
Arabic 101

Introduction to Arabic Language & Culture

World Cultures & Education · 2026 learning edition

Developed for WCE under the editorial direction of
Wagih Elgohary, Ph.D., Ed.D.

العربية: أصوات وحروف وثقافة

An eight-module beginner course and practice book

Welcome to Arabic

This original WCE course is for adult and older teenage beginners, including learners without prior Arabic. It is a non-credit community learning course, not a university-credit offering. Plan eight weeks at 4–6 hours weekly, or study at your own pace. MSA provides the core language model; Egyptian, Levantine and Iraqi examples are explicitly labeled for cultural awareness.

What you will be able to do

1. Recognize 28 alphabet letters, contextual forms and major joining exceptions.
2. Distinguish short and long vowels and begin producing unfamiliar consonants.
3. Read and write familiar vowelised words and short connected sentences.
4. Exchange greetings, introduce yourself and ask basic questions.
5. Describe family and familiar objects; count 0–20.
6. Use simple first-person verbs and polite requests.
7. Compare MSA and selected regional expressions without mixing labels.
8. Investigate a cultural example using specific evidence and respectful questions.

Your weekly rhythm

Preview 20 minutes; sound and script practice 15 minutes daily; vocabulary retrieval 10 minutes daily; dialogue rehearsal 30 minutes; culture inquiry 30 minutes; weekly task and reflection 45 minutes. Split practice across days. Record yourself, listen back, and revise one feature at a time.

Using this book and the online course

Arabic text is the primary reading target. Transliteration is a temporary bridge: ā ī ū mark long vowels, ḥ and ʿ mark throat consonants, and ṣ ḍ ṭ ḏ emphatic consonants. English approximations are imperfect. Vocabulary uses beginner pause forms; selected expressions retain customary endings. The online edition includes Dr. Elgohary's own recorded voice. Speaking assessment still requires a qualified listener. Listening scripts and instructor recording guidance are supplied in this package.

Your learning path

Module	Focus	Outcome
1	First sounds, first letters	Follow right-to-left reading; distinguish short vowels; recognize ا ب ت ث ن ي.
2	Joining letters and greeting people	Recognize ج ح خ د ذ ر ز; connect letters; exchange greetings.
3	Sound families and introductions	Recognize س ش ص ض ط ظ ع غ; ask names and origins.
4	Finish the alphabet; meet the family	Recognize ف ق ك ل م ه و; identify family members and basic possession.
5	Numbers, places and useful questions	Count 0-20; recognize both digit styles; ask where a place is.
6	Describe people, things and learning	Use pronouns, basic adjective agreement and simple present verbs.
7	Food, courtesy and regional voices	Make a polite request; recognize sun letters; compare labeled regional phrases.
8	Read, speak and connect	Combine script, pronunciation, comprehension and cultural inquiry in a final portfolio.

Alphabet & joining reference

Forms below show connection with a small extension stroke. For ا د ذ ز و, “—” means no distinct onward-joining initial or medial form; their isolated/final shapes occur instead. They do not join to the following letter on the left. Fonts may vary.

Letter	Name	Sound	Initial	Medial	Final
ا	alif	ā / carrier for hamza	—	—	ل
ب	bāʾ	b	ب	بـ	بـ
ت	tāʾ	t	ت	تـ	تـ
ث	thāʾ	th in thin	ث	ثـ	ثـ
ج	jīm	j in MSA	ج	جـ	جـ
ح	ḥāʾ	pharyngeal breath	ح	حـ	حـ
خ	khāʾ	kh, as loch	خ	خـ	خـ
د	dāl	d	—	—	د
ذ	dhāl	th in this	—	—	ذ
ر	rāʾ	tapped / trilled r	—	—	ر
ز	zāy	z	—	—	ز
س	sīn	s	س	سـ	سـ
ش	shīn	sh	ش	شـ	شـ
ص	ṣād	emphatic s	ص	صـ	صـ
ض	ḍād	emphatic d	ض	ضـ	ضـ
ط	ṭāʾ	emphatic t	ط	طـ	طـ
ظ	ẓāʾ	emphatic voiced th	ظ	ظـ	ظـ
ع	ʿayn	voiced pharyngeal	ع	عـ	عـ

Letter	Name	Sound	Initial	Medial	Final
غ	ghayn	voiced back friction	غ	ـغـ	ـغـ
ف	fāʾ	f	ف	ـفـ	ـفـ
ق	qāf	back stop q	ق	ـقـ	ـقـ
ك	kāf	k	ك	ـكـ	ـكـ
ل	lām	l	ل	ـلـ	ـلـ
م	mīm	m	م	ـمـ	ـمـ
ن	nūn	n	ن	ـنـ	ـنـ
هـ	hāʾ	h	هـ	ـهـ	ـهـ
و	wāw	w / ū	—	—	ـوـ
ي	yāʾ	y / ī	ي	ـيـ	ـيـ

Reading marks and building words

Example	Name	Reading
بَ	fathā	ba, short a
بِ	kasra	bi, short i
بُ	ḍamma	bu, short u
بْ	sukūn	b with no following vowel
بّ	shadda	double b
بَا	long ā	bā
بِي	long ī	bī
بُو	long ū	bū
شُكْرًا	tanwīn	shukran
ء ا إ و ئ	hamza	glottal stop; different seats
ة	tā' marbūṭa	often -a at pause
ى	alif maqṣūra	long ā
لا	lām-alif	lā

Three-step decoding

1. Identify the consonant bodies and dots. 2. Add vowel marks and length. 3. Blend the word without saying the letter names.

