

## Use of articles

adapted by D.Potter - 20170530

practice based on an internet press release

Complete the text with either a zero article (-), a definite or an indefinite article

1 [ ] Chernobyl nuclear disaster  
2  
3 On April 26 1986, [ ] No 4 reactor at [ ] Chernobyl power station in Ukraine  
4 blew up. Facing nuclear disaster on [ ] unprecedented scale, Soviet authorities  
5 responded by sending thousands of ill-equipped men into [ ] radioactive hell. A  
6 book by Russian journalist Svetlana Alexievich tells [ ] stories of  
7 eyewitnesses who recall [ ] terrible human cost of [ ] catastrophe.  
8  
9 When [ ] routine test at Chernobyl went catastrophically wrong, [ ] chain reaction  
10 went out of control creating [ ] fireball that blew off [ ] reactor's 1,000-tonne  
11 steel-and-concrete lid. There were 31 fatalities as [ ] immediate result of [ ]  
12 explosion and acute radiation exposure would end [ ] lives of hundreds of  
13 others in [ ] days that followed.  
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15 Evacuation of local residents was delayed by [ ] Soviet authorities'  
16 unwillingness to admit [ ] gravity of [ ] incident. Eventually, more than  
17 100,000 people were evacuated from [ ] surrounding area in Ukraine and Belarus.  
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19 Bags of sand were dropped on to [ ] reactor fire from [ ] open doors of  
20 helicopters (analysts now think this did more harm than good). When [ ] fire  
21 finally stopped, men climbed on to [ ] roof to clear [ ] radioactive debris.  
22 [ ] machines brought in broke down because of [ ] radiation. [ ] men barely  
23 lasted more than [ ] few weeks, suffering lingering, painful deaths. But had this  
24 effort not been made, [ ] disaster might have been much worse.  
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26 As [ ] result of [ ] accident 485 villages and settlements in [ ] surrounding  
27 countryside became uninhabitable, and 70 of those had to be completely  
28 demolished, dug up and carried away in trucks to be buried.  
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30 What follows is [ ] story of Lyudmilla Ignatenko, [ ] wife of one of [ ]  
31 firemen sent in to tackle [ ] blaze on [ ] night of [ ] explosion.  
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34 going to [ ] store. I would say to him, "I love you." But I didn't know then  
35 how much. I had no idea. We lived next to [ ] fire station where he worked. One  
36 night I heard [ ] noise. I looked out [ ] window. He saw me. "Close [ ] window  
37 and go back to sleep. There's [ ] fire at [ ] reactor. I'll be back soon."  
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39 Everything was radiant. [ ] whole sky. [ ] tall flame. And smoke. [ ] heat was  
40 awful.  
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42 They went off just as they were, in their shirt sleeves. No one told them that  
43 they needed special gear. They stamped on [ ] bits of burning debris that had  
44 been shot into [ ] fields by [ ] explosion.  
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46 At seven in [ ] morning I was told he was in [ ] hospital. I ran there but [ ]  
47 police had already encircled it, and they weren't letting anyone through, only  
48 ambulances. [ ] policemen shouted: " [ ] ambulances are radioactive stay away!"  
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50 I saw him. He was all swollen. You could barely see his eyes.  
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53 three litres each." "But he doesn't like milk." "He'll drink it now." Many of  
54 [ ] doctors and nurses in that hospital would get sick themselves and die. But  
55 we didn't know that then.  
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57 I couldn't get into [ ] hospital that evening. [ ] doctor came out and said,  
58 yes, they were flying to Moscow, but we needed to bring them their clothes. [ ]  
59 clothes they'd worn at [ ] station had been burned. [ ] buses had stopped

60 running already and we ran across [ ] city. We came running back with their  
61 bags, but [ ] plane was already gone. They had tricked us.  
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63 When I got back to [ ] fire station they measured me with [ ] dosimeter. My  
64 clothes, bag, purse, shoes - they were all "hot". And they took that all away  
65 from me right there. Even my underwear. [ ] only thing they left was my money.  
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67 [ ] hospital in Moscow was [ ] special hospital, for radiology, and you couldn't  
68 get in without [ ] pass. I gave some money to [ ] woman at [ ] door, and she  
69 said, "Go ahead." Then I had to ask someone else - to beg them. Finally I'm  
70 sitting in [ ] office of [ ] head radiologist. Right away she said: "All right,  
71 listen: his central nervous system is badly affected, and his skull." OK, I'm  
72 thinking, so he'll be [ ] little dizzy. "And listen: if you start crying, I'll  
73 kick you out right away. No hugging or kissing. Don't even get near him. You  
74 have half [ ] hour." He looks so funny, he's got pyjamas on for [ ] size 48, and  
75 he's [ ] size 52. [ ] sleeves are too short, [ ] trousers are too short. But his  
76 face isn't swollen any more. They were given some sort of fluid. I say,  
77 "Where'd you run off to?" He wants to hug me. [ ] doctor won't let him. "Sit,  
78 sit," she says. "No hugging in here."  
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80 He started to change; every day I saw him change. [ ] burns started to come to  
81 [ ] surface. In his mouth, on his tongue, his cheeks - at first there were  
82 little sores, and then they grew. [ ] skin came off in layers - as white film  
83 ... [ ] colour of his face ... his body ... blue, red, grey-brown.  
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85 [ ] only thing that saved me was that it happened so fast; there wasn't any  
86 time to think, there wasn't any time to cry. It was [ ] hospital for people with  
87 serious radiation poisoning. Fourteen days. In 14 days [ ] person dies. When he  
88 turned his head, there'd be [ ] clump of hair left on [ ] pillow. I tried joking:  
89 "It's convenient, you don't need [ ] comb." Soon they cut all his hair off.  
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91 I tell [ ] nurse: "He's dying." And she says to me: "What did you expect? He  
92 got 1,600 roentgen. Four hundred is [ ] lethal dose. You're sitting next to [ ]  
93 nuclear reactor."  
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95 When they all died, they refurbished [ ] hospital. They scraped down [ ] walls  
96 and dug up [ ] floor. When he died, they dressed him up in formal wear, with  
97 his service cap. They couldn't get shoes on him because his feet had swollen  
98 up. They buried him barefoot. My love.  
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100 Sergei Vasilyevich Sobolev - one of those responsible for constructing [ ]  
101 shield over [ ] Chernobyl power station.  
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105 There was [ ] moment when there was [ ] danger of [ ] nuclear explosion, and they  
106 had to get [ ] water out from under [ ] reactor, so that [ ] mixture of uranium  
107 and graphite wouldn't get into it - with [ ] water, they would have formed [ ]  
108 critical mass. [ ] explosion would have been between three and five megatons.  
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112 So here was [ ] task: who would dive in there and open [ ] safety valve so we  
113 could pump out [ ] water? They promised them [ ] car, [ ] apartment, aid for their  
114 families until [ ] end of time. They searched for volunteers. And they found  
115 them! [ ] boys dived, many times, and they pumped out [ ] water, and [ ] unit  
116 was given 7,000 roubles. They forgot about [ ] cars and apartments they  
117 promised - that's not why they dived. These are people who came from [ ] certain  
118 culture, [ ] culture of [ ] great achievement. They were [ ] sacrifice.  
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120 And what about [ ] soldiers who worked on [ ] roof of [ ] reactor? 3,600  
121 soldiers worked on [ ] roof to clear [ ] debris and get it ready so we could  
122 build [ ] concrete shield. These guys got it [ ] worst. They had lead vests,  
123 but [ ] radiation was coming from below, and they weren't protected there. They  
124 were wearing ordinary, cheap imitation-leather boots. They spent about [ ] minute

