

Some Rules about Articles Part 1

Articles in writing are hard to understand, and use properly. Let's look at some rules and use them in a short writing lesson.

Articles: the, a/an, some

Rule #1. Writing about single countable nouns: first time A, second time THE.

I saw a dog yesterday.
The dog was playing with a cat.
The cat was big and black.

Rule #2: For plural nouns use SOME and THE.

There were some cats on the wall.
The cats were eating some dead fish.
The fish came from a garbage can

Rule #3: Use THE when the reader understands the countable noun which you are talking about.

1. You should not look directly at the sun.
2. I went to the airport to pickup my friend.
3. Can you tell me where I can find the bathroom?
4. Do you want to me to turn on the heater?
5. The delivery man rang the doorbell.

Rule #4: Use THE when the reader knows the plural noun. Compare these pairs of sentences. What is the difference?

I love to eat oranges.
The oranges in the basket are fresh.

People should not drink milk.
The milk on the table is too old to drink.

Ham is my favorite food at Thanksgiving.
The ham in the basket smells great.

Part 2 Practice

A, And or The?

1. There is _____ rainbow in _____ sky.
2. Who is _____ woman in _____ hall?
3. _____ doctor gave Barry _____ IV.
4. Jennifer opened _____ door to let _____ dog in.
5. Kevin is _____ only child in _____ family.
6. What's _____ largest mammal in _____ world?
7. There's _____ bird in _____ tree.
8. Doug is writing _____ letter to her niece.
9. June has _____ brother and _____ sister.
10. They reached _____ top of _____ mountain in 2 hours.
11. _____ cherries are sweet.
12. _____ cherries from Argentina don't taste good.

Add articles if required.

Gary lives in _____(1) house with his mom, dad and brother, Jack. _____(2) house has three bedrooms, _____(3) kitchen, two bathrooms and _____(4) big backyard. John's father works for _____(5) software company. His mom runs _____(6) small business at home. She spends her day talking on _____(7) telephone, calling clients and writing _____(8) reports. His brother is _____(9) high school student but he helps with _____(10) housework. He likes using _____(11) vacuum cleaner and washing _____(12) dishes. Every Saturday morning, Gary has the same routine. He eats _____(13) oranges for breakfast. He thinks _____(14) oranges from California are the best. Every Saturday, he gets _____(15) allowance for helping with _____(16) chores.

Dogs and Sausages

