1. te

Singular Kiribati nouns are always preceded by the article te, with the exception of names of places, people, and when used with a form of the possessive pronoun. In this respect it is very similar to English, where you don't say 'the New York', 'the Roosevelt', or 'the my book'. Unlike 'a' or 'the', however, te only indicates singularity, with no indication of definiteness, and thus has no exact equivalent in English. (Note that Kiribati can and does indicate definiteness of a noun through the use of demonstrative pronouns. See the lesson on these demonstratives.):

- te auti: house, a house, the house
- te mata: eye, an eye, the eye
- te aiine: woman, a woman, the woman

Before collective nouns, substances, etc, te can also have the meaning 'some':

- te ran: water, some water, the water
- te boki:ang wind, some wind, the wind

And it can also denote a class:

- te ika: fish (in general)
- te boki: books (in general)

When placed before adjectives and verbs, it serves to transform them into nouns:

- uraura: red
- te uraura: redness
- mm'akuri: to work
- te mm'akuri: the work
- nanokaawaki: sad
- te nanokaawaki: sadness
A small class of nouns which do not fit into the above categories for exceptions do not take the article te. This set is generally composed of those things of which there are only considered to be one:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>taai</th>
<th>sun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nam'akaina</td>
<td>moon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>karawa</td>
<td>heaven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marawa</td>
<td>sea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aonnaba</td>
<td>earth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taari</td>
<td>sea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moone</td>
<td>hell</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When some of these nouns do appear after the article, there is a change in meaning:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>te taai</th>
<th>burning glass (magnifier)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>te nam'akaina</td>
<td>month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>te taari</td>
<td>salt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>te marawa</td>
<td>an ocean (a specific one)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarly, compass points and directions do not take the article.

2. taian

Taian can be considered to be the plural from of te. It can be used before any countable noun to show that there are more than one:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>taiani boki</th>
<th>books, some books, the books</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>taian rua</td>
<td>pits, some pits, the pits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unlike te, however, its use is optional, for plurality can be indicated by a number of other devices, including demonstrative pronouns and transitive object pronouns. (See lesson on plurality):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>booki akanne</th>
<th>those books</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>taiani boki akanne</td>
<td>those books</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some nouns lengthen a vowel in the plural. After taian however, there is no lengthening. Remember that an 'i' must be inserted after taian when the first sound of the next word is incompatible with 'n'. (See page 12)
3. **te naa n**

While not an article the expression ‘te naa n _____’ often replaces ’tai’ before plural nouns, with the sense ‘a group of’, ‘a bunch of’:

- te naa n aomata  a crowd of people
- te naa ni man    a band of animals
- te naa ni kai    a group of trees
- te naa ni* waa   a fleet of canoes

*(ni will be heard to be pronounced nu before waa.)*

4. **Person Articles**

Kiribati does sometimes employ an article before the names of people, somewhat equivalent to the English Mr. or Ms., but its use seems apparently less widespread now than in former times. It is most frequently heard before names which are also words in their own right, so perhaps the introduction of so many European names has lessened its usefulness.

There is some dialect distinction in the use of these articles, especially between Butaritari-Makin and the rest of the group. Throughout the entire group, the feminine article stays the same: Nei

- Nei laonna
- Nei Artiti
- Nei Tebora
- etc.

For masculine names, except in Butaritari-Makin, the form is Te, Tem, Ten, or Teng, depending on the initial sound of the name it precedes. Quite a bit of variation exists, but the most common pattern is as follows:

- Te before I, U, W, B’, Ng
- Ten “  A, E, O, N, R, T
- Tem “  B, M
- Teng “ K, (Ng)
In Butaritari-Makin, the forms are Na, Nan, Nam, Nang:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sae:</th>
<th>Na before A, E, I, O, U, W, B'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Na / _ka,ke</td>
<td>Na before T, R, N*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nan / _ki,koe</td>
<td>Nam &quot; B, M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nang / _ko,ku</td>
<td>Nang &quot; K, Ng</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(* often used with no article.)

Thus, in summary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Main Group</th>
<th>Butaritari-Makin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arobati</td>
<td>Ten Arobati</td>
<td>Na Arobati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beniamina</td>
<td>Ten Beniamina</td>
<td>Nam Beniamina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eria</td>
<td>Ten Eria</td>
<td>Na Eria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iaone</td>
<td>Te Iaone</td>
<td>Na Iaone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mareko</td>
<td>Ten Mareko</td>
<td>Nam Mareko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nikora</td>
<td>Ten Nikora</td>
<td>(Nan) Nikora</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otea</td>
<td>Ten Otea</td>
<td>Na Otea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rui</td>
<td>Ten Rui</td>
<td>Na Rui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taomati</td>
<td>Ten Taomati</td>
<td>Nan Taomati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaitara</td>
<td>Teng Kaitara</td>
<td>Nang Kaitara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngauea</td>
<td>Te/Teng Ngauea</td>
<td>Nang Ngauea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bwebweata</td>
<td>Te Bwebweata</td>
<td>Na Bwebweata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uriam</td>
<td>Te Uriam</td>
<td>Na Uriam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiriam</td>
<td>Te Wiriam</td>
<td>Na Wiriam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These forms will be most often used in writing, or when speaking of someone (third person), rather than directly addressed to someone.
A. Insert the singular article te into the following (ungrammatical) sentences in its proper position:

