

The Arabic script

We expect you to have some knowledge of the Arabic script at the start of the course: if you don't you will really struggle. We're not expecting fluent reading, but an ability to recognise the letters and to work out the pronunciation of words when vowels are written. To help with this, the following is a brief introduction covering all aspects of the script, which you may like to work through, but you can of course use a book or any other way of learning it. If you need more practice on any particular item, a good book to use is Wightwick, J, and Gaafar, M. *Mastering Arabic Script* or *Mastering Arabic*, but any introductory textbook to Standard Arabic will cover this ground. We will have a session at the beginning of the year to go over some of the material from this worksheet and answer any questions you have.

If you use this introduction, we would strongly recommend working through each exercise once, then go through it again, pronouncing the word aloud. Then perhaps read it through again. There is a lot of repetition, with the aim of helping you to get comfortable with the script and some of the vocabulary and phrasing, to help reduce the cognitive load at the beginning of the year, when you will have to cope with new squiggles, new sounds and unrecognisable words, all at the same time. For the same reason, spacing this out over a period of months will be more useful than cramming it into the last week before you come. The vocabulary in bold below will appear fairly early on in the course. We will go over it as it comes up, but familiarising yourself with some or all of these words beforehand will make things easier for you, giving you less to learn later and allowing some things to settle and be more integrated before the course starts. All of the words here are used in both Standard and Colloquial Egyptian Arabic, the dialect we teach in the first year, except those words marked with an asterisk, which occur only in Standard Arabic.

If you would like anything checked or have any other questions, please feel free to contact Dr Rachael Harris (rmh1001@cam.ac.uk) in the Department. Any suggestions for improving this worksheet would be very much appreciated!

1. The alphabet

Arabic letters are almost always written joined up. So each has a basic shape, a way of connecting it to preceding and subsequent letters, and a tail - a final flourish for when it is written alone or at the end of words.

This means that each letter has up to four shapes: at the beginning, middle and end of a word, and in isolation.

Writing is right to left.

Handwriting: for most Arabic letters just copying the printed form will give you a good handwritten version, and for these there are no notes on how to do it. Where it's not obvious which order to do the strokes in, there are notes on this at the end of the exercises to help you get into good habits from the start. A few letters have very different handwritten and printed forms, but you can just keep to the printed form for now. As in English, you write a string of letters in one continuous line without lifting the pen off the paper until you get to the end of the word, or to a letter that doesn't join onto the following one. Then you go back and add in the dots, and sometimes extra lines to the shape of the letter itself.

Transliteration	Final	Medial	Initial	Alone	Name
ā (long 'aa'- only a vowel, not a consonant)	ا	ا	ا	ا	أَلِف
b	ب	ب	ب	ب	باء
t	ت	ت	ت	ت	تاء
th (as in 'thin')	ث	ث	ث	ث	ثاء
j	ج	ج	ج	ج	جيم
H	ح	ح	ح	ح	حاء
kh	خ	خ	خ	خ	خاء
d	د	د	د	د	دال
dh (like the 'th' in 'the')	ذ	ذ	ذ	ذ	ذال
r	ر	ر	ر	ر	راء
z	ز	ز	ز	ز	زاي
s	س	س	س	س	سين
sh	ش	ش	ش	ش	شين
S	ص	ص	ص	ص	صاد
D	ض	ض	ض	ض	ضاد
T	ط	ط	ط	ط	طاء

DH	ظ	ظ	ظ	ظ	ظ	ظاء
	ع	ع	ع	ع	ع	عَيْن
gh	غ	غ	غ	غ	غ	غَيْن
f	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف	فاء
q	ق	ق	ق	ق	ق	قاف
k	ك	ك	ك	ك	ك	كاف
l	ل	ل	ل	ل	ل	لام
m	م	م	م	م	م	ميم
n	ن	ن	ن	ن	ن	نون
h	ه	ه	ه	ه	ه	هاء
w or ū (long 'uu' like the 'oo' in 'too')	و	و	و	و	و	واو
y or ī (long 'ii' like the 'ee' in 'see')	ي	ي	ي	ي	ي	ياء

*The six letters و، ز، ر، ذ، د، ا never join to following letters.

Note: When ا ('alif) follows ل they are written لا if not joined to a previous letter and لا if joined.

2. Vowels:

Short vowel signs go above or below the consonant they follow. In most texts they are not written, except to clarify ambiguities:

َ = a (فَتْحَة 'fatHa'); ُ = u (ضَمَّة 'Damma');

ِ = i (كَسْرَة 'kasra'); ْ = no vowel (سُكُون 'sukuun')

Long vowels are written after the consonant they follow: ل = aa; و = uu; ي = ii.

