



# Learn English Through Stories

T Series

Upper – Intermediate

Grammar

**Adapted and modified by**

**Kulwant Singh Sandhu**

<https://learn-by-reading.co.uk>

## **Banta's New Life in Coventry by K S Sandhu**

Banta arrived in Coventry two months ago. He came to study Computer Science at the university. He really likes the city. The streets are busy. The people smile and say hello. And the campus has nice green spaces and modern buildings.

His English is still not perfect, so every Wednesday he goes to extra classes. The teacher is Mr Sandhu. This week she explained articles: a, an, the... and sometimes no article at all.

Banta listened carefully. He wrote examples in his notebook.

"I study at a university in England."

"The university has a good library."

"I drink coffee in the morning."

After class, Banta walked to the bus stop on the corner.

He looked at his phone and sighed.

"Oh no. The next bus comes in an hour again."

While he waited, his phone rang. It was his friend Karl.

"Hi, Banta!"

"Hi, Karl! Any news?"

"Yes! I found a job!"

"Wow! Really? Where?"

"At a hotel in the city centre. It's called The Regent. You know it – the big white building opposite the bus station."

"Oh yes, I know the hotel. Congratulations! What do you do there?"

"I work at reception. I meet people from all over the world. It's good practice for my English... and the money is okay."

Banta smiled. "That's perfect for you."

Then he asked, "How is Maria? I haven't seen her for a long time." Karl's voice became quieter.

"She was in hospital last month. She had an operation."

"Oh no! Was the operation serious?"

"No, don't worry. It was her appendix. The doctors were very good. She's home now, and she feels much better."

"I'm so glad. Health is the most important thing, isn't it?"

“Yes. It was a big shock when she suddenly felt pain. But everything is fine now. The doctor she sees is really kind.”

Banta saw his bus coming.

“Karl, the bus is here. I have to go. Shall we meet soon? Maybe at the coffee shop near the university?”

“Yes, good idea. See you soon!”

Banta got on the bus and sat near the window.

He looked out at Coventry: the old cathedral with its broken walls, the modern shops, the students walking with their laptops.

He felt happy. Every day he studied programming. He made new friends from many countries. And slowly, his English was getting better.

When he reached his student flat, he opened his laptop to do some coding.

But first, he wrote one more note in his book:

Today I used articles correctly when I spoke:

- a job (first time we talk about it)
- the job (now we both know which one)
- a hotel (one of many)
- The Regent (it’s the name)
- the bus station (we both know the place)
- health (general – no article)

Banta smiled to himself.

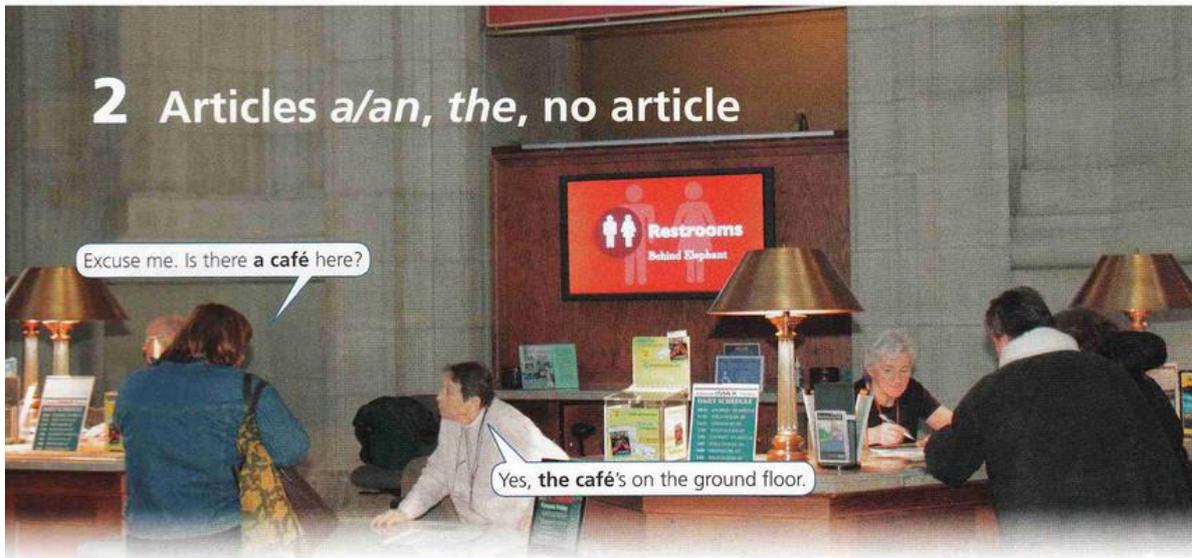
“Maybe one day my English will be as good as the teachers’,” he thought.

Outside, the sun was going down over the city.

Banta closed his notebook.

He felt excited about his new life here... studying, learning, and building a future.

