

VIRTUES AND FEATURES OF ARABIC

MOTIVATION FOR THOSE COMMENCING THE STUDY OF
THE PINNACLE OF ALL LANGUAGES

TOPICS COVERED

- ✓ Qur'an Ayat about the Arabicness of the Qur'an
- ✓ Arabic's designation for Divine Revelation
- ✓ The miracle of Qur'anic Arabic
- ✓ The Divine preservation of Arabic
 - *Activity*
- ✓ History of the Arabic language
 - *Discover ancient Arabic script*
- ✓ The first alphabet
- ✓ Various forms of Arabic
- ✓ Interesting facts about Arabic
 - *Root letter trees*
- ✓ Common English words from Arabic
- ✓ Common food names from Arabic
- ✓ The Abjad system
- ✓ Exercise in the eloquence of Arabic grammar
 - *Activity*
- ✓ History of diacritics in Arabic
- ✓ Virtues of studying Arabic from the blessed Hadith
- ✓ Virtues of studying Arabic from the predecessors
- ✓ Developing love of the Arabic language
 - *Poem on the love of Arabic*
- ✓ The predecessors seriousness about grammatical mistakes
- ✓ Eloquence of the prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)
- ✓ A Believer's preference for the Arabic language
- ✓ Arabism is through the Arabic language
- ✓ Subjects studied to acquire the Arabic language
- ✓ Arabic calligraphy
 - *Activity*
- ✓ Mushaf Uthmani (Allah be pleased with him)
- ✓ Two orthographies of Masāhif in use today

وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَنزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا وَصَرَّفْنَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْوَعِيدِ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ أَوْ يُحْدِثُ لَهُمْ ذِكْرًا

Thus We have sent this down **an Arabic Qur'an**
and explained therein in detail some of the warnings so that
they may achieve God-consciousness, or that it may cause
them remembrance.

(Holy Qur'an 20:113)

قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا غَيْرَ ذِي عَوْجٍ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ

An Arabic Qur'an without any crookedness
so that they may attain piety.

(Holy Qur'an 39:2)

إِنَّا أَنزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ

We have verily revealed it as **an Arabic Qur'an**
so that you may understand.

(Holy Qur'an 12:2)

ARABIC'S DESIGNATION FOR DIVINE REVELATION

Allāmah Shabbir Ahmad Uthmani (may Allah have mercy on him) writes, 'The Arabic language, which is the **most eloquent, versatile, regulated and magnificent of all languages** was chosen for the revelation of the Qur'an. Because the Messenger (peace be upon him) was an Arab, it logically follows that its first audience will be Arabs. Then, by means of the Arabs, this light spread all around. The words 'so that you may understand' indicate the reason for revealing the Qur'an in Arabic; that you, who are the nation of the Messenger (peace be upon him), should first taste its knowledge and thereafter make others do the same. So it happened like that.' (Tafseer Uthmani)

Imam Ibn Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him) writes, 'The Arabic language is the **most eloquent, plain, deep and expressive of the meanings that might arise in one's mind**. Therefore, the most honourable Book was revealed in the most honourable language to the most honourable Prophet and Messenger (peace be upon him), delivered by the most honourable angel, in the most honourable land, starting during the most honourable month of the year, Ramadan. Therefore, the Qur'an is perfect in every respect.' (Tafseer Ibn Kathir)

THE MIRACLE OF QUR'ANIC ARABIC

The Holy Qur'an is the actual words of Allah Ta'ala. It is a miracle in its meanings and messages but also in its wording. It reaches the height of eloquence, introduces formations previously unheard of by the Arabs, and is inimitable. This is known as **I'jāz of the Qur'an**. This is an open challenge to all rejecters and disbelievers until the day of Judgement.

وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّثْلِهِ
وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

If you are in doubt about what We have revealed to Our servant, then produce a Surah like it and call your helpers other than Allah if what you say is true. (Holy Qur'an 2:23)

Even the worst opponent of Islam, Walid ibn Mughairah, exclaimed about it:

والله، ما يشبه الذي يقول شيئاً من هذا، والله، إن لقوله الذي يقول حلاوة، وإن عليه لطلاوة، وإنه لمثمر أعلاه، مغدق أسفله، وإنه ليعلو وما يعلى، وإنه ليحطم ما تحته
'By Allah! It (the Qur'an) is not like any of this (poetry). By Allah! The words which he - Muhammad (peace be upon him) - is saying has a sweetness and it has an elegance to it. (It is like such tree) where the upper part is fruit bearing and the bottom is also laden with fruit. It rises without being risen over. It vanquishes everything under it.'

