

EXERCISE 3 ARTICLES: A, AN, THE, AND ZERO ARTICLE

GRAMMAR NOTES 1-5 Complete the paragraph. Circle the correct articles (Ø = zero article).

We are losing many species, and a major contributor to the loss of species is pollution.

One of a / the / Ø most serious causes of pollution is plastics. Did you know that a / the / Ø plastics represent about 10 percent of all pollution on a / the / Ø earth today?

How can a / the / Ø product that is so essential to the lifestyle of a / the / Ø twenty-first century also be one of a / the / Ø worst polluters? Obviously, the answer is complex, but we can begin by noting that plastic is everywhere. It's in landfills; it's on city streets; it's in forests; it's in lakes and oceans.

Consider the following facts about products made with plastic. One of the most polluting plastic products is a / the / Ø disposable diaper. It requires about 450 years to biodegrade. Fishing line takes about 600 years. It was originally thought that plastics in a / the / Ø ocean would take a / an / the extremely long time to decay, but researchers have recently discovered that water currents make plastic degrade faster. However, the vast increase in the amount of plastic reaching the ocean makes a / the / Ø process slower.

When plastic products do decay in the ocean, the chemicals in them gradually enter the water and can sicken animals like birds, whales, and sea turtles, which eat them. A / The / Ø whale, for example, might eat pieces of plastic and become ill or even die. A / The / Ø seagull might get tangled in fishing line. Even more seriously, a / the / Ø large netting, which of course contains plastic, captures larger animals. Normally, they are unable to escape and end up drowning or starving to death. These examples show us that a / the / Ø problem of plastic pollution is becoming increasingly acute.