و and ي can also represent diphthongs: و = aw; ي = ay

Exercises 1, 3, 5 & 7 work through the alphabet gradually introducing all of the letters. Try to remember the words in **bold**, the others are just for reading practice. Work your way through them as far as you find useful. Question marks in place of the meaning mean that you might be able to guess it from English or from what has gone before (answers in the footnotes). Exercises 2, 4, 6 & 9 are to help to reinforce the words in bold, and give some beginnings of putting words together.

Exercise 1. Read the following, starting on the right:

girls	بَنَاتٍ	girl	بِنْتٍ	pope	بَابَا	door	بَابٍ
our daughter	بِنْتِنَا	my door	بَابِي	between	بَيْنَ	house	بَيْتٍ
between us	بَيْنَنَا	our house	بَيْتِنَا	my daughters	بَنَاتِي	my daughter	بِنْتِي
prophet	نَبِيٍّ	he builds	يَبْنِي*	we built	بَنَيْنَا	our daughters	بَنَاتِنَا

Note: the sign ّ means that the consonant is pronounced double, like the *t + t* in 'hot tea'. See section 4 below.

Japanese	يَابَانِيٍّ	she built	بَنَتْ*	we build	نَبْنِي*	she builds	تَبْنِي*
				and ...	و...	بابنا	بابنا ¹ ?

Note: ّ is always written as part of the following word, e.g. بابي وبنتي

day	يَوْمٍ	from	مِنْ	houses	بُيُوتٍ	doorman	بَوَّابٍ
book	كِتَابٍ	he dies	يَمُوتُ*	death	مَوْتٍ	who	مَنْ*
offices	مَكَاتِبٍ	office	مَكْتَبٍ	our books	كُتُبِنَا	books	كُتُبٍ
your (f.) book	كِتَابِكِ*	your (m.) book	كِتَابِكَ*	she writes	تَكْتُبُ*	I wrote	كَتَبْتُ

You use كِتَابِكَ for 'your book' to men/boys and كِتَابِكِ to women/girls. F. and m. are 'feminine' and 'masculine'.

I slept	نَمْتُ	he slept	نَامَ	I was	كُنْتُ	he was	كَانَ
what	مَا	*how much	كَمْ	buildings	بِنَايَاتٍ	complete, OK	تَمَّامٌ
Lebanon	لُبْنَانٍ	place	مَكَانٍ	possible	مُمْكِنٍ	Yemeni	يَمَنِيٍّ
no	لَا	money, wealth	مَالٍ	dog	كَلْبٍ	king	مَلِكٍ

(See the note at the end of the alphabet if you're not sure what this last one is.)

Libya	لِيْبِيَا	kings	مُلُوكٍ	speech	كَلَامٍ	attention	بَالٍ
		dogs	كِلَابٍ	night	لَيْلٍ	Libyans	لِيْبِيَّوْنَ*

Notes on writing:

1) Since you don't lift pen from paper until there's a break, the letter 'alif' in a word like باب is written upwards, not downwards. It's written downwards when not joined to anything in front.

2) و Start writing at the point where the lines join and form the circle going left first then up, right, down.

3) م In isolation: start at the top left.

ـ At the beginning of a word or group of letters: start at the point where the lines join and go either way

round.

حـ In the middle: in handwriting the loop goes under the line, not above it as in print.

مـ At the end of a word: do a loop downwards, as with the form in the middle, then carry on a bit left then down for the tail.

4) كـ At the beginning of a word or group of letters, if you think of the shape as like a leg and foot with the knee pointing left, start at the knee and go down. When you've got to the end of the word or the letter group, go back and add the top diagonal stroke, downwards.

كـ In the middle, start at the bottom right where the line comes in, go up to the 'knee' and down again, then carry on with the line. Add the top diagonal afterwards.

5) لـ On its own: do the ل as a downstroke finishing on the left side of the letter. Then do the alif as a separate downstroke in a steep diagonal down from the top left of the letter to where it meets the ل.

لاـ Joined to a previous letter: similar but go up into the ل first.

Exercise 2. A pause. a) Do you remember what the following mean? (Answers²)

باب، كتاب، ليبيا، من، بنت، لا، كتابك، بين، من، باب، لا، بنت، كتاب، ممكن، بابي، بنتي، ما، كتابك، مكتب
وباب

b) Given some of the words above, what do the following mean? (Answers³)

كتابي، بنتي، كتابك*، مكتبنا، بنتنا، كتابك*، بابنا، مكتبك.