ACTIVITY

Ayah is a word uniquely used for the Qur'an, different to a grammatical sentence (jumlah) or a poetic verse (bayt).
Can you explain how?

Surah is a word uniquely used for the Qur'an, different to a story, paragraph, chapter or a stanza. Can you explain how?

What do the words Ayah and Surah mean?

Which Ayah is considered the most eloquent Ayah in the Qur'an?

Which Ayah is the greatest Ayah in the Qur'an?

Which Ayah is the longest Ayah in the Qur'an?

Which Ayah is the shortest Ayah in the Qur'an?

THE DIVINE PRESERVATION OF ARABIC

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

We have revealed The Reminder (i.e. Qur'an) and

We will be The Ones to preserve it. (Holy Qur'an 15:9)

Allah Almighty has made a promise to Himself safeguard the Qur'an. This naturally requires the Arabic language to be preserved. All languages gradually change and distort over time. Their grammar, spelling and vocabulary go through additions, subtractions and substitutions. Some become extinct while others mutate into a new language. Sanskrit and Latin, once influential languages that are no longer spoken. Consider this line of Beowulf in Old English, spoken around 1000 years ago: 'Hwæt! Wé Gárdena in géardagum.' It would now be spoken as: 'Listen! We of the Spear-Danes in the days long gone.' Consider this line from Shakespeare, spoken around 400 years ago: 'Wherefore art thou Romeo?' It would now be spoken as: 'Where are you Romeo?' The miracle of Arabic is that it is still preserved and studied in its original form. It is widely spoken in personal, public and professional spheres, and foreign exchanges. It is the only language preserved due to religious devotion by Muslims. A classical Arabic speaker today could easily communicate with an Arab from 2000 years ago.

HISTORY OF THE ARABIC LANGUAGE

Arabic is the language of the heavens which Prophet Adam (peace be upon him) spoke in Paradise. It is said that when he descended to earth, he spoke a similar language called Siryāniyah (Syriac). After the flood of Prophet Nuh's people, the survivors were inspired to speak different languages. The surviving sons of Prophet Nuh (peace be upon him) - Sam, Ham and Yafeth - and their descendants spread out across the world and spoke different languages. The first Arabic speaker was Ya'rub. Sam's descendants who settled around Arabia are Arabs. Thus, Arabic is a Semitic language from the Afro-Asiatic branch. Some other Semitic languages: Assyrian, Aramaic, Hebrew and Amharic. Prophet Isma'il and his mother Hajar (peace be upon them) were settled in Makkah Mukarramah by Allah's command. He grew up there and adopted the language of the Arabs who came to settle there. The four Arab Prophets are: Hud, Sālih, Shua'yb, and Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon them all).

أَوَّلُ مَنْ فَتَقَ اللَّهَ لِسَانَهُ بِالْعَرَبِيَّةِ الْمُبِينَةِ إِسْمَاعِيلُ

'The first person whom Allah opened their tongue
to eloquent Arabic was Isma'il.'

Hadith with good chain narrated by in Fath-ul-Bāri (403/6)
from the book Nasb by Imam Zubair ibn Bakkār.

THE FIRST ALPHABET

أَخْنُوخُ وَهُوَ إِدْرِيسُ وَهُوَ أَوَّلُ مَنْ خَطَّ بِالْقَلَمِ

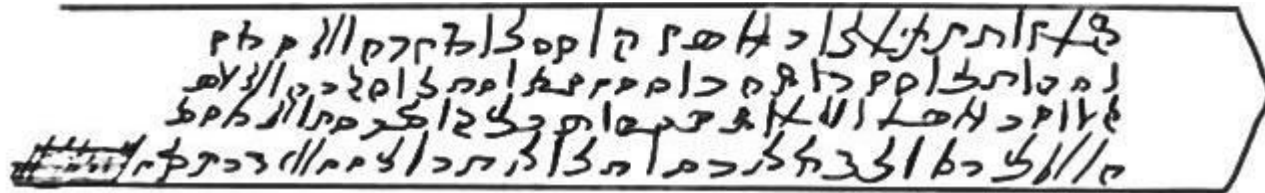
‘Enoch, and he is Idrees. He is the first to write script with a pen.’

Hadith narrated in Ibn Hibbān’s Saheeh via Abu Dharr.

Even non-Muslim historians agree that the first alphabet was a Semitic one developed in The Fertile Crescent. The word alphabet comes from the Semitic letters Alif-Ba-Ta. Consider some of the oldest alphabets and their similarities.

