Articles

Articles are very similar to adjectives; they both work to modify nouns.

English has two articles:

1. **The** = Definite article
2. **A/An** = Indefinite article

"The" refers to specific objects, while "A/An" refers to non-specific. For example:

> I want to see the movie. (A specific movie)
> I want to see a movie. (Non-specific movie)

It can be slightly tricky to know when to use "a/an." A helpful rule involves listening to the sound of the noun a/an is modifying. For example:

- Singular noun beginning with a consonant: a dinosaur, a truck
- Singular noun beginning with a vowel: an iguana, an ice cube
- Singular noun beginning with a consonant sound: a user
- Nouns beginning with a silent "H": an hour
- Nouns beginning with a hard "H": a horse, a house

Countable and Uncountable Nouns
"The" can be used with non-count nouns, or the article can be omitted entirely. For example:

> I love to sail over the water. (Some specific body of water)
> I love to sail over water. (Any water)

"A/An" can be used only with count nouns. For example:

> I need a bottle of water.

Geography
Use "the" for: deserts, forests, gulfs, peninsulas, rivers, oceans, seas, points on the globe, and geographical areas.

Do not use "the" for: cities, towns, states, streets, lakes, bays, mountains, continents, or islands.

Need more information or assistance?

Schedule an appointment with the Excel Multiliteracy Center. We are here to provide one-on-one and group assistance to any and all UCCS students!