ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Articles (A, An, The) MCQ Test With Answers + PDF Exercise 1

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Explanations

1. On _____ bright January morning, _____ telephone kept ringing in my office.
✔ **B) a / the**
Use **a** with a singular noun mentioned for the first time: **a bright January morning** is one morning among many. Use **the** for **telephone** because it is the specific telephone in my office.

2. On _____ first day, they stopped at _____ river and decided to make _____ camp.
✔ **A) the / a / a**
Ordinal numbers like **first** take **the**: **the first day**. **A river** is mentioned for the first time, and **make a camp** means set up one camp (**make camp** without an article is also common). Not **an river**, because **river** begins with a consonant sound.

3. At _____ first they began to look for _____ dry place.
✔ **B) _____ / a**
At first is a fixed phrase with no article; it means 'in the beginning'. **A dry place** means any dry place, not a particular one. Not **at the first**, which is not used in this meaning.

4. To climb _____ tree is not to climb _____ mountain.
✔ **A) a / a**
This is a general statement, so we use **a** with singular countable nouns: **a tree**, **a mountain** mean any tree, any mountain.

5. Where there's _____ will, there's _____ way.
✔ **A) a / a**
This is a fixed proverb: **Where there's a will, there's a way**. It means that if you really want to do something, you will find a way to do it.

6. _____ man always went to _____ same bar at _____ same time every day and asked for two glasses of _____ soda.
✔ **A) A / the / the / _____**
A man is mentioned for the first time. **Same** always takes **the**: **the same bar**, **the same time**. **Soda** is uncountable here (a drink in general), so no article: **two glasses of soda**.

7. _____ weather was rainy and we made _____ bet on whether you would come.
✔ **A) The / a**
We say **the weather** when talking about the weather at a particular time. **Make a bet** is a fixed phrase with **a**. Not **a weather**, because **weather** is uncountable.

8. - Are you afraid of _____ him?

- Not _____ bit.
✔ **B) _____ / a**
Pronouns like **him** never take an article. **Not a bit** is a fixed phrase meaning 'not at all'.

9. _____ USA is _____ country. It is in North America.
✔ **B) the / a**
Country names with words like **States** or **Kingdom** take **the**: **the USA**. **A country** is used because the USA is one country among many.

10. If _____ guest has to leave _____ table during _____ meal, he always asks his hostess, "Will you please excuse me for _____ minute?"
✔ **A) a / the / a / a**
A guest and **a meal** mean any guest and any meal (a general rule). **Leave the table** is the usual phrase for the dining table everyone is sitting at. **For a minute** is a fixed phrase meaning 'for a short time'.

11. _____ most popular summer game in England is cricket, which is called by _____ English "_____ greatest game in _____ world".
✔ **A) The / the / the / the**
Superlatives take **the**: **the most popular**, **the greatest**. **The English** means the English people as a group (**the** + nationality adjective). **The world** is unique, so it also takes **the**. Not **an English**, because a nationality adjective used for the whole people takes **the**, never **a/an**.

12. In his childhood he lived with _____ family of his grandfather, _____ poor tailor.
✔ **C) the / a**
The family of his grandfather is a specific family, made clear by **of his grandfather**, so we use **the**. **A poor tailor** tells us his job; jobs take **a/an**: **He was a tailor**.

13. _____ night being sharp and frosty, we trembled from _____ head to _____ foot.
✔ **B) the / _____ / _____**
The night is the specific night of the story. **From head to foot** is a fixed phrase with no articles, meaning 'all over the body'.

14. My _____ friend likes to listen to _____ good story.
✔ **D) _____ / a**
After a possessive like **my**, we never use an article: **my friend**, not **my a friend**. **A good story** means any good story.

15. She didn't like her new neighbour. _____ idea of helping _____ man was unpleasant in itself.
✔ **B) the / the**
The idea of helping … is a specific idea, defined by the **of**-phrase. **The man** refers back to the neighbour already mentioned. Not **a man**, because we already know which man.

16. When I lived in Paris some years ago I used to buy _____ copy of Le Monde every evening at _____ same local newspaper kiosk.
✔ **B) a / the**
A copy means one copy of the newspaper (any copy). **Same** always takes **the**: **the same kiosk**.

17. _____ death of her husband resulted in _____ loss of her home also.
✔ **C) the / the**
Nouns followed by an **of**-phrase that makes them specific take **the**: **the death of her husband**, **the loss of her home**.

18. Peter is on _____ night duty. When I go to _____ bed, he goes to _____ work.
✔ **B) _____ / _____ / _____**
These are fixed phrases with no article: **on night duty**, **go to bed**, **go to work**. Not **go to the bed**, which would mean going to the piece of furniture, not going to sleep.

19. R. Peary was _____ famous American polar explorer. He claimed to be _____ first to reach _____ North Pole, in 1909.
✔ **A) a / the / the**
A famous explorer describes him as one of many explorers. **The first** is an ordinal, so it takes **the**. **The North Pole** is unique, so it also takes **the**.

20. He likes to have _____ rest in _____ country.
✔ **E) a / the**
Have a rest is a fixed phrase with **a**. **In the country** means in the countryside, outside towns, and it takes **the**. Not **in country**, which is not used in this meaning.

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