	' b g d h w z ḥ ṭ y k l m n s ' p ṣ q r š t
Phoenician	𐤀 𐤁 𐤂 𐤃 𐤄 𐤅 𐤆 𐤇 𐤈 𐤉 𐤊 𐤋 𐤌 𐤍 𐤎 𐤏 𐤐 𐤑 𐤒 𐤓 𐤔 𐤕
Aramaic	ܐ ܒ ܓ ܘ ܘܢ ܘܟ ܘܠ ܘܡ ܘܨ ܘܩ ܘܩܫ ܘܩܬ ܘܩܘܢ ܘܩܘܪ ܘܩܘܪܫ ܘܩܘܪܬ ܘܩܘܪܘܢ ܘܩܘܪܘܪܫ ܘܩܘܪܘܪܬ
Nabatean	𐤀 𐤁 𐤂 𐤃 𐤄 𐤅 𐤆 𐤇 𐤈 𐤉 𐤊 𐤋 𐤌 𐤍 𐤎 𐤏 𐤐 𐤑 𐤒 𐤓 𐤔 𐤕
Early Arabic	ا ب ج د ه و ز ح ط ي ك ل م ن س ع و ص و ر س ر
Modern Arabic	ا ب ج د ه و ز ح ط ي ك ل م ن س ع ف ص ق ر س ت
Syrian	ܐ ܒ ܓ ܘ ܘܢ ܘܟ ܘܠ ܘܡ ܘܨ ܘܩ ܘܩܫ ܘܩܬ ܘܩܘܢ ܘܩܘܪ ܘܩܘܪܫ ܘܩܘܪܬ ܘܩܘܪܘܢ ܘܩܘܪܘܪܫ ܘܩܘܪܘܪܬ
Modern Hebrew	א ב ג ד ה ו ז ח ט י כ ל מ נ ס ע פ צ ק ר ש ת

DISCOVER ANCIENT ARABIC SCRIPT



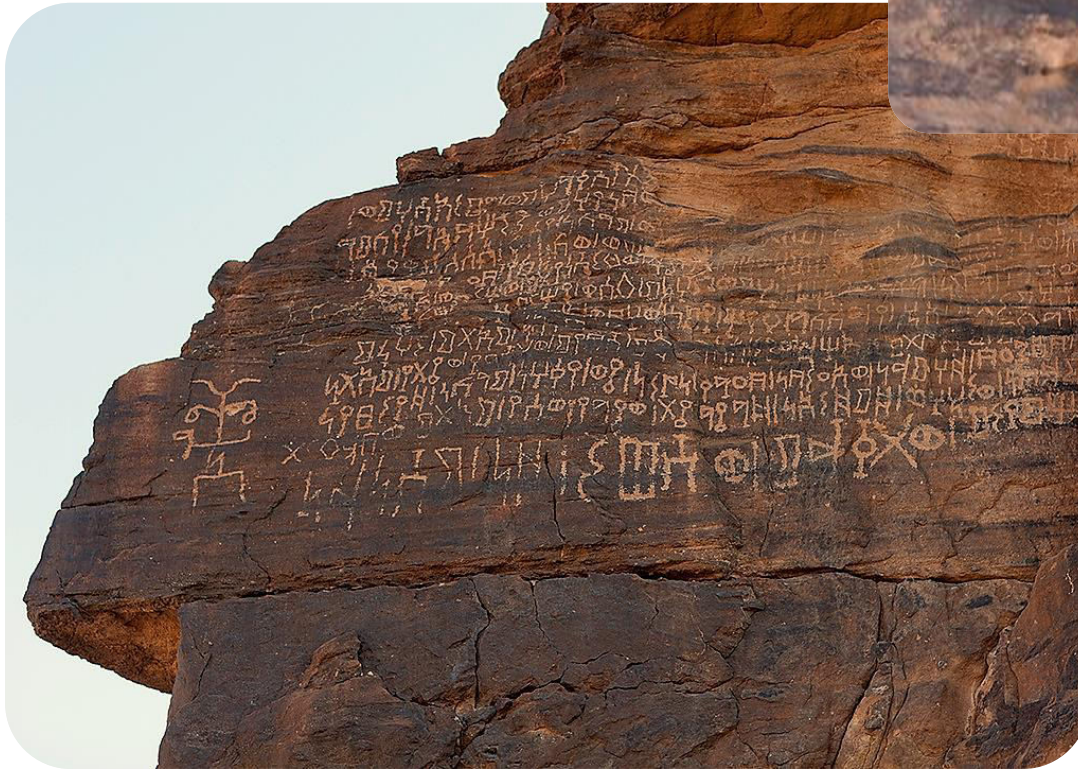
Discovery of palm-leaf stick in As-Sawda, Yemen.
It is a contract written in Sabaic Arabic and dates back to 5th-2nd Century B.C..