Exercise 3. Some more letters:

country	بِلَاد	town	بَلَد	religion	دِين	boy	وَلَد
dollars	دُولَارَات	dollar	دُولَار	London	لُنْدُن	father	وَالِد
Beirut	بَيْرُوت	house	دَار	post	بَرِيد	cold	بَارِد
fire	نَار	light	نُور	generous	كَرِيم	big	كَبِير*
excellent	مُمْتَاذ	كومبيوتر ⁴	كُومْبِيُوتَر	كندا?	كَنْدَا ?	نيويورك?	نِيُويُورِك ?
Zeinab	زَيْنَب	minister	وَزِير	I visited	زُرْتُ	he visited	زَار
Mohamed	مُحَمَّد	sea	بَحْر	beloved	حَبِيب	love	حُب
milk	لَبَن	under	تَحْت	my life	حَيَاتِي	Mahmoud	مَحْمُود
		beautiful, handsome	جَمِيل	Mubarak	مُبَارَك	Husni	حُسْنِي
pilgrim	حَاج	pilgrimage	حَجَّ	it is necessary	يَجِب*	homework	وَأَجِب
marriage	زَوَاج	husband, couple	زَوْج	he needs	يَحْتَاج*	hot	حَار

reason سَبَب	man رَجُلٌ *	new جَدِيدٌ *	he marries يَتَزَوَّجُ *
we study نَدْرُسُ *	he studies يَدْرُسُ *	Syria سوريَا	peace سَلَامٌ
tea شاي	trees شَجَرٌ	Tunisia تُونِسِيَا	they study يَدْرُسُونَ *
sun شَمْسٌ	north شَمَالٌ	grass حَشِييسٌ	lesson دَرْسٌ
			form, shape شَكْلٌ

Notes on writing:

6) Note the difference between د and ر. This shows up in particular when they're joined to the previous letter.

د starts at the level of the line, goes up and comes back down the same way. ر starts on the level of the line and only goes up a little before going down. It's also curved rather than angled like د. Same for ذ and ز.

7) ح, ج, خ These are different in handwriting. For the moment just copy the printed form, which means that they're the only exception to the rule that you don't lift the pen off the paper until you get to a gap.

Exercise 4. Another pause: what do the following mean? Note that a singular noun on its own generally translates as 'a such-and-such', e.g. وَاَلِدٌ can be translated as 'a boy'.

لا، كَبِيرٌ، نور، مَكْتَبٌ، واجِبٌ، مِن، رَجُلٌ وَاَلِدٌ، كِتَابٌ، بِنْتٌ، واجِبِي، جَدِيدٌ، باب، جَمِيلٌ، وَاَلِدٌ جَمِيلٌ a)
(handsome boy) كِتَابٌ جَدِيدٌ، مَكْتَبٌ كَبِيرٌ، مِن رَجُلٌ، نور جَدِيدٌ، كِتَابٌ كَبِيرٌ، وَاَلِدٌ وَاَلِدَةٌ، شَمْسٌ، بابك، مِن،
بَيْنَ بِنْتٍ وَاَلِدٍ. (Answers)⁵

Exercise 5. More letters:

long, tall طَوِيلٌ	airport مَطَارٌ	doctor طَبِيبٌ	student طَالِبٌ
	happy سَعِيدٌ	work عَمَلٌ	homeland وَطَنٌ
	they work يَعْمَلُونَ *	wide, spacious وَاَسِعٌ	he returns يَرْجِعُ *
	eye عَيْنٌ	festival عِيدٌ	you (f.) work تَعْمَلِينَ *
in فِي	you (m.) have عِنْدَكَ *	I have عِنْدِي	street شَارِعٌ
Yasir يَاسِرٌ	France فَرَنْسَا	we know نَعْرِفُ *	he knows يَعْرِفُ *
east شَرْقٌ	we returned رَجَعْنَا *	she returns تَرْجِعُ *	far from عَنْ
	near to قَرِيبٌ مِّنْ	travel سَفَرٌ	pen قَلَمٌ
thirsty عَطْشَانٌ	tired تَعْبَانٌ	time وَقْتٌ	with مَعَ
		child طِفْلٌ	hungry جَوْعَانٌ

Notes on writing:

8) ط (and ظ) Wherever it is in the word, start with the loop. If there's no letter before this, you start at the left of the loop and go rightwards and up, then back down and along the bottom. The 'stick' is added on as a downstroke at the end, after you've got to the end of the line of letters if there is one, or even if you're writing the letter on its own.

ط In the middle of a word the line comes in from the right, continues along the bottom, then loops up and back, then down and round and back to continue the line towards the left.

9) ع (and غ) In the middle of a word, ع starts with the line going up diagonally to the left, then horizontally to the right, then diagonally down to the left, forming a triangular shape.

