

GRAMMAR

Using articles

LEVEL

Intermediate (B1)

NUMBER

EN_B1_1062G

LANGUAGE

English

Learning outcomes

- I can provide a simple explanation of when articles should be used.
- I can construct straightforward sentences using *a/an/the* and no article.



Warm-up

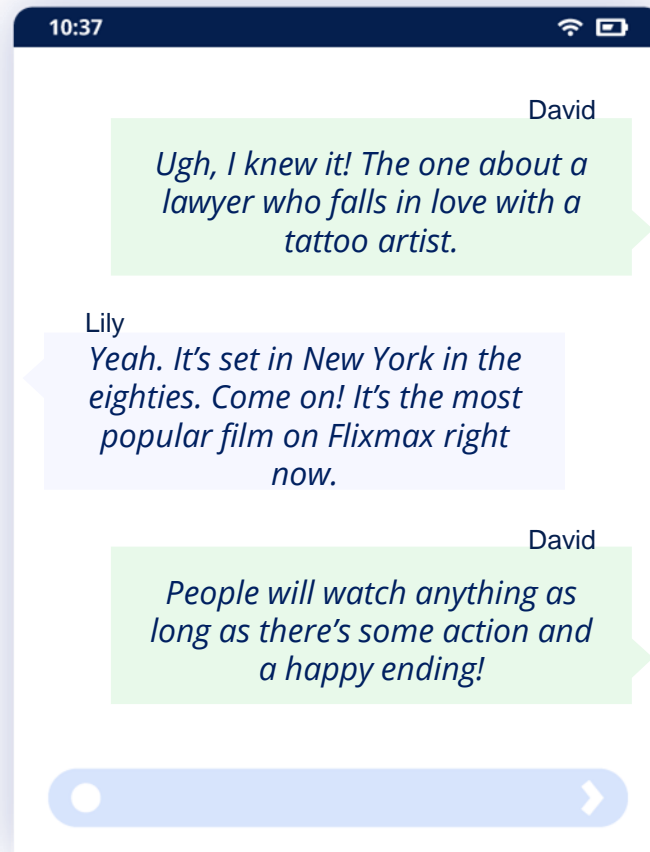
Who usually chooses what to watch in your house?



Do you ever have disagreements about what to watch?



Reading



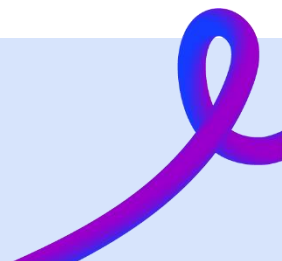
1. Why does Lily text David?
2. Do you know what the term *romcom* is short for? What is David's opinion of romcoms?



Come on! It's the most popular film on FlixMax right now.



Look at the phrase highlighted in purple. Why does Lily say this to David? What does she want?



Articles: *a/an* or *the*?

Read these quotes from Lily and David's conversation on slide 4. Answer the questions in the blue box.

Lily: Do you want to come over and watch **a film**?

David: Sure! But not **a romcom**, please!

Lily: What about **the new film on FlixMax that everyone's talking about**.

- In the first two sentences, are Lily and David referring to a **specific film**?
- **What film** is Lily referring to in the third sentence?

- We use the **indefinite article** (_____) when we are talking about an **unspecific person or thing**.
- We use the **definite article** (_____) when we are talking about a **specific person or thing**.

Further uses of the indefinite and definite article.

Read these **quotes** from the conversation on slide 4. **Answer the questions** in the blue box.



Ugh, I knew it! The one about a lawyer who falls in love with a tattoo artist...



Come on! It's the most popular film on FlixMax right now.

- We use the **indefinite article** before **jobs**. Can you identify two examples of this in the sentences above?
- We use the **definite article** for **superlatives**. Can you find an example of this in the sentences above?





Fill in the gaps

Complete the sentences with *a/an* or *the*.

- 1 I wanted _____ new sweater for Christmas but _____ one I got isn't very nice.
- 2 _____ barber shop on my street is closed because the barber is on holiday. Is there _____ barber near you I could go to instead?
- 3 My cousin is working as _____ teacher now and he loves it! He says it's _____ best job ever.
- 4 I need _____ tool to remove this plug from the kitchen wall. Where's _____ one with the red handle?
- 5 She wanted _____ diamond ring, but _____ ring he bought her had a ruby.

No article

Read these **quotes** from the text and **answer the questions** in the blue box.

Not a romcom, please! Romcoms are the worst.

People will watch anything as long as there's some action and a happy ending.

It's set in New York in the eighties.

- We use **no article** to refer to **people or things in general**. Can you find two examples in the sentences above?
- We use **no article** before **most place names**. Can you find an example in the sentences above?

Place names: definite article or no article?

Read the example sentences below and answer the question in the blue box.

They visited **the United States** last April.

Have you ever been to **the Himalayas**?

The Nile is the longest river in the world.

As you saw in the previous slide, we use **no article** before most place names. This includes **most countries, cities**, and the **continents**. Here are some examples:

Australia, China, Dublin, Europe, South America

- Can you think of some other place names that use **no article**?

In some cases, however, we use the **definite article**. This can be for **some countries** and **groups of islands**, as well as some **mountain ranges** and **rivers**

- Can you think of any other place names that use the **definite article**?