Discovery of large inscription on granite stone in Al-Ukhudud site. It mentions about a man named Wahb Ail bin Maqen that he was watering his house and perhaps his palace.

DISCOVER ANCIENT ARABIC SCRIPT

Discovery of carvings in Al-Haqqan mountain. It was written by the merchant Ka'b bin Amr bin Abd Manat around the year 380 A.D.



Discovery of Petroglyphs carvings amongst many in Bir Hima, Asir mountains. Estimated to be recorded around 7000-1000 B.C.

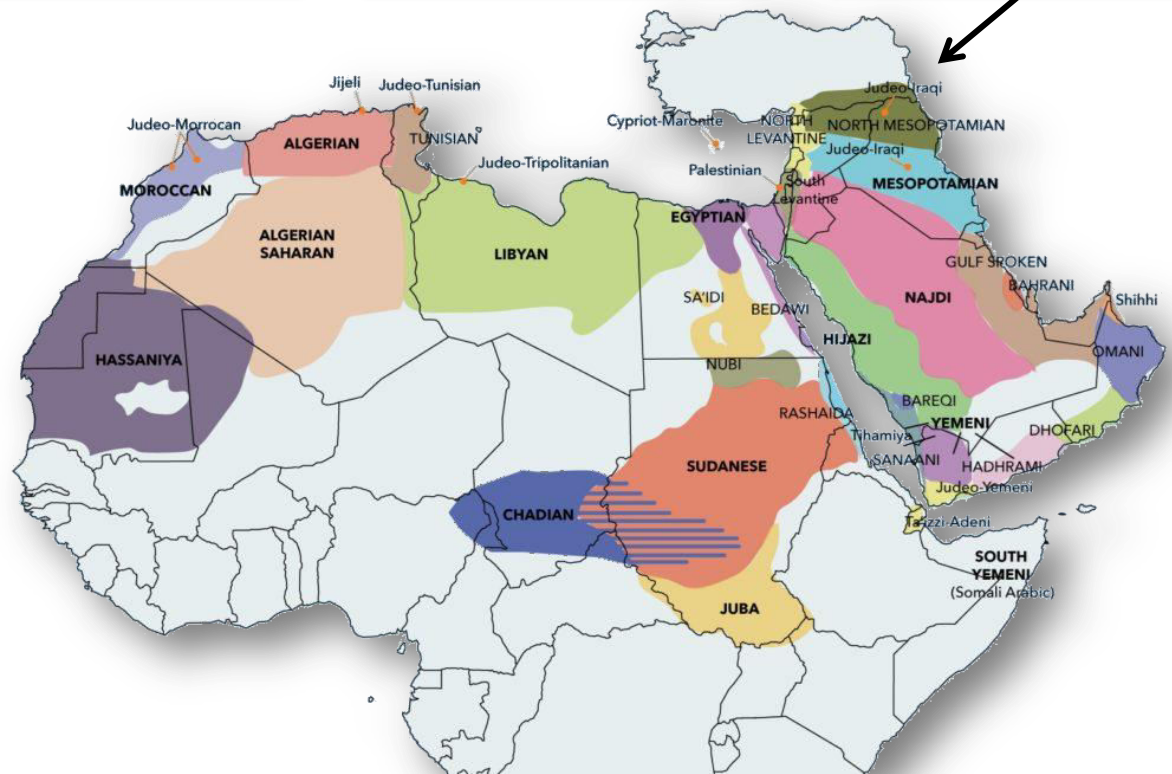
VARIOUS FORMS OF ARABIC

Classical (Fusha)

Qura'nic

Modern
Standard Arabic
(Fusha)

