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Definite/Indefinite Article Materials

ROBERTSON, D. A., GERNSBACHER, M. A., GUIDOTTI, S. J., ROBERTSON, R. W. R., IRWIN, W., MOCK, B. J., & CAMPANA, M. E. (2000). Functional neuroanatomy of the cognitive process of mapping during discourse comprehension. *Psychological Science*, 11, 255-260 [[View PDF](#)]

Instructions

In this experiment, we are investigating how people comprehend language. This experiment is NOT a test of your intelligence or your personality. In this experiment you will be using the key labeled "ADVANCE" that is located on the keypad in front of you. Please locate that key now.

When pressing the "ADVANCE" key it is very important that you only press it when you are told to. Also, do not hold it down or press it more than once. The key acts just like a key on a keyboard. We want you to use only ONE HAND to press the key labeled "ADVANCE." That hand should be THE HAND THAT YOU NORMALLY WRITE WITH. On that hand, please use only your pointer finger to press the key throughout the entire experiment. YOU MUST BE SURE AND USE ONLY THAT FINGER.

In this experiment, we are going to present to you several sets of sentences. Each set will appear one sentence at a time in the center of this screen. At the beginning of each set, you will see the word "READY?." When you are ready to begin reading the set of sentences, press the key labeled "ADVANCE." Immediately after you press the "ADVANCE" key, the word "READY?" will disappear, and the first sentence of the set will appear.

Press "ADVANCE" when you have finished reading the first sentence, and the next one will appear. So, to read each sentence all you have to do is to press the key labeled "ADVANCE." However, it's very important that you don't press the key labeled "ADVANCE" to go on to the next sentence until you have fully understood the sentence you were just reading. That is, read each sentence as well as you can.

After you have read each set of sentences, you will see the words "Please write in your packet as much as you can remember from the last set of sentences." When you see these words try to write down as much as you can remember.

The more you can remember the better. If you can't remember all the sentences or all the words in a sentence, write down as much as you can. When you are finished writing, press the key labeled "ADVANCE" and you will be presented with the next set of sentences.

Let's try a practice story. Remember, when you see the word "READY," prepare to read the first sentence of the set. When you are ready, press the "ADVANCE" key. Then, read each sentence that is presented to you carefully, pressing the "ADVANCE" key after you have read each sentence. After all of the sentences in one set, you will be asked to write down as much about that set of sentences as you can remember.

For the practice set please use the top page of the packet that is on the clipboard to write down as much as you can remember. When you are finished writing, press the key labeled "ADVANCE" to continue.

Practice Set 1:

Definite

The hospital was near the river.
The day was sunny and warm.
The sister walked into the nursery.
The room was neat and clean.
The mother was resting.
The women greeted each other.
The husband left to get the car.
The mother held her child.
The man stopped to buy candy in the shop.
The clerk was stocking the shelves.
The aunt walked to the main door.
The baby could be heard down the hall.
The father ran through the parking lot.
The man was eager to get home.
The baby was sleeping.
The women waited with the child.
The husband drove up to the entrance.

Indefinite

A hospital was near a river.
A day was sunny and warm.
A sister walked into a nursery.
A room was neat and clean.
A mother was resting.
Some women greeted each other.
A husband left to get a car.
A mother held a child.
A man stopped to buy candy in a shop.
A clerk was stocking some shelves.
An aunt walked to the main door.
A baby could be heard down a hall.
A father ran through the parking lot.
A man was eager to get home.
A baby was sleeping.
Some women waited with a child.
A husband drove up to an entrance.

Good. Now you know how to do this task, and in just a minute we will start the experiment. But first please look through your packet.

You'll see we have given you several pages. There are numbers listed along the left side of each page, and they correspond to the sets of sentences. When you are asked to write down all that you can remember about a particular set of sentences, please write it under the corresponding number. So after you have read the first sentence set, write down all that you can remember about it under the number "1." After you read the second sentence set, write all that you can remember about it under the number "2." Continue in this way until you have written all that you can remember about the tenth sentence set.

