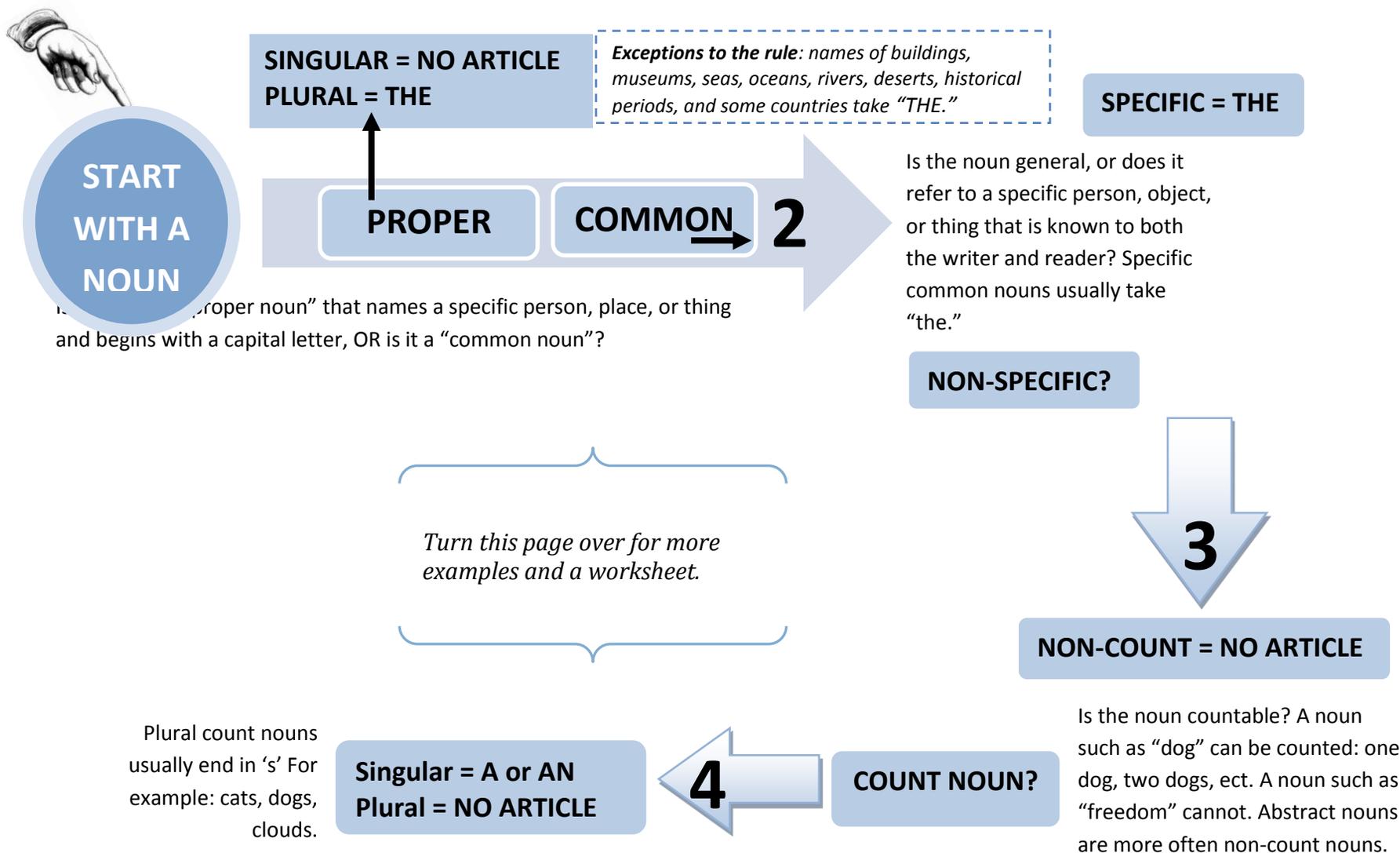


Articles and Nouns: Flow Chart



1 This chart was abridged by Tusa Shea from Ann Raimés and Sarah Norton, *Keys for Writers*, First Canadian Edition (Scarborough, Ontario: International Thomson Publishing, 1998), 300-304. The CAC (formerly TWC), University of Victoria, 2012. This copy is made solely for the use by a student, staff member, or faculty member for private study. Any other use may be an infringement of copyright if done without securing the permission of the TWC at UVic.

EXAMPLES

1. **PROPER NOUNS** name a specific person, place, or thing and begin with a capital letter. They do not take an article. For example: Abraham Lincoln, New York City, etc.

You wouldn't say: We took a vacation to **the** New York City.

*Exceptions to this rule include names of buildings, museums, seas, oceans, rivers, deserts, historical periods, and some countries, for example: the United States, the neoclassical period, the Getty Museum.

1. **COMMON NOUNS** do not begin with a capital letter: cup, dog, computer, bus, essay, ect. Common nouns are either specific or non-specific.
2. **SPECIFIC COMMON NOUNS** take the article "the."

You would say: **The** cup in your hand is too full.

3. **NON-SPECIFIC COMMON NOUNS** use the article "a or an" or they take no article, depending on whether they are count or non-count.
4. **NON-SPECIFIC COMMON NON-COUNT NOUNS** are usually abstract nouns such as boredom, freedom, fear, etc. They cannot be counted and are rarely pluralized. Non-count nouns do not take an article.

You wouldn't say: I was suffering from **the** boredom.

You wouldn't say: I had a lot of **a** freedom as a child.

But you would say: I was motivated by fear.

5. **NON-SPECIFIC COMMON COUNT NOUNS** are either singular or plural. If a non-specific count noun is singular it takes "a or an." If it is plural, it takes no article.

You would say: I saw **a** dog at the park.

You wouldn't say: I saw **a** dogs at the park.

But you would say: I saw dogs at the park.

PRACTICE

Circle all the incorrect uses of articles:

1. During my trip to the Spain, I never experienced a boredom.
2. A computer is a useful tool. The one I have is fairly new.
3. There are many great works of the art at Museum of Modern Art in New York.
4. Bus left early and I experienced the anger.
5. My sister bought the new house, but she regretted it when she found out that a basement flooded every winter.

Fill in the articles:

1. My cat follows me everywhere; she acts more like ___ dog.
2. I have ___ fear of spiders.
3. Please don't feed ___ monkeys.
4. We took a tour of ___ legislature.

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