بَيْت : bayt, house. ب + ي + ت ← بَيْت
كِتَاب : kitāb, book. ك + ت + ا + ب ← كِتَاب

Sound laboratory

Practice ء / ع / ق / ك / ط / ت / ص / س / ح / ه. Listen to a proficient MSA speaker, imitate, record, and ask for feedback. Do not invent English equivalents for every sound. If discomfort occurs, stop forcing the sound and return to comfortable speech.

Writing laboratory

Write on a baseline from right to left. Copy the large printed model, then write from memory. Keep dots distinct from vowel marks. Check connectivity before speed. Use blank practice lines at the end of this book.

First sounds, first letters

Follow right-to-left reading; distinguish short vowels; recognize ا ب ت ث ن ي.

Learn

Arabic runs from right to left, but numbers are read in their normal numeric order. Learn a letter by its sound, shape and joining behavior together. Dots are part of the letter: ا has one below, ت two above, ث three above. A small vowel mark is different from a letter dot. Begin with clear printed Naskh shapes before exploring handwriting styles. Alif ا commonly carries long ā; hamza ء represents the glottal stop, as between the syllables of “uh-oh.” They are not the same sound. ب ba, بي bi and بُ bu share a consonant but have different short vowels. Hold باب bā, بي bī and بُ bū about twice as long. English spelling is only a reminder; it cannot replace careful listening.

Words and phrases

Arabic	Reading aid	Meaning
أَنَا	anā	I
أَنْتَ	anta	you, masculine singular
أَنْتِ	anti	you, feminine singular
بَاب	bāb	door
بَيْت	bayt	house
بِنْت	bint	girl / daughter

Model conversation / reading

Arabic	Reading aid	Meaning
أَنَا نُور.	anā Nūr.	I am Noor.
أَنَا آمِينَ.	anā Amīn.	I am Amin.

Culture in context

Arabic is a language used by people with different religions, histories and identities. Arab, Arabic-speaking and Muslim are not interchangeable labels. Ask how a person identifies rather than assuming.

Practice and submit

1. Circle the letter with two dots above: ب ت ث.
2. Read aloud: بَ بٍ بُ بَا بِي بُو. Record two attempts and compare vowel length.
3. Copy باب and بيت five times. Mark any break in joining.
4. Introduce yourself with أنا and your name.

Check your progress

Can you perform this module's outcome without looking at the English? Select "independent," "with support," or "needs practice." Write one next step.

Joining letters and greeting people

Recognize ر ز د ذ ح خ ج; connect letters; exchange greetings.

Learn

A letter changes shape according to its neighbors. Most letters connect to the following letter on the left; ر ز د ذ لا do not. They can receive a connection from the preceding letter on the right. A break inside a word is not a space between words. Compare باب with ج ح خ. ج ح خ share a body: ج has a dot below, ح no dot, خ a dot above. ح is a breathy sound produced deep in the throat, without scraping; خ has friction like the consonant in Scottish “loch.” Do not force the throat. د is d; ذ is the voiced th in “this.” ر is a light tap or trill, not the English r. ز is z. Practice slowly, then in short words.

Words and phrases

Arabic	Reading aid	Meaning
مَرْحَبًا	marḥaban	hello
أَهْلًا	ahlan	welcome / hello
صَبَاحُ الْخَيْرِ	ṣabāḥ al-khayr	good morning
صَبَاحُ النُّورِ	ṣabāḥ an-nūr	morning response
شُكْرًا	shukran	thank you
عَفْوًا	‘afwan	you are welcome / pardon me

Model conversation / reading

Arabic	Reading aid	Meaning
مَرْحَبًا!	marḥaban!	Hello!
أَهْلًا! أَنَا لَيْلَى.	ahlan! anā Laylā.	Hello! I am Layla.
أَنَا سَامِي.	anā Sāmī.	I am Sami.

Culture in context

Greetings depend on setting and relationship. **السلام عليكم** and its response **وعليكم السلام** are widely used; **مرحبًا** is another useful greeting. Avoid presenting one greeting as compulsory for everyone. Observe personal-space and handshake preferences.

Practice and submit

1. Which do not connect onward: **ب د ر خ ا**?
2. Join these letters into words: **ت + ي + ب** ; **ب + ا** ; **ب + ل + ا** .
3. Write a four-line morning exchange with two names.
4. Compare **و** and **ح** by listening to a proficient speaker; describe what you notice.

Check your progress

Can you perform this module's outcome without looking at the English? Select "independent," "with support," or "needs practice." Write one next step.

Sound families and introductions

Recognize س ش ص ض ط ظ ع غ; ask names and origins.

