**2.1 ARTICLES**

**Introduction to the Topic**

Articles is a very important topic when it comes to the sentence correction questions in CAT.

A thorough understanding of rules pertaining to the use of articles A, An and The and also rules of omission of the articles will help you to have grip on this topic.

**Relevance in CAT**

Learning to find the errors pertaining to Articles, which is one of the trickiest areas of the sentence correction questions in CAT. It is one of the common areas in which an error might occur in sentence correction questions, thus making it an important topic for CAT examination.

**Articles**

The Words **‘a’** or **‘an’** and **‘the’** are called Articles. They come before nouns.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Classification of Articles** | |
| **Indefinite Article** | **Definite Article** |
| **‘A’** and **‘an’** are called the indefinite articles because it usually leaves indefinite the person or thing spoken of;  e.g. A teacher, that is, any teacher. | **'The'** is called definite article, because it normally points out some, particular person or thing;  e.g. He saw the teacher, meaning some particular teacher |
| The indefinite article is used before **singular countable nouns:**  e.g. A book, an apple, a boy | The definite article is used before **singular countable nouns,** **plural countable nouns** and **uncountable nouns:**  e.g. The book, the books, the milk |

**Use of the Indefinite Article:**

**■** The choice between **a** or **an** is determined by **sound**.

● Words beginning with a vowel sound use **an**.

e.g. An egg.

An umbrella.

We say: an hour, an heir.

e.g. An honest man

This is because of the way the consonant **'h'** is pronounced.

● Words beginning with a consonant sound use **'a'**.

Therefore, we have: a boy; a goat

We say: a University (yu – sound)

A European (yo – sound)

A Useful article (yu – sound)

This is because the vowels **'u'** and **'e'** are taking the sound of the consonant **'y'**.

● We say: A one-rupee note (wa – sound)

A one-eyed man (wa – sound)

This is because the vowel **'o'** is taking the sound of the consonant **'w'**.

**■** The Indefinite Article is used in its original numerical sense of **one**; as,

e.g. Twelve inches make a foot.

Not a word was said.

A bird in the hand is worth two on the bush.

**■** In the vague sense of a certain: as,

e.g. A Rohit Sharma (= a certain person Rohit Sharma) is arrested by the police.

One evening a beggar came to my door.

**■** In the sense of any, to single out an individual as the representative of a class; as,

e.g. A student should obey his teacher.

A goat is a useful animal.

**■** To make a common of a proper noun: as,

e.g. A Hari comes to judgment! (A Hari = very wise man)

**Use of the Definite Article:**

**■** When we talk about a particular person or thing, or one already referred to

e.g. The book you want is out of print. (Which book? The one you want. )

Let’s go to the park. (The park in this town)

**■** When a singular noun is meant to represent a whole class:

e.g. The cow is a useful animal.

The cat loves comfort.

**■** Before some proper names, viz., these kinds of place names:

● Oceans and seas, e.g. the pacific, the black sea

● Rivers, e.g. the Ganga, the Nile

● Canals, e.g. the Suez canal

● Deserts, e.g. the sahara

● Groups of islands, e.g. the West indies

● Mountain- ranges, e.g. the Himalayas, the Alps

● A very few names of countries, which include word like republic and kingdom (e.g. the lrish Republic, the United Kingdom) also: the Ukraine, the Netherlands (and its seat of government the Hague)

**■** Before the name of certain books; as,

e.g. The Vedas, the Puranas, the Iliad, the Ramayana.

But we say – Homer’s Iliad, Valmiki’s Ramayana.

**■** Before names of things unique of their kind; as,

e.g. The sun, the sky, the ocean, the sea, the earth.

**Note:** Sometimes the is placed before a Common noun to give it the meaning of an Abstract noun; as,

Atleast the warrior (the warlike or martial spirit) in him was thoroughly aroused.

**■** Before a proper noun when it is qualified by an adjective or a defining adjectival clause; as,

e.g. The great Caesar: the immortal Shakespeare.

The Mr. Roy whom you met last night is my uncle.

**■** With Superlatives ; as,

e.g. The darkest cloud has a silver lining.

This is the best book of elementary chemistry.

**■** With ordinals; as,

e.g. He was the first man to climb Mt. Everest.

The ninth chapter of the book is very interesting.

**■** Before musical instrument; as,

e.g. He can play the piano.

**■** Before and adjective when the noun is understood ; as,

e.g. The poor are always with us.