1. E b'aka nii.  
   fall coconut tree
2. I tangira miriki.  
   want milk
3. Ti noora booti.  
   see boat
4. Ko kana ben.  
   eat coconut
5. E anaa m'angko.  
   take cup
6. I taua b'aatika.  
   hold bicycle
7. Kam noora kaibuke.  
   see ship
8. E biri kirii.  
   run dog
   sleep cat
10. Ko kabooa kariki.  
    buy bread
11. I korea karewe.  
    cut toddy
12. E buti kaa.  
    move car
13. E b'aro ran.  
    pour water
14. E m'aoto kai.  
    break stick
15. E un kirii.  
    angry dog
    weave mat
17. E bua m'ane.  
    lose money
18. Ko korea reta.  
    write letter
19. Ti nako n titooa.  
    go store
20. A nako n um'antabu.  
    church
B. Insert the plural article taian(i) (or te naa n(i)) into its proper position in the following sentences. (Note that nouns which would lengthen the vowel in the plural are given in the unlengthened form which would appear after taian.)

1. Iai boki iaon te taibora.
   books on table
2. E wareki boki.
   read
3. A nakonako ataeinimm'aane.
   walk boys
4. A uoti ika.
   bring fish
5. A mate taura.
   go out lamps
6. Ti noori taamnei.
   see movies
   open boxes
8. Iai karaki inanon te boki.
   stories in
9. A toka am'arake iaon te taibora.
   place food
10. E wene Meere iaon baoki.
    lie boxes
11. E uoti raurau Tiaon.
    plates
12. Uoti mai am'arake Maria.
    bring here food
    their house lepers
14. A ngaa amata ake ikai?
    where people here
15. Tai ririing boki aikai.
    touch these
16. A booti b'ai n takaakaro.
    put together
17. A un moa akekei.
    angry chickens those
18. A b'aka beeba iaon tano.
    fall papers on the ground
19. A taui biti i baiia.
    hold knives their hands
20. E kiniki uee Tebora.
    pick
C. Change the articles in the following sentences from singular to plural and vice versa. (Change the subject pronoun as well, where necessary - see lesson on subject pronouns if necessary):

1. E b'aka te ben.
   fall coconut
2. E roko te waa.
   come canoe
3. A matuu taian aaine.
   sleep women
4. E unika te aroka. (unika becomes unikii with plural object)
   plant plant
5. E kab'aka te ben.
   throw down
6. A tang taian teei.
   cry children
7. E buubah te booro.
   big ball
8. E m'aiit te kaa ikai.
   many cars here
9. A biri te naa n aomata.
   run people
10. E koro te booti.
    grounded boat
11. E uki te mataroa.
    open door
12. E a bane te am'arako.
    all gone food
13. A kiba ieta taian mannikiba.
    fly up birds
14. E mainai te boki. (boki becomes bookii in plural)
    wet book
15. E korakora te nao.
    strong wave
16. A uti taian aomata.
    awake people
17. E oti te itoi.
    rise star
18. E aki kibanako te mannikiba.
    fly away birds
19. A ngare te naa n aiine.
    laugh women
20. E kaiaki te m'angko. (kaiaki becomes kaiakiikii with plural object)
D. Place the appropriate person article in front of the following names. Use either that for the main group or Butaritari-Makin according to where you expect to spend time:

1. Bauro
2. Urtoa
3. Meeri (F)
4. Tiaon
5. Ruta (F)
6. Kaake
7. Maio
8. Reeti (F)
9. Wiri
10. Uriam
11. Aata
12. Enoka
13. Eeta (F)
14. Morita (F)
15. Iotin
16. Otati
17. Ngauea
18. Rooti
19. Aana (F)
20. Oriwa (F)

Note: feminine names above are marked with (F).
E. Write translation for the following sentences:

1. The canoe arrived yesterday.

2. Some children are crying.

3. The books are on the table.

4. Where is the box?

5. A crowd of people have arrived.

6. Don't buy the rice!

7. The cat is sleeping on the table.

8. Mary is walking in the road.

9. I didn't see Ngauea.

10. Did John go to Bairiki?

11. There are bicycles in the house!

12. Does Maio want some milk?

13. I lost the money.

14. Are there stories in the book?

15. Those chickens are upset (angry).