Learn

س is s and ش is sh. ط ظ ع غ are emphatic consonants: the back of the tongue retracts and nearby vowels change quality. Do not merely make them louder. Compare س / ص and ط / ظ with a model speaker. ع is a voiced pharyngeal consonant, shown here as ‘; it is not an English vowel. غ is voiced friction toward the back of the mouth; it differs from ع. Practice one comfortable sound at a time. Arabic present-tense identity sentences usually need no word for “am/is/are”: أنا طالب means “I am a male student.” Use ما for “what” and من أين for “from where.” أنت and أنت identify the person addressed, not the speaker.

Words and phrases

Arabic	Reading aid	Meaning
مَا اسْمُكَ؟	mā ismuka?	What is your name? to a man
مَا اسْمُكِ؟	mā ismuki?	What is your name? to a woman
إِسْمِي	ismī	my name
مِنْ أَيْنَ أَنْتَ؟	min ayna anta?	Where are you from? to a man
مِنْ أَيْنَ أَنْتِ؟	min ayna anti?	Where are you from? to a woman
مِنْ مِصْرَ	min Miṣr	from Egypt

Model conversation / reading

Arabic	Reading aid	Meaning
مَا اسْمُكِ؟	mā ismuki?	What is your name?
إِسْمِي مَرْيَمَ. وَأَنْتَ؟	ismī Maryam. wa-anta?	My name is Maryam. And you?
إِسْمِي عُمرَ. أَنَا مِنْ مِصْرَ.	ismī ‘Umar. anā min Miṣr.	My name is Omar. I am from Egypt.

Culture in context

MSA is useful in writing, formal communication and education. Everyday conversations often use regional varieties. Egyptian ج is commonly pronounced g, while the course MSA model uses j. Neither variety is inferior; label the variety you are practicing.

Practice and submit

1. Match: ع / س / ش to sh / s / ʿ.
2. Choose a question addressed to a woman: مَا اسْمُكَ or مَا اسْمُكِ?
3. Write two sentences giving your name and origin.
4. Record a 20-second introduction, then repeat without transliteration.

Check your progress

Can you perform this module's outcome without looking at the English? Select "independent," "with support," or "needs practice." Write one next step.

Finish the alphabet; meet the family

Recognize ف ق ك ل م ه و; identify family members and basic possession.

Learn

ف is f, ك k and ق a stop made farther back than k. م is m; ل l; ه h. و can represent consonant w or long ū; ي can represent y or long ī. Context and vowel marks help. The sequence ل + ل appears as لا, a familiar ligature. ه is tā' marbūṭa, usually pronounced -a or -ah in a beginner pause reading, and t in certain grammatical connections. It often marks feminine nouns but not all feminine nouns end in ه. ا is alif maqṣūra and represents long ā, as in ليلي. At this stage use short standalone phrases without full case endings. "My book" is كتابي; the suffix -ī expresses "my." Learn أبي and أمي as whole useful words.

Words and phrases

Arabic	Reading aid	Meaning
أَبِي	abī	my father
أُمِّي	ummī	my mother
أَخِي	akhī	my brother
أُخْتِي	ukhtī	my sister
هَذَا	hādhā	this, masculine
هَذِهِ	hādhihi	this, feminine
أُسْرَةٌ	usra	family
كِتَابِي	kitābī	my book

Model conversation / reading

Arabic	Reading aid	Meaning
هَذَا أَبِي.	hādhā abī.	This is my father.

Arabic	Reading aid	Meaning
وَهَذِهِ أُمِّي.	wa-hādhihi ummī.	And this is my mother.
هَذِهِ أُخْتِي لَيْلَى.	hādhihi ukhtī Laylā.	This is my sister Layla.

Culture in context

Family vocabulary is useful, but learners need not disclose private family details. A fictional family is equally acceptable. Family structures and naming conventions differ across communities; ask rather than generalize.

Practice and submit

1. Choose: هذه / هذا أُمِّي.
2. Add “my” to كِتَاب.
3. Find the special final letter in مَدْرَسَة and لَيْلَى.
4. Make a fictional family card with three captions.

Check your progress

Can you perform this module’s outcome without looking at the English? Select “independent,” “with support,” or “needs practice.” Write one next step.

Numbers, places and useful questions

Count 0–20; recognize both digit styles; ask where a place is.

Learn

Arabic-speaking settings may use 0–9 or ٠–٩, depending on place and context. Read multi-digit values in normal numeric order: ٢٠ = 20. Learn numbers here as standalone counting forms; number-noun agreement has additional rules and is not covered by simply attaching any noun. أين means “where”; هل introduces a yes/no question; نعم is yes and لا no. في means “in/at.” أين المتحف؟ asks “Where is the museum?” The reply المتحف في القاهرة means “The museum is in Cairo.” Definite ال attaches to the noun. Learn place names as real destinations and respect local pronunciations.