Now, we need to find out if you want to continue to participate in the experiment (we hope that you do!). If you want to participate, we need you to sign the statement of informed consent that is on the SECOND page of the packet on your clipboard. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask the experimenter now.

Story Sets:

1. *Definite*

The woman drove quickly to the terminal.
The girlfriend hoped to say good-bye.
The college student was sitting in the lounge.
At a nearby table, the waitress took an order.
The student had been waiting for an hour.
The man looked impatiently at his watch.
The airport was crowded with holiday travelers.
The announcer called over the loudspeaker.

The man was getting anxious.
The woman entered the bar.
The couple ordered their drinks.
The discussion lasted for several minutes.
The flight was taking boarders.
The woman paid the bill.
The student stood in line to board the plane.
The man waved good-bye.

Indefinite

A woman drove quickly to a terminal.
A girlfriend hoped to say good-bye.
A college student was sitting in a lounge.
At a nearby table, a waitress took an order.
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A couple ordered their drinks.
A discussion lasted for several minutes.
A flight was taking boarders.
A woman paid a bill.
A student stood in line to board the plane.
A man waved good-bye.

2. ***Definite***

The siblings were happy to be together. The road was icy and slick.
The family stopped to rest.
The cafe was almost deserted.
The waitress took the order.
The driver left to get gas.
The man slipped and fell in the parking lot.
The sister watched through the window.
The gas station was nearby.
The attendant rushed out of the building.
The stranger helped the brother.
The man walked slowly.
The group stayed for the night.
The trip was postponed.

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A group stayed for a night.
A trip was postponed.

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Definite

The big party was scheduled for tonight.
The woman hoped to speak with the foreign ambassador.
The husband couldn't decide what to wear.
The couple drove to the mall.
The day was very rainy.
The man bought new shoes.
The couple was surprised to see the hostess at the mall.
The woman was very nervous about the party.
The caterer had walked off the job.
The woman offered to help.
The friends drove to the mansion.
The house was a mess.
The husband shopped for groceries.
The women worked frantically.
The guests were impressed with the visitor.
The evening was a success.

Indefinite

A big party was scheduled for tonight.
A woman hoped to speak with a foreign ambassador.
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Some guests were impressed with a visitor.
An evening was a success.

4ž

Definite

The sleek racehorse pranced by on the track.
The young girl squeezed her father's hand.

The man was waiting in line.
The child wanted some peanuts.
The father didn't want to step out of line.
The race was about to begin.
The father gave the girl some change.
The child ran to the concession stand.
The horse was a long shot.
The teller took the money.
The man held his ticket tightly.
The booth closed.
The horses rounded the corner.
The man yelled at the top of his voice.
The horse led the pack.
The daughter jumped up and down.
The event was remembered for several years.

Indefinite

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The woman waited nervously.
The performer stepped out on the stage.
The critic wrote favorable comments in the newspaper.

Indefinite

A singer picked up her music.
A man drove up to the front of a house.
A woman picked up her coat.
A chauffeur turned onto an interstate.
A stadium was lit up.
A line of people curved around a building.
A teenager waited impatiently.
A girl spotted a star in a limo.
A teenager alerted her friends.
A crowd went crazy.
A guard rushed a performer inside.
A singer looked in a mirror.
A woman waited nervously.
A performer stepped out on a stage.
A critic wrote favorable comments in a newspaper.

5.

Definite

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The teenager alerted her friends.
The crowd went crazy.
The guard rushed the performer inside.
The singer looked in the mirror.

Instructions Part 2

You have now completed the first part of this experiment. The second part is much like the first. Again, please press the "ADVANCE" key when you have finished reading each sentence. Be sure to read each sentence carefully before moving on, because you will again be asked to write down everything that you remember about each set on the packet provided. Let's begin with another practice set.