ع At the end of a word, it's the same, but with the tail coming down from where the two lines cross.

Exercise 6. What do the following mean? (Answers⁶)

مَكْتَبَ جَمِيلٍ، طَالِبِ جَدِيدٍ، بِنْتِ جَمِيلَةٍ، قَلَمَ وَكِتَابٍ، لا، وَوَلَدَ مَعَ طَالِبٍ، قَلَمَ كَبِيرٍ، قَلَمِكَ، رَجُلٍ فِي مَكْتَبٍ، قَلَمَ جَدِيدٍ وَكِتَابِ جَمِيلٍ، طَالِبِنَا وَعَمَلِي، شَمْسِ

Exercise 7. The last group of letters:

I've understood فَهَمَّتْ	they هُمْ	he هُوَ	she هِيَ
face وَجْهٌ *	there هُنَاكُ *	here هُنَا *	we've understood فَهَمْنَا
Egypt مِصْرُ *	difficult صَعْبٌ	correct صَحِيحٌ	morning صَبَاحٌ
eggs بَيْضٌ	she hit ضَرَبَتْ *	ill مَرِيضٌ	friend صَدِيقٌ
Damascus دِمَشْقٌ	officer ضَابِطٌ	short قَصِيرٌ	zero صَفْرٌ
bread خُبْزٌ *	he went out خَرَجَ	sheikhs شَيْوُخٌ	sheikh شَيْخٌ
exit خُرُوجٌ	mind عَقْلٌ	special خَاصٌّ	person شَخْصٌ
strange غَرِيبٌ	small صَغِيرٌ *	Khalid خَالِدٌ	غربٌ غَرْبٌ
martyr شَهِيدٌ	he watches يَشَاهِدُ *	بَغْدَادُ ؟	westerners * غَرْبِيُونَ
strange غَرِيبٌ	he went ذَهَبَ *	he remembers يَذْكُرُ *	delicious لَذِيذٌ
price ثَمَنٌ *	third ثَالِثٌ *	we نَحْنُ *	you (f.) go تَذْهَبِينَ *
back ظَهْرٌ	noon ظُهْرٌ	second ثَانِيٌ	research بَحْثٌ
good luck حَظٌّ سَعِيدٌ	luck حَظٌّ	I thought ظَنَنْتُ *	it appears يَظْهَرُ *

Notes on writing:

10) ه (and ه - see section 3) In isolation, start at the top and go down the right side of the circle and up the left.

هـ At the beginning of a word or letter group, start by doing a backwards 'C'. When you reach the bottom of the letter, on the line, do a smaller loop upwards that tucks under the left-hand end of the 'C'.

هـ In the middle of the word the commonest way to write this is by doing a diagonal leftwards stroke down below the line, then a vertical stroke back up to the line, the two making a sharp point, a 'v' shape a bit like an inverted shark's fin. It goes below the line about the same distance as the هـ and similar letters go above the line.

هـ At the end of a word, start with the line going vertically upwards, then do the semi-circle round and down to the left. There isn't an extra bit sticking up on the vertical line in the handwritten version.

11) ص and ص (ض) In isolation and at the beginning of a word, start at the point where the lines join and go up and rightwards then down and leftwards along the line to complete the loop. Then do a 'tooth', a little sticking up line to finish the letter. At the end of the word, the tail comes straight down from this 'tooth'.

ص and ص In the middle and at the end of words, the line comes in from the right and continues straight to the point where the lines join. Then go up and back to the right to form the loop, down and back along the same line to complete it. The rest is as above.

Exercise 8. Match these Arabic words with their English meanings: (Answers⁷)

a) telephone	g) Arabs	٧. سُكَّر	١. سَيْنَمَا
b) Muslim	h) film	٨. تَلْفُون	٢. بَنَك
c) sugar	i) felaful	٩. مَسْلَم	٣. جَمَل
d) cat	j) cinema	١٠. عَرَب	٤. دُكْتُور
e) bank	k) doctor (title)	١١. فِلْم	٥. قَطَّ
f) camel			٦. فَلَافِل

Note: you will also find it useful to learn the Arabic way to write numbers. They go **left to right**. Note that ١ is written in one pen movement, starting at the bottom right.