Words and phrases

Arabic	Reading aid	Meaning
صِفْر، وَاحِد، إِثْنَان، ثَلَاثَة، أَرْبَعَة، خَمْسَة	ṣifr, wāḥid, ithnān, thalātha, arba‘a, khamsa	0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
سِتَّة، سَبْعَة، ثَمَانِيَة، تِسْعَة، عَشْرَة	sitta, sab‘a, thamāniya, tis‘a, ‘ashara	6, 7, 8, 9, 10
أَيْنَ؟	ayna?	where?
مُتَحَف	maṭḥaf	museum
مَدْرَسَة	madrasa	school
مَكْتَبَة	maktaba	library / bookshop, by context

Model conversation / reading

Arabic	Reading aid	Meaning
أَيْنَ الْمَتْحَف؟	ayna al-maṭḥaf?	Where is the museum?

Arabic	Reading aid	Meaning
الْمُتَحَف فِي الْقَاهِرَة.	al-mathaf fi al-Qāhira.	The museum is in Cairo.
شُكْرًا.	shukran.	Thank you.

Culture in context

Explore a museum or library in an Arabic-speaking city using its official website. Notice Arabic and other languages on signs. Museums show particular collections and viewpoints; they do not represent an entire culture.

Practice and submit

1. Convert ٢٠ , ١٢ , ٧ , ٣ to Western digits.
2. Write أَيْنَ + the definite word for school.
3. Count from zero to ten aloud without reading.
4. Write a location sentence using فِي and a real city.

Check your progress

Can you perform this module's outcome without looking at the English? Select "independent," "with support," or "needs practice." Write one next step.

Describe people, things and learning

Use pronouns, basic adjective agreement and simple present verbs.

Learn

Learn أنا أنت/أنتِ you, هو he and هي she. These are singular pronouns; plural forms can wait. A descriptive adjective normally follows its noun: كتاب جديد “a new book”; مدرسة جديدة “a new school.” Both become definite in الكتاب الجديد “the new book.” In الكتاب جديد “the book is new,” the noun is definite but the predicate adjective is not. For basic feminine agreement, طالب/طالبة and جديد/جديدة give helpful patterns, not universal rules. Learn أدرس “I study,” أقرأ “I read,” and أكتب “I write” as functional first-person verbs before memorizing a whole conjugation chart. لا before a present verb gives basic negation: لا أفهم “I do not understand.”

Words and phrases

Arabic	Reading aid	Meaning
طَالِب / طَالِبَة	ṭālib / ṭāliba	male / female student
جَدِيد / جَدِيدَة	jadīd / jadīda	new, masculine / feminine
كَبِير / كَبِيرَة	kabīr / kabīra	big, masculine / feminine
أَدْرُس الْعَرَبِيَّةَ	adrus al-‘arabiyya	I study Arabic
أَقْرَأُ	aqra’	I read
أَكْتُبُ	aktub	I write
لَا أَفْهَمُ	lā afham	I do not understand

Model conversation / reading

Arabic	Reading aid	Meaning
هَلْ تَدْرُسُ الْعَرَبِيَّةَ؟	hal tadrus al-‘arabiyya?	Do you study Arabic? to a man
نَعَمْ، أَدْرُسُ الْعَرَبِيَّةَ.	na’am, adrus al-‘arabiyya.	Yes, I study Arabic.

Arabic	Reading aid	Meaning
أَقْرَأْ وَأَكْتُبْ.	aqra' wa-aktub.	I read and write.

Culture in context

Learning Arabic can connect literature, media, daily interaction and art. Calligraphy is an artistic tradition, while everyday script is a practical skill. Compare a readable sign with an artistic composition without judging them by the same purpose.

Practice and submit

1. Complete: مدرسة (جديد / جديدة).
2. Translate: الكتاب جديد.
3. Write "I study Arabic" and "I write."
4. Describe a book and a school with two different adjectives.

Check your progress

Can you perform this module's outcome without looking at the English? Select "independent," "with support," or "needs practice." Write one next step.

Food, courtesy and regional voices

Make a polite request; recognize sun letters; compare labeled regional phrases.

Learn

أريد means “I want / would like.” Add من فضلك “please” in a suitable context. الماء water and الشاي tea contain ل. Before sun letters the l sound assimilates: الشمس ash-shams; before moon letters it remains: القمر al-qamar. The spelling keeps ل. Sun letters are ن ط ظ ل ن. A shadda doubles a consonant, as in أمي ummī. Sukūn shows no following short vowel. Tanwīn adds final n in fully pronounced forms; learn شكرًا as shukran. Natural pause reading often omits grammatical final short vowels. Regional expressions are useful recognition examples, not replacements for course MSA.

Words and phrases

Arabic	Reading aid	Meaning
أريد	urīd	I want / would like
ماء	mā'	water
شاي	shāy	tea
قهوة	qahwa	coffee
مِنْ فَضْلِكَ / مِنْ فَضْلِكِ	min faḍlika / min faḍliki	please, to a man / woman
كُشْرِي	kusharī	kushari, an Egyptian dish

Model conversation / reading

Arabic	Reading aid	Meaning
مَرْحَبًا. أريد شايًا، مِنْ فَضْلِكَ.	marḥaban. urīd shāyan, min faḍlika.	Hello. I would like tea, please.
تَقْصِّلِي.	tafaḍḍalī.	Here you are, to a woman.

