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## Articles

Whether **a/an**, **the** or **no article** is used before a noun depends on the situation.

### a/an

**A/an** is used with **singular, countable nouns** in **non-specific** situations:

- ☀ James was a king. *James was one king out of many in history and the world.*
- ☀ The conspirators came up with a plot. *People come up with many plans. This was one of them.*
- ☀ Guy Fawkes was a traitor who planned to kill King James. *Guy Fawkes was one of many traitors and this is the first time he has been mentioned.*

### the

**The** is used when talking about a **specific** or **definite** item, place, person or situation. It is used when referring to a topic that is known to the listener and/or has already been mentioned before:

- ☀ James was a king. He was **the** King of England.
- ☀ The conspirators came up with a plot. **The** plot was to blow up Parliament.
- ☀ Guy Fawkes was **the** traitor who was caught first.

**The** is used with **plural, uncountable** and **abstract** nouns when they refer to something specific:

- ☀ **The** anger they felt towards the king was strong.
- ☀ Those are **the** traitors who planned to kill King James.
- ☀ **The** gunpowder they were using was too old.

### no article

The following types of noun are used with **no article**, in **non-specific** situations:

- |                               |                                |   |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| ☀ <b>plural nouns</b>         | <i>traitors, conspirators</i>  | • Traitors betray their own country.              |
| ☀ <b>uncountable nouns</b>    | <i>gunpowder, soup</i>         | • Gunpowder is extremely dangerous.               |
| ☀ <b>abstract nouns</b>       | <i>treason, anger, revenge</i> | • The dead man's brother wanted revenge.          |
| ☀ <b>most proper nouns</b>    | <i>Guy Fawkes, King James</i>  | • Guy Fawkes plotted to kill King James.          |
| ☀ <b>academic disciplines</b> | <i>History, Politics</i>       | • I learnt about Guy Fawkes in History at school. |

## Worksheet 3.2



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# Guy Fawkes

## Britain's Most Notorious Traitor

 Circle the correct word to complete the sentence, a/an or the.  
Circle *no article* if none is needed.

In 1603, Queen Elizabeth the First died and James the First became King of England. King James was 1) **a / the / no article** Protestant. English Catholics, who had been treated badly during Elizabeth the First's reign, hoped King James would be more tolerant of them. Unfortunately, James the First was not.

2) **A / The / no article** group of Catholic young men were angry about this and wanted 3) **a / the / no article** revenge on the King. Robert Catesby and his friends came up with 4) **a / the / no article** plot to blow up the Houses of Parliament on November 5<sup>th</sup>, 5) **a / the / no article** day King James and all 6) **a / the / no article** members would be opening Parliament. They hoped to kill the King and other important people too.

First, 7) **a / the / no article** conspirators hired the building next to the Houses of Parliament and got into 8) **a / the / no article** cellar. Next, they put 9) **a / the / no article** thirty-six barrels of gunpowder there. These barrels were to be exploded on November 5<sup>th</sup> by 10) **a / the / no article** man named Guy Fawkes.

But then 11) **a / the / no article** plot went wrong. Some of 12) **a / the / no article** conspirators became worried that innocent people would be hurt in 13) **an / the / no article** attack. One of 14) **a / the / no article** plotters wrote 15) **an / the / no article** anonymous letter to his friend, Lord Monteaule, warning him to stay away from parliament on November 5<sup>th</sup>. Subsequently, this letter was given to the King.

On November 4<sup>th</sup>, 16) **a / the / no article** King's soldiers searched 17) **a / the / no article** cellar beneath the Houses of Parliament and found Guy Fawkes and 18) **a / the / no article** thirty-six barrels of gunpowder. Not long afterwards, Guy Fawkes and 19) **an / the / no article** other conspirators were executed.

Maybe the conspirators would not have been able to blow up Parliament – it is said that 20) **a / the / no article** gunpowder they were using was too old to ignite. But 21) **a / the / no article** Guy Fawkes Night is still commemorated each year in Britain, when people burn 22) **a / the / no article** dummy of him, called a "guy", on 23) **a / the / no article** bonfire, let off 24) **a / the / no article** fireworks and eat food outdoors. To this day, UK children say 25) **a / the / no article** rhyme to remember what Guy Fawkes did:

*Remember, remember,  
The Fifth of November  
Gunpowder, treason and plot*

Worksheet 3.3



Lexicopoly 1 *a reproducible resource book for English Language teachers*  
[www.poorlittlenell.com](http://www.poorlittlenell.com)

Loads more resources on articles in Unit Five: Around Town