Colloquial
(Āmiyyah) &
regional dialects

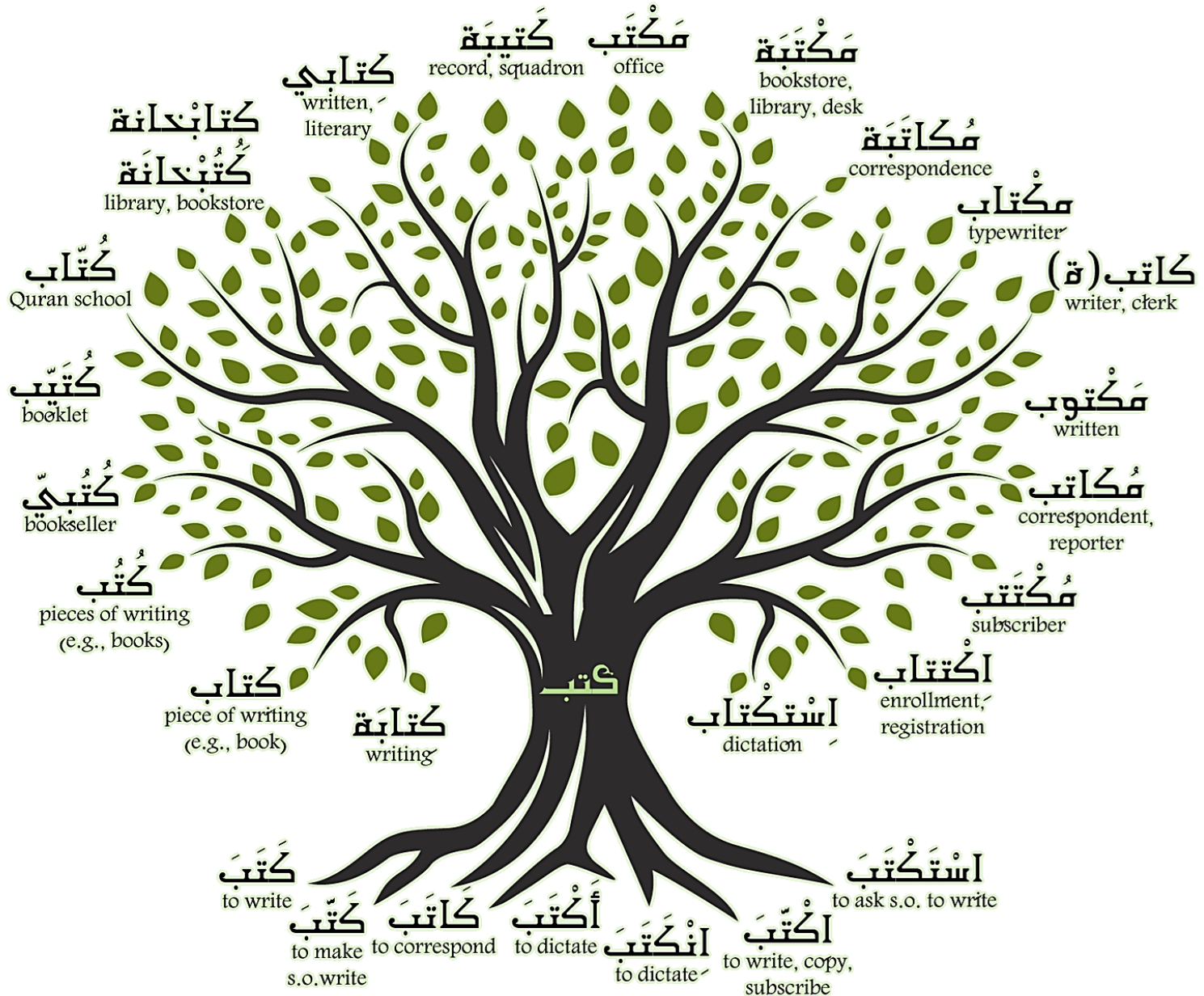


INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT ARABIC

- Arabic is a Semitic language from the Afro-Asiatic language family
- This family has over 300 languages, Arabic is the most widely spoken
- There are over 422 million Arabic speakers worldwide today, over 220 million native speakers, and millions of Muslims being able to read it
- It is an official language of around 26 countries
- It is one of the 6 official languages of the UN
- The UN declared December 18th as Arabic National Day
- Many languages have adopted Arabic words into their vocabulary
- Many languages have adopted the Arabic alphabet as their own
- The Arabic numerals, Algebra and most star names come from Arabic
- Less than 1% of UK population can hold a basic conversation in Arabic
- It takes about 1.69 years (2200 hours) for an average English speaker to reach speaking and reading proficiency (According to 2014 study by the Foreign Service Institute of the U.S. Department of State)
- Its conciseness is unparalleled e.g. 'haw-qa-la' means 'he said lā hawla wa lā quwwata illā billah' and 'sar-wa-la' means to 'he wore a trouser'
- Its descriptiveness is unparalleled e.g. there are 300+ words for lions
- The oldest form of Arabic literature is poetry