Arabic	Reading aid	Meaning
شُكْرًا.	shukran.	Thank you.

Culture in context

Kushari combines rice, lentils, pasta and accompaniments in common Egyptian versions; recipes vary. Explore a dish as a starting point for questions about ingredients, migration and daily life. Do not assume all Arabic speakers share one cuisine or diet. Egyptian إزّايك؟ izzayyak/izzayyik, Levantine كيفك؟ kīfak/kīfik and Iraqi شلونك؟ shlōnak/shlōnich are common regional ways of asking “How are you?” Usage varies by locality and speaker.

Practice and submit

1. Classify: القمر / الشمس as sun or moon examples.
2. Explain the mark in أمّي.
3. Write a polite water request.
4. Compare one MSA greeting with a regional example; label both.

Check your progress

Can you perform this module’s outcome without looking at the English? Select “independent,” “with support,” or “needs practice.” Write one next step.

Read, speak and connect

Combine script, pronunciation, comprehension and cultural inquiry in a final portfolio.

Learn

Read connected text in small meaningful chunks, not letter names. First locate familiar words and punctuation, then decode unfamiliar words using shape, vowel marks and context. Remove transliteration progressively: read Arabic once with help, once without it, then record. Beginners will still need a dictionary or teacher for unvowelled unfamiliar words. A successful final introduction communicates a name, origin, learning activity and one interest. Fluency is not promised after eight weeks. Continue with regular listening, spaced retrieval, handwriting and interaction with speakers from the varieties you wish to learn.

Words and phrases

Arabic	Reading aid	Meaning
أُحِبُّ	uḥibb	I like / love
الْفَنِّ	al-fann	art
الثَّقَافَةِ	ath-thaqāfa	culture
اللُّغَةُ الْعَرَبِيَّةُ	al-lugha al-‘arabiyya	the Arabic language
إِلَى اللِّقَاءِ	ilā al-liqā’	goodbye / until we meet
كَيْفَ حَالُكَ؟ / كَيْفَ حَالُكِ؟	kayfa ḥāluka / ḥāluki?	How are you? to a man / woman

Model conversation / reading

Arabic	Reading aid	Meaning
مَرْحَبًا. إِسْمِي نُور.	marḥaban. ismī Nūr.	Hello. My name is Noor.
أَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِيكََا. أَدْرُسُ الْعَرَبِيَّةَ.	anā min Amrīkā. adrus al-‘arabiyya.	I am from America. I study Arabic.
أُحِبُّ الْفَنِّ وَالثَّقَافَةَ.	uḥibb al-fann wa-ath-thaqāfa.	I like art and culture.

Culture in context

Choose an official cultural resource and distinguish an observation from an interpretation: “The exhibition shows...” is evidence; “Everyone in this country...” is an unsupported generalization. End with a question you would respectfully ask a local speaker.

Practice and submit

1. Read the dialogue without transliteration and identify three facts about Noor.
2. Write a 40–60-word introduction using supported vocabulary; a shorter accurate version is acceptable for early beginners.
3. Record 45–60 seconds of speech and answer two familiar questions.
4. Create a 150-word English cultural reflection with a source, one comparison and one open question.

Check your progress

Can you perform this module’s outcome without looking at the English? Select “independent,” “with support,” or “needs practice.” Write one next step.

Numbers and a mini grammar reference

Standalone counting forms 11-20. Case and gender can alter number forms in fuller sentences; those rules belong in the next course.

Digits	Arabic	Reading aid
١١	أحد عشر	aḥada ‘ashar
١٢	اثنا عشر	ithnā ‘ashar
١٣	ثلاثة عشر	thalāthata ‘ashar
١٤	أربعة عشر	arba‘ata ‘ashar
١٥	خمسة عشر	khamсата ‘ashar
١٦	سنة عشر	sittata ‘ashar
١٧	سبعة عشر	sab‘ata ‘ashar
١٨	ثمانية عشر	thamāniyata ‘ashar
١٩	تسعة عشر	tis‘ata ‘ashar
٢٠	عشرون	‘ishrūn

Pattern	Function
أنا طالب. / أنا طالبة.	I am a male / female student.
هو طالب. / هي طالبة.	He / she is a student.
كتابي / كتابك / كتابها	my book / your book / her book; your suffix varies -ka/-ki
كتاب جديد / الكتاب الجديد	a new book / the new book
الكتاب جديد.	The book is new.
أدرس / أقرأ / أكتب	I study / read / write
لا أفهم.	I do not understand.

Pattern	Function
هل ...؟ / أين ...؟	yes/no question / where ...?

Assessment and learner support

Suggested instructor-led weighting: weekly sound/script practice 25%; dialogue and participation portfolio 20%; Module 3 checkpoint 15%; Module 6 progress task 15%; final integrated portfolio 25%. Total 100%. Self-study learners use these as milestones, not awarded grades.