**■** Before a noun ( with emphasis ) to give the force of a superlative; as,

e.g. The verb is the word (= the chief word) in a sentence.

**■** As an adverb with comparatives ; as,

e.g. The more the merrier.

(= by **how much** more, by **so much** the merrier)

The more they get, **the** more they want.

**■ Basic Rules**

**Rule 1: A** or **an** is used in the following ways:

Before the word ‘most’ when it is used in the sense of very or much or exceedingly.

e.g. Sridhar is a most intelligent student.

This is a most unfortunate event.

**Note:** It must be borne in mind that ‘man’ or ‘woman’, when used in a general sense to represent ‘mankind’ as a whole, never takes an article.

e.g. Man is mortal.

**Rule 2:** With a noun complement. This includes names of professions.

e.g. He is an actor.

She is a good dancer.

**Rule 3:** With certain numbers: a hundred, a thousand, a million etc.

**Rule 4:** Before certain uncountable nouns preceded by nouns + of

e.g. A piece of advice, a bit of news, a drop of water etc.

**Rule 5:** In certain expressions of quantity.

e.g. A lot of, a couple of, a great many, a good deal of , a good many, a few, a little etc.

**'THE'** is used in the following ways:

**Rule 6:** Before a noun denoting a hospital, temple, school, college, prison etc. If its purpose or use is not referred to or say if used not in its primary purpose.

e.g. He has gone to the hospital to visit a friend.

**Rule 7:** With certain adjectives indicating nationality.

e.g. The Dutch, the Spanish, the Chinese, the Burmese etc.

**Rule 8:** Before a noun when special emphasis is needed.

e.g. This is the novel I am talking about.

**Rule 9:** Before the names of certain countries each of which is a union of smaller units.

e.g. the U.S.A, the U.A.E, the U.K., etc.

**Rule 10:** Before the words like north, south, etc. when these are used as nouns.

e.g. the north of India, the Middle East, the West Asia.

**Rule 11:** Before some proper nouns consisting of adjectives and nouns or noun of noun.

e.g. The State Bank of India, the National Museum .

**Rule 12:** Before the names of political parties.

e.g. The Congress, The BJP, etc.

**Rule 13:** Before the names of the historical or public buildings

e.g. The Taj Mahal, the Red Fort, the Rashtrapati Bhavan etc.

**Rule 14:** Before the names of newspapers, magazines, etc.

e.g. The Hindustan Times, the Statesman, the Deccan Chronicle etc.

**Rule 15:** Before groups of islands.

e.g. The Andaman & Nicobar islands, the West Indies etc.

**Rule 16:** Before the names of certain countries.

e.g. the Yemen, the Sudan , the Hague, etc.

**Rule 17:** Before the dates of months.

e.g. the 23rd October, 1994, the 15th August, 1947, etc.

**Rule 18:** Before the superlative degree of adjectives.

e.g. She is the best person.

**Omission of the Article**

**■ The Article is omitted:**

● Before names of substances and abstract nouns(*i.e*. uncountable noun ) used in a general sense:

e.g. Sugar is bad for your teeth.

Honesty is the best policy.

**Note:** Uncountable nouns take the when used in a particular sense (especially when qualified by an adjective or adjectival phrase or clause);

e.g. The Wisdom of Solomon is great.

I can’t forget the kindness with which he treated me.

● Before plural countable nouns used in a general sense: as,

e.g. Children like toys.

Computers are used in many offices.

**Note:** Such nouns take 'the' when used with a particular meaning:

e.g. Where are the children? (= our children)

● Before most proper nouns (except those referred to earlier), namely, names of people (e.g. Rohan, Ram), names of continents, countries, cities, etc. (e.g. Europe, Pakistan, Nagpur), Name of individual mountains (e.g. Mount Everest), individual islands, lakes, hills, etc.

● Before names of meals (used in a general sense):

e.g. What time do you have lunch?

Dinner is ready.

● Before languages:

e.g. We are studying English.

They speak Punjabi at home.

● Before school, college, university, church, bed, hospital, prison, when these places are visited or used for their primary purpose:

e.g. I learnt French at school.

We go to church on Sundays.

He stays in bed till nine every morning.

My uncle is still in hospital.

● Before names of relations, like father, mother, aunt, uncle,

and also cook and nurse, meaning ‘our cook’ ‘our nurse’:

e.g. Mother has returned.

Uncle wants you to see her.