- Nouns, adjectives and verbs are built on a system of tri-literal roots
- There are at least 10,000 roots, branching into over 200,000 words
- Gender, plurality, pronoun, tense and grammatical function do not require a separate word but can be achieved by adding, removing or changing letters or diacritical marks
- There are three verb tenses: past, present/future, imperative
- It has the most available vocabulary, with English second to it
- There are 28 letters in the Arabic alphabet
- Arabic script is cursive with no upper or lower cases
- Each letter in a word has a different shape depending on its placing
- Writing goes from right to left, while numbers are written left to right
- Reading Arabic activates both the right and left hemisphere of brain, increasing brain function (2005 study, Firas Al-Hamouri et al. NeuroReport)
- Arabic calligraphy is renown for its artistic geometric and fluid look
- Arabic has certain sounds that do not exist in any other language due to their unique place of articulation
- It cannot be totally transliterated into English (According to ABC News, English translators have used at least 112 different transliterations to identify **معمر القذافي** Mo'ammarr Gaddafi)

ROOT LETTER TREES



COMMON ENGLISH WORDS FROM ARABIC



admiral	arsenic	carat	cork	hazard	loofah	popinjay	typhoon
adobe	arsenal	café	cotton	hookah	massage	ream (of	tuna
alchemy	assassin	cape	crimson	henna	magazine	paper)	talc
alcohol	azure	case	elixir	jar	magenta	safari	sequin
alcove	borax	camel	garble	jargon	mask	sash	sofa
algebra	cable	carafe	gazelle	jasmine	mattress	satin	talisman
algorithm	caliph	checkmate	genie	julep	monsoon	scarlet	tariff
alkali	camisole	chemistry	gerbil	jumper	mummy	Sandal-	wisdom
amber	chemise	cheque	ghoul	kismet	(wax)	wood	tooth
antimony	camphor	chess	giraffe	kohl	ottoman	sapphire	zenith
				lilac	racket	taffeta	zero

COMMON FOOD NAMES FROM ARABIC

apricot
aubergine
artichoke
balsamic
cumin
carob
coffee
candy
carmine
caraway
kebab
lemon
lime
marzipan
mocha
spinach
sumac
sorbet

couscous
falafel
halwa
julep
soda
sugar
sesame
sultana
saffron
syrup
sherbet

kofte
shawarma
tagine
pita
hummus
halloumi
tahini
tamarind
tandoori
tarragon
Tuna



THE ABJAD SYSTEM

This is the most common ancient Abjad system where each letter is assigned a numerical value. Later the Arabic alphabet was organised with similar looking letters next to each other, making it easy for non-Arabs to memorise them. What uses do you think an Abjad system can have?

a, á, ʾ ا ء	b ب	j ج	d د	h ه	v, ú و	z ز	ḥ ح	t ط	y, í ي
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	k ك	l ل	m م	n ن	s س	‘ ع	f ف	ṣ ص	
	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	
q ق	r ر	sh ش	t ت	th ث	kh خ	dh ذ	ḍ ض	ẓ ظ	gh غ
100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800	900	1000

EXERCISE IN THE ELOQUENCE OF ARABIC GRAMMAR

Consider the following words: Zayd helped Amr. There are a limited number of ways which this can be rearranged to hold the same meaning. In Arabic, all possible combinations hold the same meaning, adding depth. This is possible because words have grammatical cases (I'rāb).

عمرواً	زيدٌ	نصر	Sentence 1
زيدٌ	عمرواً	نصر	Sentence 2
عمرواً	نصر	زيدٌ	Sentence 3
نصر	عمرواً	زيدٌ	Sentence 4
نصر	زيدٌ	عمرواً	Sentence 5
زيدٌ	نصر	عمرواً	Sentence 6

Consider which of the sentences above would be used to answer the following: Who helped Amr? Zayd helped whom? What did Zayd do? What happened to Amr? Are you sure Zayd helped Amr? Are you sure it was Amr whom Zayd helped? Did Zayd hit or help Amr?

ACTIVITY

Who was the founder of Arabic grammar and which Sahabi helped him compose the first book of grammar?

Who first placed the dots (Nuqāt) on the Arabic script, known as I'jām?

Who first placed the diacritical marks (Harakāt) on the Arabic script, known as Tashkeel?

Can you figure out what the following means?

علاج (ـ) ب (ـ) تعيد للقلب (ـ) بعد (ـ)

Do you know why grammarians use examples like Zayd and Bakr?

Do you know the joke about the person who asked, 'Why is it that Amr is always being hit by Zayd, and not the other way round?'

Do you know the story about the student who abandoned studying grammar after asking, 'Why did Zayd hit Amr?'

HISTORY OF DIACRITICS IN ARABIC

The earliest form of diacritics was invented by Abu Aswad Du'ali who suggested placing red dots to represent the three basic Harakāt. Grammarians like Nasr ibn Asim Laithi invented dots to distinguish between similar looking letters. Due to possible confusion, even later grammarians stuck to using dots to distinguishing letters and signs for Harakāt. (May Allah reward them.)



