

What are French Articles?

Worksheet

French has three article types: definite (le, la, les — 'the'), indefinite (un, une, des — 'a/an/some'), and partitive (du, de la, des — 'some' for uncountables). Choice depends on whether the noun is known, new, or countable.

Questions

1. Choose the correct article: 'Je prends ____ café au matin.'

- A) du
- B) un
- C) le
- D) de la

2. Correct article: '____ chats que j'ai vu sont noirs.'

- A) Des
- B) Les
- C) Un
- D) Du

3. Article for uncountable nouns?

- A) Definite only
- B) Indefinite only
- C) Partitive (du, de la, des)
- D) No article needed

4. Before vowel sounds, what happens?

- A) The article becomes plural
- B) The article elides (l'arbre, de l'eau)
- C) Gender changes
- D) The article disappears

5. Fill in the blanks: 'Je vois ____ (le/un) chat noir sur ____ (la/une) table.'

6. Fill in: 'Je prends ____ (du/le) café et ____ (de la/la) confiture au petit déjeuner.'

7. Translate: 'I need a pen and some paper to write the letter.'

8. Define: When do you use the definite article (le, la, les)?

9. Define: When do you use the indefinite article (un, une, des)?

10. Define: What is the partitive article?

Answer Key

1. A) du — 'Café' is uncountable and expressing quantity (some coffee). Use partitive: du.
2. B) Les — Specific, known cats (previously mentioned). Use definite plural: les.
3. C) Partitive (du, de la, des) — Partitive articles express an unspecified quantity of uncountable nouns (du vin, de la eau).
4. B) The article elides (l'arbre, de l'eau) — Definite/partitive articles drop the final vowel before a vowel: l'arbre, l'eau, de l'or.
5. First blank: 'le chat noir' means 'the black cat' — a specific, known cat. Use definite article: le
Second blank: 'la table' means 'the table' — also specific and known. Use definite article: la
Answer: Je vois le chat noir sur la table.
6. First blank: 'café' is uncountable — asking for some coffee, not all coffee. Use partitive: du
Second blank: 'confiture' (jam) is also a quantity (some jam). Use partitive: de la Answer: Je prends du café et de la confiture au petit déjeuner.
7. a pen = un stylo (indefinite, new object) some paper = du papier (partitive, quantity) the letter = la lettre (definite, specific known letter) Answer: J'ai besoin d'un stylo et du papier pour écrire la lettre.
8. For specific, known, or previously mentioned nouns. Example: 'Le chat que je vois' (The cat I see — specific cat).
9. For new, unknown, or general nouns. Example: 'Un homme arrive' (A man arrives — we don't know which man).
10. du, de la, des — used for uncountable nouns or quantities. Example: 'du vin' (some wine), 'de la eau' → 'de l'eau' (some water).

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