## 2 Articles *a/an, the*, no article



### 1 *a* or *an*? *the* /ə/ or *the* /i:/?

*A, an* and *the* are **articles**. We use *a* before consonant sounds (*b, d, k, t, s*, etc.):

*a café, a tourist, a museum*

- AND before *u* or *eu* when they sound like /j/ (as in *you*): *a uniform, a European city*

We use *an* before vowel sounds (*a, e, i, o, u*): *an interesting book, an unusual job*

- AND before words that begin with a silent *h*: *an hour* /ən aʊə/

We pronounce *the* with /ə/ before consonant sounds: *the book, the tourist*

Before vowel sounds we pronounce *the* with /i:/: *the art gallery, the English teacher*

#### Pronunciation ► 1.03

### 2 General or particular meaning?

We use *a/an* or no article when we are talking about things in general:

<i>a/an</i> + SINGULAR NOUN	no article + PLURAL NOUN	no article + UNCOUNTABLE NOUN
<i>Is there a café here?</i> (any kind of café)	<i>Sandwiches aren't expensive.</i> (sandwiches in general, all sandwiches)	<i>I don't like music.</i> (music in general, all music)

We use *the* to talk about something particular:

<i>the</i> + SINGULAR NOUN	<i>the</i> + PLURAL NOUN	<i>the</i> + UNCOUNTABLE NOUN
<i>Yes, the café's on the ground floor.</i> (there is only one café here)	<i>Did you get the sandwiches?</i> (we know which sandwiches)	<i>I don't like the music on that CD.</i> (only the music on the CD, not music in general)

 We don't use *the* when we are talking about things in general:

~~*Is there the cash machine near here?*~~ ✓ *Is there a cash machine near here?*

~~*I prefer the films to the books.*~~ ✓ *I prefer films to books.*

### 3 New information or known information?

We use *a/an* or no article when we mention something for the first time.

We use *the* when we mention it again:

*I've just bought a new suit. It's the grey suit we saw in the shop window last week.*

*'Carla asked her teacher for advice.' 'Really? Was the advice useful?'*

*'Have they filled in entry forms?' 'Yes, I've got the forms here.'*

We use *the* when the listener knows which particular person or thing the speaker is talking about:

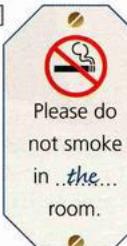
*It was a great holiday. Have you seen the photos yet?* (the photos of the holiday)

## Practice

### 1 Complete the sentences with *a* or *an*. 2.04 Listen and check.

- 0 My teacher went to *an* American university. It's quite *a* famous one, I think.  
 1 Excuse me, Dr Taylor. There's ..... urgent message for you. It's from ..... patient.  
 2 There's ..... bus stop on the corner. But you'll have to wait ..... hour for the next bus.  
 3 She's got ..... young son. He has ..... unusual name.  
 4 My parents have ..... elderly friend who owns ..... small cottage by the sea.  
 5 Detectives don't wear ..... uniform. But they always carry ..... badge.  
 6 We can find you ..... European holiday at ..... excellent price.

### 2 Complete the notices with *a*, *an*, *the* or – (no article).

<p>0</p>  <p>Please do not smoke in <i>the</i> room.</p>	<p>1</p>  <p>We do not accept ..... credit cards for items under £10.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>If you have ..... <b>complaint</b>, please <b>contact</b> reception.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>WE REGRET THAT ..... OFFICE IS CLOSED UNTIL 2.00 P.M.</p>	<p>4</p>  <p>There is ..... life-jacket under the seat in front of you.</p>
<p>5</p>  <p><b>Do not bring</b> ..... <b>food into this area.</b></p>	<p>6</p> <p>Please note there are ..... <b>extra pillows in the cupboard.</b></p>	<p>7</p>  <p>Visitors may park in ..... car park at the back of the hotel.</p>	<p>8</p> <p><b>Please do not take hotel towels to</b> ..... <b>swimming pool.</b></p>	

### 3 GRAMMAR IN USE Find nine more mistakes in the conversation and correct them. 2.05 Listen and check.

- JENNY Hello, Karl. How are ~~the~~ things? Have you found <sup>a</sup> job yet?  
 KARL Hi, Jenny. Yes, I have.  
 JENNY Great! Is a job near here?  
 KARL Yes. It's at a hotel in a city centre.  
 JENNY That's very convenient. Which hotel is it?  
 KARL It's hotel opposite bus station: The Regent.  
 JENNY Oh, yes. I know it. By the way, how is Maria?  
 KARL She's OK now, but she's been quite sick. She had operation last month.  
 JENNY Oh dear. Was an operation serious?  
 KARL No, don't worry – nothing serious. She's better now.  
 JENNY I'm glad to hear it – the health is so important, isn't it?  
 KARL Yes. It was shock when she became ill.  
 JENNY I can imagine. Has she got the good doctor?  
 KARL Yes. The doctor's very helpful.

## Answers

### UNIT 2

**1** 1 an ... a 2 a ... an 3 a ... an 4 an ... a  
5 a ... a 6 a ... an

**2** 1 – 2 a 3 the 4 a 5 – 6 – 7 the 8 the

**3** JENNY Hello, Karl. How are ~~the~~ things? Have you found <sup>a</sup> job yet?

KARL Hi, Jenny. Yes, I have.

JENNY Great! Is ~~a~~ the job near here?

KARL Yes. It's at a hotel in ~~a~~ the city centre.

JENNY That's very convenient. Which hotel is it?

KARL It's the hotel opposite the bus station: The Regent.

JENNY Oh, yes. I know it. By the way, how is Maria?

KARL She's OK now, but she's been quite sick. She had an operation last month.

JENNY Oh, dear. Was ~~an~~ the operation serious?

KARL No, don't worry – nothing serious. She's better now.

JENNY I'm glad to hear it – ~~the~~ health is so important, isn't it?

KARL Yes. It was a shock when she became ill.

JENNY I can imagine. Has she got ~~the~~ a good doctor?

KARL Yes. The doctor's very helpful.