كلنا نعلم ان العرب بسطبعون ان
بعر او بدون بسكل او همراب من
الساو، ولكن هل نعلم انك بسطبع
فراءه همراب كامله بدون بعاط؟ كما
كان بفعل الاسلاف؟

One who studies Arabic grammar well should be able to read Arabic without Harakāt (vowel sound diacritics). One who studies Arabic vocabulary well should be able to read Arabic even without dots due to being able to identify possible letter combinations and meanings.

VIRTUES OF STUDYING ARABIC FROM THE BLESSED HADITH

أحبوا العرب لثلاث:
لأنني عربي، والقرآن عربي، وكلام أهل الجنة عربي.

'Love the Arabs for three (reasons) :

Because I am an Arab

and the Qur'an is Arabic

and the speech of the people of Paradise is Arabic.'

Hadith in Tabarani's Al-Kabeer, Al-Hakim's Mustadrak and Baihaqi's Shu'b-ul-Iman via ibn Abbās. Note: There may be weakness in some of the following chains.

رحم الله امرأً أصلح من لسانه.

'May Allah have mercy on a person
who corrects his tongue.'

Hadith narrated in Baihaqi's Shu'b-ul-Iman via Umar, Abu Nu'aym and Dailimi via Anas.

إن من البيان لسحرا.

'Verily some types of eloquence is sorcery.'

Hadith narrated in Sahih Al-Bukhari.

VIRTUES OF STUDYING ARABIC FROM THE PREDECESSORS

قال عمر بن الخطاب رضي الله عنه:
تَعَلَّمُوا الْعَرَبِيَّةَ فَإِنَّهَا تُثَبِّتُ الْعَقْلَ ، وَتَزِيدُ فِي الْمُرُوَّةِ .
Sayyidina Umar (Allah be pleased with him) said,

'You should learn Arabic.

For verily it strengthens one's intelligence
and increases one's dignity.'

كتب عمر بن الخطاب إلى أبو موسى الأشعري رضي الله عنهما:
فَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي السُّنَّةِ، وَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الْعَرَبِيَّةِ، وَأَعْرَبُوا الْقُرْآنَ فَإِنَّهُ عَرَبِيٌّ.
Sayyidina Umar wrote to Abu Musa Asha'ri (Allah be pleased with them),
'Study the Sunnah well. Study Arabic well.
Learn the Qur'an in Arabic; for it is Arabic.'

قال محمد بن سيرين:
ما رأيت على رجل أجمل من فصاحة.
Imam Muhammad ibn Sirin (Allah have mercy on him) said,
'I did not see anything more beautiful on a person than eloquence.'

DEVELOPING LOVE OF THE ARABIC LANGUAGE

The Arabic language is fondly referred to as 'Lughat-ud-Dād (language of the letter Dād). It is a letter unique to Arabic and difficult to pronounce.

قال الإمام الثعلبي:
إِنَّ مَنْ أَحَبَّ اللَّهَ أَحَبَّ رَسُولَهُ،
وَمَنْ أَحَبَّ النَّبِيَّ أَحَبَّ الْعَرَبَ،
وَمَنْ أَحَبَّ الْعَرَبَ أَحَبَّ اللُّغَةَ الْعَرَبِيَّةَ الَّتِي بِهَا
نَزَلَ أَفْضَلُ الْكُتُبِ عَلَى أَفْضَلِ الْعَجْمِ وَالْعَرَبِ،
وَمَنْ أَحَبَّ الْعَرَبِيَّةَ عُنِيَ بِهَا وَثَابَرَ عَلَيْهَا، وَصَرَفَ هِمَّتَهُ إِلَيْهَا.

Imam Tha'labi (Allah have mercy on him) says,

'Whoever loves Allah, loves his Messenger.

Whoever loves the Prophet, loves Arabs (in general).

Whoever loves Arabs, loves the Arabic language in which the greatest Book was revealed to the greatest person from the Arabs and non-Arabs alike.

Whoever loves the Arabic language will be enriched through it and spend his efforts in its pursuit.'