Match

Match the sentences with the rules for using *a/an*, *the* or *no article*.

1 I'm looking for **a new laptop**, mine is too old.

2 **Pets** are great friends and very good for **mental health**.

3 I lived in **Canada** for two years.

4 I'd like to be **an accountant**, as it is a well-paid job.

5 You wanted a new watch, but **the one** you got looks old.

a **no article** is used to talk about things in general.

b **an** is used before a job (that starts with a vowel sound).

c **a** is used to mention an unspecific person or thing (ie. we don't know which one).

d **the** is used for a specific person or thing.

e **no article** is used before most place names.



Discuss

Read the statement and **discuss the questions** with a partner.
You can do this activity **in breakout rooms** or **in the main classroom**.

“

**I hate romcoms. They're so boring.
I prefer action movies or thrillers
any day!**

Do you agree with this person? Give a reason for your answer.

Can you think of any specific examples of the types of movies mentioned above?

What was the last romcom, action movie or thriller that you saw?

Did you enjoy it?





Mystery film

Choose a film you really like. Message it privately in the chat to your teacher. Then describe it to your classmates without saying its name. Keep going until your classmates guess the film. Be careful with the use of articles!



I am thinking about a (horror) film.

The film is about... and there are... main characters...

The characters are...

I like the film because...



End of the lesson

Idiom

To steal the show

Meaning: to be the best or the most popular part of an event or situation



Additional practice



Choose the correct option



1 We stayed in _____ extraordinary hotel in Miami.

a. a

b. an

c. the

d. (-) no article

2 John bought a new car last week. Unfortunately, _____ car broke down after a week.

a. a

b. an

c. the

d. (-) no article

3 Yesterday's test was _____ hardest test ever!

a. a

b. an

c. the

d. (-) no article

4 _____ vegetarians do not eat meat.

a. a

b. an

c. the

d. (-) no article



Complete the sentences

Fill in the **gaps** using the options in the red box.

- 1 We finally found _____ apartment, but we don't have _____ keys yet.
- 2 _____ pet shop has _____ pretty good selection of _____ collars.
- 3 Semi works for _____ Arabian company which specialises in _____ space communications.
- 4 When I was in _____ China, I stayed in _____ hotel with walls made of _____ gold.
- 5 We only had _____ bread and butter for dinner last night.

a
an
the
(-) no article



Talk about a bad TV series

Talk about a TV series you would not recommend. Use the ideas in the box to help you. Remember the correct use of articles.



type of TV series

actors and characters

plot

reasons why you didn't like it



Yesterday was...

Talk about what you did yesterday. Pay attention to how you use articles!



What did you do yesterday?

*Well, yesterday was a _____ day.
I...*

- Type of day
- What you did
- Who you saw
- How you felt



Discuss

Which of these factors are important to you when you choose a film?
Pick one from below and explain why. Are there any other important factors that aren't mentioned here?



the director

the length of the film

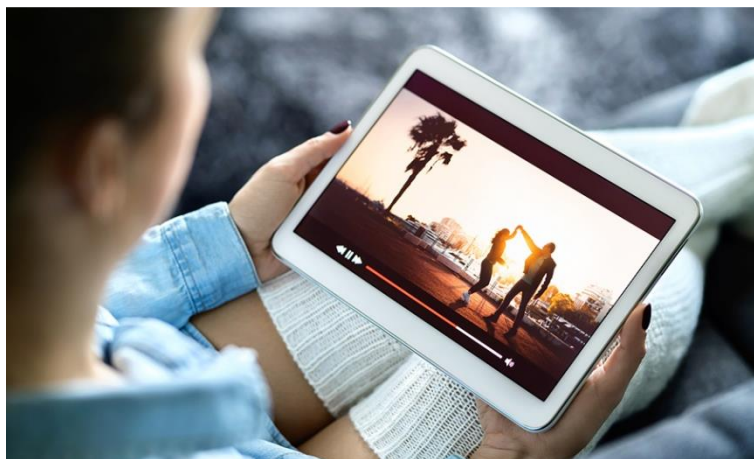
the type of film

reviews and recommendations



Discuss

What's the last thing you watched?



Would you recommend it to everyone or only to people with a specific taste? Explain.



Answer key

P.4:

1. Lily texts David to see if he wants to come over to hers and watch a movie.
2. *Romcom* is short for *romantic comedy*. David doesn't like romcoms.

P.8: 1. a; the 2. the; a 3. a; the 4. a; the 5. a; the

P.11: 1. (c) 2. (a) 3. (e) 4. (b) 5. (d)

Additional practice:

P.17: 1. (b) 2. (c) 3. (c) 4. (d)

P.18: 1: an, the 2: The, a, (-) 3: an, (-) 4: (-) a/an (-) 5: (-)



Summary

Articles:

- We use **a/an** to for unspecific people or things, as well as before jobs.
- We use **the** for specific people or things, superlatives, and for some place names.

No article:

- to speak **generally** about things or people
- before **most place names**

Real life language

- Come on!

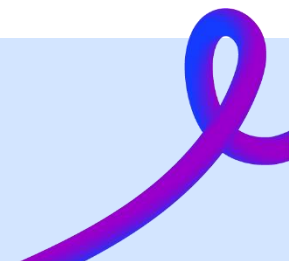


Vocabulary

Come on!

romcom

action movie





Notes