Exercise 9. Here are some sentences. Note that in this kind of sentence the verb 'to be' is not used, so هُو means 'He is a student'. Note also that هُو and هِيَ mean 'it' for things referred to by masculine and feminine words respectively. (Watch out for names!) (Answers⁸)

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| ٨. يَاسِرٌ وَوَلَدٌ صَغِيرٌ. | ١. هُوَ وَوَلَدٌ. |
| ٩. هُوَ كِتَابٌ صَغِيرٌ مِّنْ لُّبْنَانِ. | ٢. مَحْمُودٌ طَالِبٌ. |

٣. هُوَ عَمَلٌ صَعْبٌ. ٠١. هِيَ بِنْتُ مَنِ لُنْدَنَ.
٤. هُوَ وَاجِبٌ جَدِيدٌ. ١١. هُمْ مِنْ لِيْبِيَا.
٥. هُوَ وُلْدٌ مَعَ قَلَمٍ. ١٢. هُوَ صَبَاحٌ جَمِيلٌ.
٦. مُحَمَّدٌ رَجُلٌ جَمِيلٌ. ١٣. طَالِبِنَا جَدِيدٌ.
٧. هِيَ مِنْ سُورِيَا. ١٤. وَاجِبُكَ صَعْبٌ.

3. ة

The letter ة as on the end of the word 'فَتْحَةٌ' (the 'a' vowel) is called تاء مَرْبُوطَةٌ (taa' marbuuTa) and is a combination of ه and ت. It is always preceded by فَتْحَةٌ ('a') (occasionally a long 'aa') and the two together are mostly pronounced just 'a', but when in close connection with the following word (to be explained later), or when reading aloud with full vowelling, ة is pronounced 'at'.

Exercise 10. Read the following, pronouncing the ة as 'a':

female doctor دُكْتُورَةٌ school مَدْرَسَةٌ female student طَالِبَةٌ university جَامِعَةٌ

Exercise 11. Using the further vocabulary given here, read and translate the phrases below.

(جامعة كَبِيرَةٌ means 'a big university'.) Note that adding ة to the end of a word generally makes it feminine:

طَالِبَةٌ a female student; جَدِيدَةٌ new (feminine). What are the rules for agreement in gender? (Answers⁹)

- | Arab, Arabic عَرَبِيٌّ | room غُرْفَةٌ |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| ٩. طَالِبَةٌ مُسْلِمَةٌ | ١. طَالِبٌ عَرَبِيٌّ |
| ١٠. مَدْرَسَةٌ جَدِيدَةٌ | ٢. طَالِبَةٌ عَرَبِيَّةٌ |
| ١١. كِتَابٌ عَرَبِيٌّ | ٣. غُرْفَةٌ جَدِيدَةٌ |
| ١٢. بِنْتُ عَرَبِيَّةٌ | ٤. طَالِبٌ جَدِيدٌ |
| ١٣. جَامِعَةٌ عَرَبِيَّةٌ كَبِيرَةٌ | ٥. عَمَلٌ صَعْبٌ |
| ١٤. قَلَمٌ صَغِيرٌ | ٦. جَامِعَةٌ صَغِيرَةٌ |
| ١٥. مَدْرَسَةٌ جَمِيلَةٌ | ٧. صَبَاحٌ جَدِيدٌ |
| ١٦. غُرْفَةٌ صَغِيرَةٌ | ٨. غُرْفَةٌ صَغِيرَةٌ |

4.

The sign ّ is called شَدَّة 'shadda', and when written above a consonant makes it double, e.g. سُكَّر 'sukkar' above. Note that a كَسْرَة ('i' vowel) with a شَدَّة may be written under the consonant as usual, or above the consonant but under the شَدَّة, but it is generally clearer to use the first method. شَدَّة is usually not written in unvowelled texts.

Exercise 12.

office worker مُوظَّف teacher مُدَرِّس he taught دَرَّس he studied دَرَس

Exercise 13. Read the following - if you prefer a pictorial presentation, see *Alif Baa* pp.116-8 and 113-4!

شُبَّان	صَفٌّ	وَرَقَة	سَاعَة	كِتَاب	طَاوِلَة	كُرْسِيٌّ	طَالِب
window	class	piece of paper	watch/clock		table	chair	
فِي	مَدِينَة	بَعِيد عَنْ	قَرِيب مِنْ	كَبِير	صَغِير	طَوِيل	قَصِير
	city	far from	near to			long	short
خُبْز	سُكَّر	قَلَم	شَاي	قَهْوَة عَرَبِيَّة	غَرِيب	جَامِعَة	
bread	sugar		tea	Turkish coffee	strange		

Exercise 14. True or false? (translations¹⁰)

(The ة in مَدِينَة is pronounced '-at' here: 'the city of ...'). فِي لَنْدَنْ جَامِعَة means: 'There is a university in London.'

١. مَدِينَة بَيْرُوت فِي فَرَنْسَا.
٢. مَدِينَة لَنْدَنْ قَرِيبَة مِنْ لِيْبِيَا.
٣. مَدِينَة كَمْبَرِيدْج صَغِيرَة.
٤. جَامِعَة كَمْبَرِيدْج جَدِيدَة.
٥. فِي مَدِينَة لَنْدَنْ جَامِعَة كَبِيرَة.
٦. فِي جَامِعَة كَمْبَرِيدْج مَكْتَب كَبِير.