Module 3 checkpoint

Identify 12 letters already taught (20 points); join بيت، باب، and أنا from letter prompts (20); read six familiar vowelised items (20); exchange names and origins (25); compare MSA with one labeled dialect observation (15). Total 100.

Module 6 progress task

Recognize all 28 letters and six non-onward-joining letters (20); read ten familiar words (20); write five original family or object sentences (25); give a short introduction and answer هل أبن or (25) هل; explain a culture observation without generalizing (10). Total 100.

Final portfolio rubric

Criterion	Points	Evidence
Script and connected reading	25	Recognizable letters, correct dots, connections and decoding
Speaking and listening response	25	Intelligible rehearsed speech; appropriate response to familiar prompts
Basic language use	20	Useful vocabulary, question patterns and simple agreement
Original written communication	15	Personal or fictional information conveyed in original sentences
Cultural inquiry	15	Specific example, source, comparison and respectful question

For each criterion, award full credit for clear independent achievement; approximately 75% for achievement with minor errors; 50% for partial performance needing support; 25% for limited evidence; 0 for no evidence. Give specific feedback and a revision target. Accent differences alone are not failure.

WCE learning guidelines

Respect classmates and cultural differences. A fictional identity/family is permitted. In a guided cohort the instructor announces deadlines, revision opportunities and accessibility arrangements before enrollment. In self-study there are no weekly deadlines. Use AI for explanation or feedback with disclosure; submitted speaking and writing should show the learner's own skill. Do not use detector scores as a substitute for assessment evidence.

Provide text alternatives for audio, keyboard access and flexible ways to demonstrate learning. A transcript-assisted listening task assesses supported comprehension and should be labeled as such. Do not post recordings of other people without permission. Online progress is stored only in the learner's browser, not in a WCE gradebook. No accredited credit or official proficiency certification is implied.

Listening studio: scripts and activities

For authentic listening practice, an instructor or proficient MSA speaker records each script at a clear natural pace and again slowly. Leave a pause between statements. Record words in context, avoid music, and name files M01-M08. Learners first listen without the transcript, answer, then listen with it. Use the instructor recording for matching examples.

Track M01: First sounds, first letters

أَنَا نُور. أَنَا أَمِين.

Task: Identify the greeting or topic; write two words you hear; summarize one message in English. Then shadow one sentence and compare your recording. Key: use the module's dialogue meanings; accept accurately identified words.

Track M02: Joining letters and greeting people

مَرْحَبًا! أَهْلًا! أَنَا لَيْلَى. أَنَا سَامِي.

Task: Identify the greeting or topic; write two words you hear; summarize one message in English. Then shadow one sentence and compare your recording. Key: use the module's dialogue meanings; accept accurately identified words.

Track M03: Sound families and introductions

مَا اسْمُكَ؟ إِسْمِي مَرْيَم. وَأَنْتَ؟ إِسْمِي عُمَر. أَنَا مِنْ مِصْر.

Task: Identify the greeting or topic; write two words you hear; summarize one message in English. Then shadow one sentence and compare your recording. Key: use the module's dialogue meanings; accept accurately identified words.

Track M04: Finish the alphabet; meet the family

هَذَا أَبِي. وَهَذِهِ أُمِّي. هَذِهِ أُخْتِي لَيْلَى.

Task: Identify the greeting or topic; write two words you hear; summarize one message in English. Then shadow one sentence and compare your recording. Key: use the module's dialogue meanings; accept accurately identified words.

Track M05: Numbers, places and useful questions

أَيْنَ الْمَتْحَف؟ الْمَتْحَف فِي الْقَاهِرَةِ. شُكْرًا.

Task: Identify the greeting or topic; write two words you hear; summarize one message in English. Then shadow one sentence and compare your recording. Key: use the module's dialogue meanings; accept accurately identified words.

Track M06: Describe people, things and learning

هَلْ تَدْرُسُ الْعَرَبِيَّةَ؟ نَعَمْ، أَدْرُسُ الْعَرَبِيَّةَ. أَقْرَأُ وَأَكْتُبُ.

Task: Identify the greeting or topic; write two words you hear; summarize one message in English. Then shadow one sentence and compare your recording. Key: use the module's dialogue meanings; accept accurately identified words.

Track M07: Food, courtesy and regional voices

مَرْحَبًا. أُرِيدُ شَيْئًا، مِنْ فَضْلِكَ. تَقْصِّلِي. شُكْرًا.

Task: Identify the greeting or topic; write two words you hear; summarize one message in English. Then shadow one sentence and compare your recording. Key: use the module's dialogue meanings; accept accurately identified words.

Track M08: Read, speak and connect

مَرْحَبًا. إِسْمِي نُور. أَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِيكََا. أَدْرُسُ الْعَرَبِيَّةَ. أُحِبُّ الْقُرْآنَ وَالثَّقَافَةَ.

Task: Identify the greeting or topic; write two words you hear; summarize one message in English. Then shadow one sentence and compare your recording. Key: use the module's dialogue meanings; accept accurately identified words.

Practice answer key

Module 1

1. ت
2. Short a/i/u; long ā/ī/ū. A reader or teacher should assess pronunciation.
3. باب breaks after بيت ا; joins throughout.
4. أنا + your name.