Practice Set 2:

Definite

The rooster stood on a fence and crowed.
The sausage sizzled and popped.
The farmer collected some new eggs from the chicken coop.
The truck's wheels spun on a gravel road.
The son rounded a familiar bend in a road.
The long drive was almost over.
The man walked in to a house.
The wife turned some bacon over.
The table was almost set.
The truck pulled up in a driveway.
The farmer sat down at a table.
The boy walked in and embraced his parents.
The family had breakfast together.
The son was happy to be home.

Indefinite

A rooster stood on a fence and crowed.
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A table was almost set.
A truck pulled up in a driveway.
A farmer sat down at a table.
A boy walked in and embraced his parents.
A family had breakfast together.
A son was happy to be home.

Good. We hope you are excited to begin part 2! When you are ready, press the "ADVANCE" key.

Story Sets (Cont'd):

6. *Definite*

The store contained a row of cages.
The man bought a dog.
The child wanted the animal.
The father drove to his house.
The cottage stood near the park.
The boy was delighted with the gift.
The twosome went exploring in the woods.
The dog chased a rabbit down the hill.
The boy shot his slingshot.
The stone crashed through the window of the cottage.
His aunt was visiting with the family.
The woman urged the mother to punish her son.
The dog was lost for a week.
The whole neighborhood heard about the incident.
The child was teased by his playmates.

Indefinite

A store contained a row of cages.
A man bought a dog.
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An aunt was visiting with a family.
A woman urged a mother to punish her son.
A dog was lost for a week.
A whole neighborhood heard about an incident.
A child was teased by his playmates.

7. **Definite**

The man gave the lottery numbers to the wife.
The woman left to go to the store.
The husband crossed his fingers and hoped.
The wife stopped at the post office.
The line was very long.
The meter maid noticed the car was in a tow-away zone.
The wife chatted with the young mother near her.
The baby was crying.
People watched the truck driver hook up the car.
The women walked out together.
The wife was shocked to see her car was gone.
The mother offered a ride.
The husband waited at the door.
The man had chosen the winning numbers.
The woman forgot to go to the supermarket.
The couple lost their chance.

Indefinite

A man gave some lottery numbers to a wife.
A woman left to go to a store.
A husband crossed his fingers and hoped.
A wife stopped at a post office.
A line was very long.
A meter maid noticed a car was in a tow-away zone.
A wife chatted with a young mother near her.
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A man had chosen some winning numbers.
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A couple lost their chance.

8. **Definite**

The office was filled with books.
The instructor was engrossed in an article.
The clock chimed the hour.
The class sat silently.
The janitor was mopping the floor.
The man whistled tunelessly.
The teacher rushed down the hall.
The woman walked into the bookstore.

The student looked for something caffeinated.
The assistant sharpened the pencils.
The woman yawned and drank her coffee.
The man tripped into the lecture hall.
The assistant passed by the room.
The students were laughing.
The instructor administered the test.
The room was filled with silence.

Indefinite

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9. **Definite**

The work place was decorated with red and green.
The workers rushed around the office.
The radio announcer forecasted snow.
The clock struck twelve.
The delivery person drove to the office building.
The man put the sandwiches on the table.
The vendor put the tip in his pocket
The employees threw their wrappings in the trash can.
The supervisor went to the bank.
The man slid the money through the small opening.
The teller stamped the piece of paper.
The supervisor walked into the work place.
The workers stood in line to receive their paychecks.
The employees looked forward to Christmas vacation.

Indefinite

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Some workers stood in line to receive their paychecks.
Some employees were looking forward to Christmas vacation.

A man wanted coffee.
A car took a long time to start.
A store's parking lot was crowded.
Some women couldn't find the ice cream aisle.
A clerk was helpful.
Some friends split the cost.
A dog barked at a door.
Some women petted a dog as they entered.
A student misspelled a word.
A guy was frustrated with his progress.
A man stopped to drink his coffee.

10. ***Definite***

The roommates were watching television.
The movie was very boring.
The friend knocked on the door.
The man was hoping to borrow the typewriter.
The friend replaced the ribbon cartridge.
The women were hungry for something sweet.
The man wanted coffee.
The car took a long time to start.
The store's parking lot was crowded.
The women couldn't find the ice cream aisle.
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