5. ء

a) The sign ء is called هَمْزَة 'hamza', and is pronounced as a glottal stop and transliterated here with an apostrophe. It may be written on its own, as in the letter names given above, or above an ا, a و, or a ي without the dots, or it may be written below an ا. These letters are called the seats (كُرْسِيّ) for the هَمْزَة. There are rules for which كُرْسِيّ to use when, and the easiest of the rules is given below, but for the moment you mainly need to recognize the هَمْزَة when reading. In careful writing or printing, even of unvowelled texts, the هَمْزَة is always written.

Exercise 15. Read the names of the letters of the alphabet.

b) At the beginning of a word هَمْزَة is written on an اَلِف if the vowel that follows it is فَتْحَة ('a') or ضَمَّة ('u'), and under the اَلِف if the vowel is كَسْرَة ('i').

Exercise 16. Read the following:

question سُؤَال	food أَكَل	water *مَاء	lecturer أُسْتَاذ
presidents رُؤَسَاء	president رَئِيس	muezzin مُؤَذِّن	imam إِمَام
you (to a female) أَنْتِ	you (to a male) أَنْتَ	أَنَا ا	boys أَوْلَاد
white أَبْيَض	black أَسْوَد	أُسْتَاذَة ? ¹¹	he began بَدَأَ
father أَب	mother أُمُّ	Israel إِسْرَائِيل	brother أَخ

6. Three kinds of long 'aa': a) اَ b) اِ c) اِي

Exercise 17.

a) When an اَلِف هَمْزَة would be followed by another اَلِف or اَلِف هَمْزَة the two together are instead written as a single اَلِف with a sign called a مَدَّة 'madda' on top: اَ ('aa').

mirror مِرْآة	now *الآن	he believed أَمَنَ	the Qur'aan الْقُرْآن
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b) On some words a final long 'aa' is written as اِء without dots, called اَلِف مَقْصُورَة "alif maqSuura". When an ending is added to such a word, so that the اِ is no longer final, it changes to an ordinary اَلِف (اَلِف طَوِيلَة):

he saw it رَأَاهُ*	Mona مَنَى	إِلَى to	on عَلَى
he saw رَأَى*	he bought it اشْتَرَاهُ*	اشْتَرَى	he bought اشْتَرَى

c) 'Dagger alif': a miniature **ألف** written above a letter in a few words, indicating the long 'aa' vowel:

that **ذَلِكَ*** this (fem.) **هَذِهِ** this (masc.) **هَذَا***

The **مَدَّة** and the dagger alif are not written in unvowelled texts.

Exercise 18. Some revision, and some new words to learn: (translations¹²)

مِصر سُؤال مَدِينة صَغِير نَعَم لا

*yes

أَنَا أَنْتَ أَنْتِ هُوَ هِيَ
هَذَا هَذِهِ لَكِنْ اللَّهُ
[The second laam has a dagger alif as well as a shadda] Allah but

Exercise 19. A pause. What do the following sentences mean? All the words are in bold somewhere above.

(Answers¹³)

١. هَذَا رَجُلٌ صَغِيرٌ. وَهُوَ مُسْلِمٌ. ('This is a ...')
٢. هَذِهِ مَدِينةٌ كَبِيرَةٌ.
٣. هَذِهِ مَدْرَسَةٌ صَغِيرَةٌ وَهَذَا كِتَابٌ صَعْبٌ.
٤. هَذِهِ أَسْتَاذَةٌ عَرَبِيَّةٌ. وَهِيَ جَدِيدَةٌ.
٥. هَذِهِ غُرْفَةٌ كَبِيرَةٌ مَعَ مَكْتَبٍ.
٦. هُوَ أَسْتَاذٌ فِي جَامِعَةٍ لَنْدُنْ وَهُوَ مِنْ سُوْرِيَا.
٧. أَنْتَ طَالِبٌ جَدِيدٌ؟ - لا. أَنَا طَالِبٌ مِنْ جَامِعَةٍ عَرَبِيَّةٍ.
٨. هَذَا سُؤْالٌ صَعْبٌ.
٩. هِيَ غُرْفَةٌ جَدِيدَةٌ.

From here on we'll go over this thoroughly in class, so it's up to you how much of it you take on board now.