125 and [ ] half, two minutes on [ ] roof each day. They gathered fuel and graphite  
126 from [ ] reactor, bits of concrete and metal. It took about 20-30 seconds to  
127 fill [ ] wheelbarrow, and then another 30 seconds to throw [ ] "garbage" off [ ]  
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129 can picture it: [ ] lead vest, masks, [ ] wheelbarrows, and insane speed.  
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132 radio-controlled robots that [ ] Americans and [ ] Japanese gave us, but [ ]  
133 radiation disrupted their electronics and they broke down after [ ] few minutes.  
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135 [ ] most reliable "robots" were [ ] soldiers. They were christened [ ] "green  
136 robots" [from [ ] colour of their uniforms]. They slept on [ ] ground in tents.  
137 They were young guys. These people don't exist any more, just [ ] documents in  
138 our museum, with their names.  
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140 Arkady Filin - one of [ ] so-called liquidators (people whose job it was to dig  
141 up and bury all [ ] contaminated land and property in [ ] huge area around  
142 Chernobyl)  
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144 You immediately found yourself in this fantastic world, where [ ] apocalypse  
145 met [ ] stone age. We lived in [ ] forest, in tents, 200km from [ ] reactor.  
146 There were between 25 and 40 of us; some of us had university degrees or  
147 diplomas. I'm [ ] history teacher, for example. Instead of machine guns they gave  
148 us shovels. We buried trash heaps and gardens. [ ] women in [ ] villages  
149 watched us and crossed themselves. We had gloves, masks with respirators and  
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161 [ ] forest. We sawed [ ] trees into 1.5m pieces and packed them in plastic  
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171 torn-up, barren earth.  
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173 There was [ ] emphasis on our being heroes. Once [ ] week someone who was digging  
174 really well would receive [ ] certificate of merit before all [ ] other men. [ ]  
175 Soviet Union's best grave digger. It was crazy.

-- original text --

1 The Chernobyl nuclear disaster

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3 On April 26 1986, the No 4 reactor at the Chernobyl power station in Ukraine  
4 blew up. Facing nuclear disaster on an unprecedented scale, Soviet authorities  
5 responded by sending thousands of ill-equipped men into the radioactive hell. A  
6 book by Russian journalist Svetlana Alexievich tells the stories of  
7 eyewitnesses who recall the terrible human cost of the catastrophe.

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9 When a routine test at Chernobyl went catastrophically wrong, a chain reaction  
10 went out of control creating a fireball that blew off the reactor's 1,000-tonne  
11 steel-and-concrete lid. There were 31 fatalities as an immediate result of the  
12 explosion and acute radiation exposure would end the lives of hundreds of  
13 others in the days that followed.

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15 Evacuation of local residents was delayed by the Soviet authorities'  
16 unwillingness to admit the gravity of the incident. Eventually, more than  
17 100,000 people were evacuated from the surrounding area in Ukraine and Belarus.

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19 Bags of sand were dropped on to the reactor fire from the open doors of  
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21 finally stopped, men climbed on to the roof to clear the radioactive debris.  
22 The machines brought in broke down because of the radiation. The men barely  
23 lasted more than a few weeks, suffering lingering, painful deaths. But had this  
24 effort not been made, the disaster might have been much worse.

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26 As a result of the accident 485 villages and settlements in the surrounding  
27 countryside became uninhabitable, and 70 of those had to be completely  
28 demolished, dug up and carried away in trucks to be buried.

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30 What follows is the story of Lyudmilla Ignatenko, the wife of one of the  
31 firemen sent in to tackle the blaze on the night of the explosion.

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34 going to the store. I would say to him, "I love you." But I didn't know then  
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