The article “al-” and tanween: the, a, an

Arabic has just one article: “al-” for the definite. The indefinite is marked with tanween. Also remember two families of letters: sun and moon letters.

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Type	Word	Reading
moon	الْقَمَر	al-qamar
sun	الشَّمْس	ash-shams
sun	النَّاس	an-nās
moon	الْكِتَاب	al-kitāb

ٱلشَّمْسُ وَٱلْقَمَرُ بِحُسْبَانٍ

Quran 55 : 5

ش is a sun letter: read ash-shams.

ٱلشَّمْسُ وَٱلْقَمَرُ بِحُسْبَانٍ

Quran 55 : 5

ق is a moon letter: read al-qamar.

مِنَ ٱلْجِنَّةِ وَٱلنَّاسِ

Quran 114 : 6

ن is a sun letter: an-nās.

هُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّلْمُحْسِنِينَ

Quran 31 : 3

Indefinite noun: ends with tanween.

Previous letter

Next lesson

See also

Arabic grammar to understand the Quran

The Arabic alphabet: all 28 letters