٧. الـ

a) هَمْزَةُ الْوَصْلِ أ

In some Arabic words, of which the commonest is the definite article **الـ** *al-* (= 'the'), the هَمْزَةُ at the beginning is not an essential part of the word, and neither it nor the vowel it carries are pronounced when there is a vowel at the end of the preceding word: **الْجَامِعَةُ** 'al-jaami'a 'the university'; **إِلَى الْجَامِعَةِ** 'ila l-jaami'a 'to the university' (long vowels are pronounced short before two consonants); **فِي الْجَامِعَةِ** fi l-jaami'a 'in the

university'. In these cases a هَمْزة is not written, and in very carefully written texts such as الْقُرْآن, the أَلِف is written instead with a هَمْزة الْوَصْل 'joining hamza' on: أ. The rules for the pronunciation of ال are a bore, but it's worth keeping practising - in the end they become automatic, and they apply in colloquial spoken as well as written Standard Arabic.

Exercise 20. Here are some common words that begin with هَمْزة الْوَصْل :

exam, test اِمْتِحَانِ a woman اِمْرَأَةٌ * my name اِسْمِي

Read the following aloud, remembering that if there's a vowel before the هَمْزة الْوَصْل that vowel needs pronouncing in place of the هَمْزة and the vowel it carries: (translations¹⁴)

أ) رَجُلٌ وَاِمْرَأَةٌ: أَنَا اِسْمِي سَارَةَ. أَنَا مِنْ سُوْرِيَا وَاِسْمِي مَحْمُوْدٌ. هَذِهِ اِمْرَأَةٌ عَرَبِيَّةٌ.

Remember also to shorten any long vowel before ال.

ب) فِي الْوَاِجِبِ، إِلَى الْجَامِعَةِ، هَذِهِ الْأُسْتَاذَةُ (this lecturer)، فِي الْغُرْفَةِ، مِنْ الْمَدْرَسَةِ إِلَى الْجَامِعَةِ، مَعَ الْعَمَلِ، الْقَلَمُ عَلَى الْكِتَابِ، فِي الْمَدِيْنَةِ.
عَلَى هَذَا الْمَكْتَبِ كِتَابٌ صَعْبٌ. أَنَا مِنْ هَذِهِ الْمَدِيْنَةِ.
الْبَابُ فِي الْمَدْرَسَةِ جَدِيْدٌ. هَذَا الْوَلَدُ فِي الْغُرْفَةِ.

b) الحُرُوفُ الشَّمْسِيَّةُ وَالْقَمَرِيَّةُ sun and moon letters

With words beginning with certain letters the 'l' of ال is not pronounced, and instead the first letter of the word that follows it is pronounced double: الدَّرْسُ 'ad-dars'. In fully vowelled texts, a شِدَّة is written over the د to show this doubling, but the ال itself is written the same. The set of letters which behave like this with ال are, roughly speaking, those pronounced with the tongue against the teeth or in that area of the mouth, and are known as الحُرُوفُ الشَّمْسِيَّةُ 'sun letters' since شَمْسُ 'sun' begins with one of them. These letters are:

ت، ث، د، ذ، ر، ز، س، ش، ص، ض، ط، ظ، ل، ن

The other consonants, those which do not affect the pronunciation of the ال, are الحُرُوفُ الْقَمَرِيَّةُ 'moon letters', because قَمَرٌ 'moon' begins with one of them. They are either pronounced further forward in the mouth than الحُرُوفُ الشَّمْسِيَّةُ, i.e. with the lips: و، ف، م، ب; or further back in the mouth:

ج، ي، ك، خ، غ، ق، ح، ع، ه، أ

(in order of how far back in the mouth they are pronounced).

Exercise 21. Read the following aloud, preferably several times each. Usually if you write a vowel on a letter with a *shadda*, you also need to write the *shadda*, but the *shaddas* on sun letters are missing here.

(Translations¹⁵)

أ) الشَّمْسُ، الطَّالِبُ، النُّورُ، الصَّبَاحُ، الأُسْتَاذُ، البِنْتُ، المَكْتَبُ، السُّؤَالُ، الوَلَدُ، الغُرْفَةُ، الرَّجُلُ، البَابُ، الطَّالِبَةُ،
الاسْمُ، الكَبِيرُ، الصَّغِيرُ، المَدِينَةُ، القَلَمُ، الكِتَابُ، النُّورُ، الواجِبُ، السُّؤَالُ.
ب) فِي الشَّمْسِ، إِلَى الطَّالِبَةِ، إِلَى المَدْرَسَةِ، الرَّجُلِ وَالمَرَأَةِ، فِي هَذَا السُّؤَالِ، هَذَا الصَّبَاحُ، إِلَى الجَامِعَةِ، هِيَ
الطَّالِبَةُ she's the student وَأَنَا الأُسْتَاذُ. أَنْتَ الرَّجُلُ. أَنَا فِي الجَامِعَةِ. الطَّالِبُ مَعَ الأُسْتَاذِ. الكِتَابُ وَالقَلَمُ عَلَى
المَكْتَبِ فِي الغُرْفَةِ.

