

the Writing Centers at Saint Mary's

Winona and Minneapolis

Grammar and Punctuation: Articles

Articles (or determiners) are used before nouns for clarity.

“**The**” is a definite article and refers to a particular item:

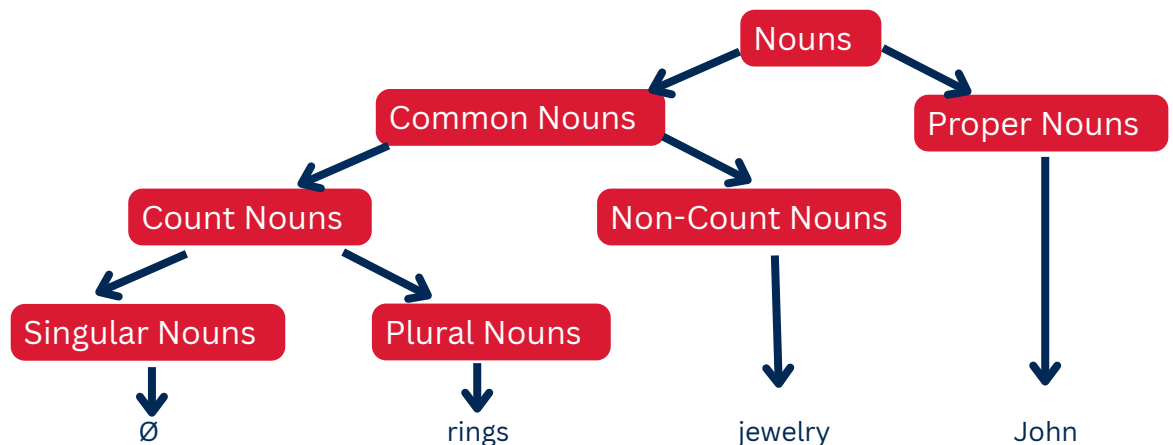
The studies, however, illustrated several health risks associated with artificial sweeteners (Dalton & Fool, 2010).

“The” refers to specific studies that are cited here.

“**A/an**” is an indefinite article and refers to any item within a group of possible items:

A study needs to be done on the effects of artificial sweeteners on adolescents.

“A” refers to any study that might be done in the future on this topic.



Any kind of this item

a ring

some rings

some jewelry

∅

One particular item

the ring

the rings

the jewelry

∅

With “this,” “that,” etc.

this/that ring

these/those rings

this/that jewelry

∅

With a number

one ring

three rings

∅

∅

With a pronoun

your/my ring

your/my rings

your/my jewelry

∅

With “a lot” or “lots”

∅

a lot of rings

a lot of jewelry

∅

With “many,” “much,” etc.

∅

many/a few rings

much/a little jewelry

∅