

- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. She is studying to be an actress in films.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. My neighbor was arrested for throwing rocks through windows.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. We have machinery that prints ten pages each minute.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Teacher has many students during a semester.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Can you heat water for tea?

**SKILL 53: DISTINGUISH A AND AN**

The basic difference between *a* and *an* is that *a* is used in front of consonants and *an* is used in front of vowels (*a, e, i, o, u*):

- |               |                      |
|---------------|----------------------|
| <i>a book</i> | <i>an orange</i>     |
| <i>a man</i>  | <i>an illness</i>    |
| <i>a page</i> | <i>an automobile</i> |

There are two exceptions to this rule: *u* and *h*. When *u* is pronounced like the consonant *y* (as in *usual*), it is preceded by the article *a* rather than *an*. When *h* is not pronounced (as in *honor*), it is preceded by the article *an* rather than *a*. Pronounce the following examples:

- |                     |                         |                   |                 |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| <i>a university</i> | <i>an unhappy man</i>   | <i>a hospital</i> | <i>an honor</i> |
| <i>a unit</i>       | <i>an understanding</i> | <i>a heart</i>    | <i>an herb</i>  |

The following chart outlines the key information about the use of *a* and *an*:

A AND AN	
A	<i>A</i> is used in front of a singular noun with a <i>consonant</i> sound.
AN	<i>An</i> is used in front of a singular noun with a <i>vowel</i> sound.
Be careful of nouns beginning with <i>H</i> or <i>U</i> . They may have a vowel or a consonant sound.	

**EXERCISE 53:** Each of the following sentences contains *a* or *an*. Circle each *a* or *an*. Underline the beginning of the word that directly follows. Pronounce the word. Then indicate if the sentences are correct (C) or incorrect (I).

- I 1. The dishwasher quit his job because he was making only four dollars (a) hour.
- C 2. It was (an) unexpected disappointment to receive (a) rejection letter from the university.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. It is raining, so you should bring a umbrella.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. He bought a half gallon of milk and a box of a hundred envelopes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. An objection was raised because it was such a unacceptable idea.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The workers at the plant do not belong to a union.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The police officer was not wearing an uniform when she arrested the suspect.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. If you do not give me a hand, finishing the project on time will be an impossibility.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. She was upset when a honest mistake was made.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. She opened a account at a local department store.

### SKILL 54: MAKE ARTICLES AGREE WITH NOUNS

The definite article (*the*) is used for both singular and plural nouns, so agreement is not a problem with the definite article. However, because the use of the indefinite article is different for singular and plural nouns, you must be careful of agreement between the indefinite article and the noun. One very common agreement error is to use the singular indefinite article (*a* or *an*) with a plural noun.

He saw *a\** new *movies*.

They traveled to *a\** nearby *mountains*.

Do you have *another\** *books*?

In these examples, you should not have *a* or *an* because the nouns are plural. The following sentences are possible corrections of the sentences above.

He saw a new movie. (singular)

He saw new movies. (plural)

They traveled to a nearby mountain. (singular)

They traveled to nearby mountains. (plural)

Do you have another book? (singular)

Do you have other books? (plural)

The following chart states the key point for you to remember about the agreement of articles with nouns:

<b>AGREEMENT OF ARTICLES WITH NOUNS</b>
You should never use <i>a</i> or <i>an</i> with a plural noun.

**EXERCISE 54:** Each of the following sentences contains *a* or *an*. Circle each *a* or *an*. Draw an arrow to the noun it describes. Then indicate if the sentences are correct (C) or incorrect (I).

  C   1. She went to school in (a) local community.

  I   2. The doctor used (an) other pills.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. It is necessary to have a farm or land of your own.

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. He must contact a members of the club.