8. One letter words

These are always written as part of the following word, and never stand alone:

وَ and بِ by, with كَ as, like لَ for, to, belonging to فَ thus, and then

Note: when لَ is written with a word beginning with الَ, the أَلِفُ is dropped:

لِ + الَ < لِلِ

Exercise 22. (Translations¹⁶)

بِالقَلَمِ وَالغُرْفَةِ كَطَالِبِ لِلجَامِعَةِ لِلطَّالِبِ

Grammatical terms:

Our current students have suggested that you will also find it helpful to have some familiarity with grammatical terms in English if you don't already, e.g. adverb, preposition, conjunction, subject, predicate, object, active, passive, transitive/intransitive verbs, suffix, participle, infinitive, relative clause, conditional sentence.

Answers

1. our door

2. Ex.2 a) door, book, Libya, from, girl/daughter, no, your (f.) book, between, from, door, no, girl/daughter, book, possible, my door, my daughter, what, your (m.) book, an office and a door.

3. Ex.2 b) my book, our house, my daughter, your (m.) book, your house, our office, our daughter, your (f.) book, our door,

your (f.) book.

4. نيو يورك = New York; كندا = Canada; كومبيوتر = computer.

5.Ex.4 no, big, light, an office, homework, from, a man and a boy, a book, a girl, my homework, new, a door, beautiful/

handsome, a handsome boy, a new book, a big office, from a man, a new light, a big book, a boy and a girl, sun, your (m.)

door, between a girl and a boy.

6. Ex.6: a beautiful office, a new student, a beautiful girl, a pen and a book, no, a boy with a student, a big pen, your (f.) pen, a man in an office, a new pen and a beautiful book, our student and my work, sun

7.Ex.8 a) 8, b) 9, c) 7, d) 5, e) 2, f) 3, g) 10, h) 11, i) 6, j) 1, k) 4.

8.Ex.9 1. He's a boy. 2. Mahmoud is a student. 3. It is difficult work. 4. It's new homework. 5. He is a boy with a pen. 6. Muhammad is a handsome man. 7. She is from Syria. 8. Yasir is a small boy. 9. It is a small book from Syria. 10. She is a girl from London. 11. They are from Libya. 12. It is a beautiful morning. 13. Our student is new. 14. Your homework is difficult.

9.Ex.11 1. an Arab student (m.) 2. an Arab student (f.) 3. a new room 4. a new student (m.) 5. difficult work 6. a small university 7. a new morning 8. a small room 9. a Muslim student (f.) 10. a new school 11. an Arabic book 12. an Arab girl 13. a big Arabic university 14. a small pen 15. a beautiful school (f.) 16. a small room

10.Ex.14. 1. The city of Beirut is in France. 2. The city of London is near Libya. 3. The city of Cambridge is small. 4. The University of Cambridge is new. 5. In the city of London (there) is a big university. 6. In the University of Cambridge (there) is a big office.

11. Female lecturer

12.Ex.18. Egypt, question, city, small, yes; no

I; you (m.); you (f.); he; she

this (m.); this (f.); but; Allah

13. Ex.19. 1. This is a small/young man. And he is (a) Muslim. 2. This is a small city. 3. This is a small school and this is a difficult book. 4. This is an Arabic lecturer (f.). And she is new. 5. This is a big room with an office/desk. 6. He is a lecturer in the University of London and he is from Syria. 7. Are you a new student? - No. I am a student from an Arab university. 8. This is a difficult question. 9. It is a new room.

14. Ex.20. أ) a man and a woman; My name is Sara. I'm from Syria and my name is Mahmoud. This is an Arab woman. ب) in the homework, to the university, this lecturer (f.), in the room, from school (= the school) to university, with the work, the pen is on the book, in the city.

On this desk (there) is a difficult book.

I'm from this city.

The door in the school is new.

This boy is in the room..

15.Ex.21. أ) the sun, the student (m.), the light, the morning, the lecturer (m.), the girl, the office, the question, the boy, the room, the man, the door, the student (f.), the name, the big one, the small one, the city, the pen, the book, the light, the homework, the question.

ب) in the sun, to the student (f.), to the school, the man and the woman, in this question, this morning, to the university.

She's the student, and I'm the lecturer (m.). You are the man. I'm at (the) university. The student (m.) is with the lecturer. The book and the pen are on the desk in the room.

16. Ex.22. to the lesson; for/belonging to the university; as a student; and the room; by car