Module 2

1. د ر ا
2. باب; بيت
3. Use صباح الخير / صباح النور and أنا + name.
4. ح is pharyngeal; ه is a glottal h. Feedback is needed for sound accuracy.

Module 3

1. ع; س; ش sh; 'ع
2. ما اسمك؟
3. ... اسمي ... أنا من .
4. Check intelligibility, vowel length, and whether your sentences convey the intended information.

Module 4

1. هذه أمي
2. كتابي
3. ي ends ليلي; ends مدرسة .
4. Use هذا with masculine and هذه with feminine family nouns.

Module 5

1. 3, 7, 12, 20
2. أين المدرسة؟
3. Use the counting list; assess pronunciation with a model.
4. Example: المتحف في القاهرة.

Module 6

1. جديدة
2. The book is new.
3. أدرس العربية. أكتب.
4. كتاب جديد; مدرسة كبيرة are possible answers.

Module 7

1. الشمس sun; القمر moon
2. Shadda doubles m.
3. أريد ماءً، من فضلك.
4. MSA كيف حالك؟ Egyptian إزتك؟ is one valid comparison.

Module 8

1. Name Noor; from America; studies Arabic; likes art and culture. Any three.
2. Use original sentences; assess accuracy and comprehensibility rather than copied length.
3. Use a teacher or proficient speaker to evaluate intelligibility.
4. Check evidence, specificity, respectful wording and source attribution.

Handwriting and reflection pages

Copy each model once, then cover it and write from memory. Check dots, joining and vowel length.

بَيْتَ بَابِ كِتَابٍ

مَرْحَبًا شُكْرًا

إِسْمِي أَنَا مِنْ

أَبِي أُمِّي أُخْتِي

أَدْرُسُ الْعَرَبِيَّةَ

Continue learning and teach this course

Extend the beginner foundation with regular human feedback, more listening and a next-stage course on present-tense conjugation, plural forms, fuller noun phrases and your chosen regional variety.

Selected reference resources

British Council, Arabic language and culture education pack: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/school-resources/find/classroom/arabic-language-and-culture-education-pack>

Unicode, Arabic script and joining behavior, Chapter 9: <https://www.unicode.org/versions/Unicode17.0.0/core-spec/chapter-9/>

These resources inform language/script context and offer further reading. This WCE book contains original explanations and activities; external works are not reproduced or included as licensed course assets.

Facilitator preparation

1. Review examples and regional pronunciation with an experienced Arabic educator.
2. Record the eight supplied listening scripts and sound contrast models before advertising an instructor-audio edition.
3. Use the checkpoint prompts and rubric consistently; offer specific corrections and a revision opportunity.
4. For a cohort, use a learning platform with enrollment, submissions and privacy controls. The supplied standalone course supports self-study.
5. Host the online folder on a static website, or link to the WCE course page. HTML can also be adapted into LMS lesson pages. This package is not SCORM.

Publication notes

Publisher: World Cultures & Education. Course: Arabic 101. Edition: 2026. Language: English with Arabic examples. Audience: beginner adult and older teenage learners. Suggested description: “Build a foundation in Arabic sounds, script, simple communication and cultural understanding through eight practical modules.”

© 2026 World Cultures & Education. WCE course material. Instructor review is recommended before commercial distribution; this edition does not include recorded human narration.

Listen to Dr. Wagih Elgohary

The online edition includes the instructor's complete recorded practice track with slower playback and repeat controls.

[Open the instructor audio and online practice](#)

<https://world-cultures-education.tunedfly5.chatgpt.site/arabic101/>

The recording index in the online edition identifies available clips. The full track remains available for continuous practice.

Extra practice workbook

Complete each item before checking its answer. For speaking tasks, use the instructor recording and seek feedback.

Module 1: review & retrieval

1. Which word means house?

بَيْت / بَاب / يَنْت

2. Which vowel is long?

بَ / بَا / بُ

3. Which letter has one dot below?

ت / ث / ب

Write from memory

Choose four words from this module. Write each in Arabic without looking, then check dots, vowels and joining.

Speak and reflect

Read the module dialogue twice. Record yourself. Identify one sound to improve and one phrase you can now use independently.

Module 2: review & retrieval

1. Reply to صباح الخير.

صباح النور / اسمي عمر / أين؟

2. Join ب + ي + ت.

بيت / باب / بنت

3. Which sound is خ?

English h / friction as in loch / English j

Write from memory

Choose four words from this module. Write each in Arabic without looking, then check dots, vowels and joining.

Speak and reflect

Read the module dialogue twice. Record yourself. Identify one sound to improve and one phrase you can now use independently.

Module 3: review & retrieval

1. What does من أين mean?

what / from where / who

2. Which means my name?

اسمي / أمي / أين

3. A woman is addressed as...

أنت / أنتِ / هو

Write from memory

Choose four words from this module. Write each in Arabic without looking, then check dots, vowels and joining.

Speak and reflect

Read the module dialogue twice. Record yourself. Identify one sound to improve and one phrase you can now use independently.

