is running **a** race.