Cook has given notice.

● Before predicative nouns denoting a unique position, *i.e*., a position that is normally held at one time by one person only:

e.g. He was elected Chairman of the Board.

Mr. Banerji became Principal of the College in 1995.

● In certain phrases consisting of a transitive verb followed by its object:

e.g. To catch fire, to take breath, to cast anchor, to send word, to bring word, to give ear, to lay siege, to set sail, to lose heart, to set foot, to leave home, to strike root, to take offence.

● In certain phrases consisting of a preposition followed by its object:

e.g. At home in hand, in debt, by day, by night, at daybreak, at sunrise, at noon, at sunset, at night, at anchor, at sights, on demand, at interest, on earth by water, by river, by train, by steamer.

**Points To Remember**

● When two or more adjectives qualify the same noun,

the Article is used before the first adjective only, but when they qualify different nouns, expressed or understand, the Article is normally used before each adjective.

e.g. I have a black and white dress. [one dress]

I have a black and a white dress. [two dresses]

● In expressing a comparison, of two nouns refer to the same person or thing, the Article is used before the first noun only.

e.g. She would make a better lawyer than engineer.

● **'A', 'an'** and **'the'** can all be used to indicate that a noun refers to the whole class to which individual countable nouns belong.

e.g. A lion is a dangerous animal. [any lion]

The lion is a dangerous animal. [all lions]

● The omission of articles also expresses a generic meaning.

I. No article with a plural noun **:** Lions are dangerous animal [all lions]

II. No article with a non-countable noun **:** Frustration is a destructive emotion.

[any kind of frustration]

**Practice Exercise – Easy**

**Directions (Q. Nos. 1 – 10):** *Identify the correct sentence or sentences.*

1.

A. This is the best book of elementary English.

B. The cat loves comfort.

C. Let’s go to park.

D. A book you want is out of print.

a. A, B b. C, D c. A only d. B only

2.

A. I met doctor this evening.

B. She came by morning flight.

C. The sun is very bright today.

D. Kalpana Sen is principal of our college.

a. D only b. A, B, C c. C only d. B, C

3.

A. Delhi is capital of India.

B. Let’s go watch movie.

C. It’s cloudy. So moon is not visible.

D. She’s the only friend I have.

a. B, C b. D only c. A, D, C d. B only

4.

A. Can I get you a cup of coffee?

B. I think it’s in the next shop.

C. But the phone is dead.

D. I have a message for you.

a. A, B, C b. A, B

c. A, B, C, D d. A Only

5.

A. I am good at playing tabla.

B. Army has helped to rescue people from flood in the town.

C. Shreya and Rohan study in same class.

D. Turn right at the end of the road.

a. D only b. C only c. A only d. A, B

6.

A. I would like to wear a black shirt.

B. How’s the new boss.

C. Shreya is a electronics engineer.

D. She has a lovely smile.

a. C, D b. A, B c. B, C d. A, B, D

7.

A. They reached the station just in time.

B. Joseph goes to church every Tuesday.

C. Is mom at home?

D. Joseph is an honest man.

a. C, D, A b. B, C

c. A, B, C, D d. C, D

8.

A. She was company director when she retired.

B. Bangalore is a beautiful city.

C. Against her parent’s wishes, she wants to be a fashion designer.

D. She is the finest actor of the bollywood.

a. A, B, C b. A, B, D c. B, C, D d. A, C, D

9.

A. He’s colleague of mine.

B. I really need cup of tea.

C. You can never find a paper clip on his desk.

D. That’s a friend of Dinesh’s.

a. C, D b. C only c. A, B d. A, C

10.

A. In middle of her speech she started to laugh uncontrollably.

B. Each new word has a different meaning.

C. The building was totally destroyed because of fire last night.

D. The bus is coming.

a. A, B, D b. A, B, C c. B, D, C d. A Only

**Practice Exercise – Medium**

**Directions (Q. Nos. 1** − **10):** *In each of the following sentences certain parts have been underlined. Choose the part that contains an error.*

1. Tanya is going to north on the basis

A

of the instructions given by her sociology teacher.