Module 4: review & retrieval

1. Which means my sister?

أخي / أختي / أبي

2. Which ends in tā' marbūṭa?

ليلي / مدرسة / باب

3. Choose: __ أبي.

هذه / هذا / هي

Write from memory

Choose four words from this module. Write each in Arabic without looking, then check dots, vowels and joining.

Speak and reflect

Read the module dialogue twice. Record yourself. Identify one sound to improve and one phrase you can now use independently.

Module 5: review & retrieval

1. What is v?

5 / 7 / 9

2. Which question asks where?

أين المتحف؟ / ما اسمك؟ / هل تدرس؟

3. What does مكتبة mean?

museum / school / library or bookshop

Write from memory

Choose four words from this module. Write each in Arabic without looking, then check dots, vowels and joining.

Speak and reflect

Read the module dialogue twice. Record yourself. Identify one sound to improve and one phrase you can now use independently.

Module 6: review & retrieval

1. Translate أكتب.

I read / I write / I study

2. Choose: كتاب ____.

جديدة / جديد / كبيرة

3. What does لا أفهم mean?

I do not understand / I study / thank you

Write from memory

Choose four words from this module. Write each in Arabic without looking, then check dots, vowels and joining.

Speak and reflect

Read the module dialogue twice. Record yourself. Identify one sound to improve and one phrase you can now use independently.

Module 7: review & retrieval

1. Which means please to a woman?

من فضلك / من فضلك / صباح الخير

2. Which is a moon-letter word?

الشمس / الشاي / القمر

3. Which phrase is Egyptian?

إنّك؟ / كيف حالك؟ / إلى اللقاء

Write from memory

Choose four words from this module. Write each in Arabic without looking, then check dots, vowels and joining.

Speak and reflect

Read the module dialogue twice. Record yourself. Identify one sound to improve and one phrase you can now use independently.

Module 8: review & retrieval

1. What does أحب الفن mean?

I like art / I am from Egypt / I write

2. Choose a respectful culture claim.

Everyone eats the same food / This recipe uses lentils / All Arabs are alike

3. What does إلى اللقاء mean?

Goodbye / Where / My name

Write from memory

Choose four words from this module. Write each in Arabic without looking, then check dots, vowels and joining.

Speak and reflect

Read the module dialogue twice. Record yourself. Identify one sound to improve and one phrase you can now use independently.

Extra practice answer key

Module 1

1. بيت means house; باب means door.
2. با. The alif lengthens ā.
3. ب. ب has one dot below.

Module 2

1. صباح النور. The conventional response is صباح النور.
2. بيت. All three letters connect in بيت.
3. friction as in loch. خ has friction toward the back of the mouth.

Module 3

1. from where. من أين asks about origin.
2. اسمي = my name. اسمي.
3. أنت. أنت is feminine singular you.

Module 4

1. أختي. أختي means my sister.
2. مدرسة. مدرسة ends with ة.
3. هذا. Use هذا with أبي.

Module 5

1. 7. ٧ = seven.
2. أين المتحف؟. أين asks where.
3. library or bookshop. Context distinguishes library from bookshop.

Module 6

1. I write. أكتب means I write.
2. كتاب جديد is masculine; جديد agrees.
3. I do not understand. لا negates the present verb here.

Module 7

1. من فضلك. The suffix -ki addresses a woman.
2. القمر. In القمر the l of ال is pronounced.
3. إزتك؟. إزتك is a regional Egyptian expression.

Module 8

1. I like art. أحب = I like; الفن = art.
2. This recipe uses lentils. A specific observation avoids a broad stereotype.
3. Goodbye. إلى اللقاء is a farewell.

Final assessment & next steps

Complete these tasks before checking the ebook answer key. This self-study assessment is not a proficiency certification.

1. Write the six letters that do not join onward to the left.
2. Join ك + ت + ل + ب and ب + ي + ت.
3. Read بُو، بِي، بُ، تَا، يِي، بُو and record the difference in length.
4. Write your name and origin in two Arabic sentences.
5. Ask a woman her name.
6. Write “This is my mother” and “This is my father.”
7. Convert ٢٠، ١٢، ٧، ٣ to Western digits.
8. Write “a new book” and “a new school.”
9. Translate لا أفهم and أدرس العربية.
10. Write a polite water request.
11. Record a 45-second introduction; compare with the rubric in the course guide.
12. Write a short culture reflection with a named source and one respectful question.

Answer key for written items

١. ا د ذ ر ز و. ٢. بيت، كتاب. ٤. اسمي ... أنا من ... ٥. ما اسمك؟ ٦. هذه أمي. هذا أبي. ٨. كتاب جديد، مدرسة جديدة.
١٠. أريد ماءً، من فضلك.

7: 3, 7, 12, 20. 9: I study Arabic; I do not understand. Oral and cultural tasks require self-reflection or instructor feedback.

Your next step

Repeat any module where you still need support. Continue with human feedback on sounds, short daily reading, and Arabic 102 topics: plural forms, present-tense verb patterns and everyday regional conversation.