B C

No error

D

2. There are a few shops at an end of the street

A B

but none of them sells red wine. No error

C D

3. The earth completes a revolution round the sun

A B

in approximately 365 days. No error

C D

4. The USA, the China and the India are on the way to invent

A

a machine that will read the minds of the people in

B C

general. No error

D

5. This city is not a very interesting place to visit, so only

A B

a few tourist come here. No error

C D

6. Mandarin is a very difficult language to understand for

A B

those who have never been to China. No error

C D

7. The singing is both my vocation and avocation because it

A B

is a source of joy and bread to me. No error

C D

8. He has been sent to the prison several times

A

but has not shown any sign of improvement in his

B C

conduct. No error

D

9. She is both a virtuous and beautiful daughter of a

A B

successful, working single mother. No error

C D

10. I shall never forget a good deed you did to me,

A B

when I was in crisis. No error

C D

**Practice Exercise – Difficult**

**Directions (Q. Nos. 1 – 10):** *Identify the correct sentence or sentences.*

1.

A. Democracy is the form of government under which power to alter the laws and structures of government lies, ultimately, with citizenry.

B. The beginning of the new financial year in India usually coincides with the announcement of the annual budget , a document that influence the common man to a great degree.

C. We wanted to know exactly what kind of atmosphere this would have been.

D. There is always a risk attached to switching jobs, particularly if the new job is in an emerging industry but there is every choice that the move will prove beneficial, especially in a booming economy.

a. B, C b. C, D c. A, D d. A, B

2.

A. SEBI is likely to approach the Supreme court with the

plea that none of the parties against whom the regulator has acted should be given a reprieve by the High courts.

B. Companies that come out on top of a brusing acquisition play often lose focus soon after the very act of winning making them ignore the truism about integration being far more difficult than acquisition.

C. A healthy economy and budget benefits have combined to put more money in the hands of the indi- vidual and it certainly calls for an alignment of financial objectives and strategies.

D. There is always a risk attached to switching jobs, particularly if the new job is in an emerging industry, but there is every chance that the move will prove beneficial, especially in a booming economy.

a. A, B, C b. A, B, C, D

c. C, D, A d. D, A

3.

A. The Suez Canal flows through the north of Egypt. From port said to Suez, joining Mediterranean sea to Gulf of Suez and Red sea.

B. Mont Blanc is in Alps on the border between France and Italy.

C. While we were in Mumbai, we stayed at Taj Hotel in Andheri near Juhu Beach.

D. We looked in the Hindustan Times newspaper and found there was a good film at PVR cinema near Lion Circus.

a. A Only b. B Only c. C Only d. D Only

4.

A. Legislature was closed due to bomb scare.

B. People are against the government policy.

C. Indian mobile phone market has been flourishing since 1992.

D. The Earth revolves around the sun.

a. D Only b. C Only c. A, B d. B, D

5.

A. The Prime Minister and the President are visiting the town today.

B. My friend always likes to travel by air since he is a very busy man.

C. A child needs love and affection if he is to be brought up as a healthy young man.

D. It is very difficult to get a taxi at such an hour as it is already 1 a.m.

a. A, B, C, D b. B, C

c. A, C, D d. A Only

6.

A. What kind of a fellow he is, if his enemies are to be believed.

B. Tonight I shall go to bed early because I have to leave for Kolkata at dawn tomorrow.

C. He knows how to play flute.

D. Please go and find out child so that you may not loose it forever.

a. A, B, C, D b. A Only

c. A, B d. D Only

7.

A. Dhoni brought glory to India by wining World Cup in 2011.

B. What a nice brother he is, because he take care of every small need of her sister.

C. These days only the rich can afford the treatment in good big private hospitals.

D. She lives in first storey of the house and she has to come down quite often.

a. B, C b. B only c. A, D d. C only

8.

A. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan was a more famous philospher than politician.

B. Those in a hurry should realize that speed is no key to success in life.

C. It is said that he is a wise man. He cannot err, the Vedas may err.

D. It is a pity that he does not behave normally with his classmates and teachers as well.

a. B, C, D b. A, B, C, D

c. A, B, C d. C, D

9.

A. She is wearing a black and white saree.

B. Being M.Com only he would not be appointed to the post of a lecturer.

C. Do you take a sugar and if so, how much?

D. Although he has undergone a very costly treatment, he has not been cured of a migraine.

a. A Only b. B Only c. C Only d. D Only

10.

A. Whenever I meet him he always makes mention of his wife.

B. He always takes a heavy breakfast because he generally skips lunch.

C. The swine flu is spreading like wild fire.

D. Charles Dickens was the greatest dramatist.

a. B, C, D b. A, B, D

c. C, D d. A, B, C, D