POEM ON THE LOVE OF ARABIC

لا تلمني في هواها ... ليس يرضيني سواها
لست وحدي أفتديها ... كلنا اليوم فداها
نزلت في كل نفس ... وتمشّت في دماها
فيها الأم تغتت ... وبها الوالد فاها
وبها الفن تجلى ... وبها العلم تباهى
كلما مرّ زمان ... زادها مجدا وجاها
لغة الأجداد هذي ... رفع الله لواها
فأعيدوا يا بنيها ... نهضة تحيي رجاها
لم يمت شعب تفانى ... في هواها واصطفاها

THE PREDECESSORS SERIOUSNESS ABOUT GRAMMATICAL MISTAKES

- Imam Ibn Taymiyyah (Allah have mercy on him) commented, 'Most of the misguidance of the innovators occurred because they misinterpreted the words of Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him) claiming that they meant one thing, when really they meant another.'
- Imam Ayyub Sakhtiyāni (Allah have mercy on him) made a grammatical error after which he said, 'I seek Allah's forgiveness.'
- A man went to Ziyād ibn Abeehi (Allah have mercy on him) and complained to him that his father had died and his brother had taken all the inheritance unlawfully, but made a grammatical mistake in his complaint. Ziyād replied, 'The loss you have caused your soul is greater than what you have lost in your wealth.'
- Umar (Allah be pleased with him) came across people doing archery poorly and remarked on it to them. They said, 'إنا قوم متعلمين We are learners'. It should have been 'إنا قوم متعلمون'. He said, 'By Allah! Your tongue's mistakes are more severe than your mistakes at archery.'
- Imam Asma'i (Allah have mercy on him) said, 'The worst thing I fear for the student who does not learn the rules of grammar is that he will fall under the ruling of this Hadith: 'Whoever lies against me on purpose, he should prepare his place in the hellfire''

ELOQUENCE OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD (PEACE BE UPON HIM)

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) chose not pursue reading, writing or poetry due to Divine providence. Yet, he was and is the most eloquent person. He is proudly referred to An-Nabi Al-Ummi; the Unlettered Prophet. **أَدَّبَنِي رَبِّي فَأَحْسَنَ تَأْدِيبِي**

'My Lord/Nurturer taught me Adab, and how well he moulded my Adab!'

Hadith narrated in Jami us-Sagheer of Imam Suyuti and others.

The chains have weakness but the meaning is sound.

His tribe - Quraish - were the most eloquent city dwellers. It was in their dialect that the Holy Qur'an was revealed. He spent the first few years of his childhood - the language acquisition years - with Banu Sa'd; the most eloquent of the countryside tribes. The Sahabah marvelled at his speech:

أَنَا أَعْرَبُ الْعَرَبِ وَوُلِدْتُ فِي قُرَيْشٍ وَنَشَأْتُ فِي بَنِي سَعْدِ فَأَنْى يَأْتِينِي اللَّحْنُ.

'I am the most eloquent of the Arabs. I was born into the Quraish and grew up amongst the Bani Sa'd. So how could I make errors in speech?'

Hadith mentioned in Tabarāni via Abu Sa'eed Khudri, and other books of Hadith.

إِنِّي أُوتِيتُ جَوَامِعَ الْكَلِمِ وَخَوَاتِمَهُ وَاخْتَصَرَ لِي الْكَلَامَ اخْتِصَارًا.

'I was gifted with comprehensive speech and its correct conclusions.

Speech was made concise for me.'

Hadith narrated in Abu Ya'lā via Umar, and other books of Hadith with variations in wording.

A BELIEVER'S PREFERENCE FOR THE ARABIC LANGUAGE

Every Holy Book is preserved in the Heavens in Arabic, then revealed in the language of that the Prophet preached to his people in. The last Prophet was sent to all of mankind. His preaching in Arabic clearly indicates that it is the best language for humanity; the most clear, concise and immutable.

يَلِسَانٍ عَرَبِيٍّ مُبِينٍ In **clear Arabic** language (Holy Qur'an 26:195)

There are traditions from Umar and Ibn Umar (Allah be pleased with them),

من أحسن منكم أن يتكلم بالعربية فلا يتكلم بالفارسية، فإنه يورث النفاق.

'Whoever amongst you is proficiently able to speak in Arabic should not speak in (a foreign language like) Persian for it breeds hypocrisy.'

Imam Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have mercy on him) takes this literally and says that Arabic should be the sole language of acts of worship. Forsaking it in acts of worship or considering it inferior to another language, while it is one the symbols of Islam and the language of Revelation, indicates a weakness of faith. Many of the greatest Muslim scholars like Imam Abu Hanifah and Imam Bukhari were non-Arab but mastered Arabic, being able to delve into intricacies of the Qur'an and Sunnah. Imam Shafi'ee, despite being an Arab, studied Arabic for 20 years. Mother of the Believers A'isha knew 12,000 lines of Labid's poetry by heart. (Allah's mercy be on them.)

ARABISM IS THROUGH THE ARABIC LANGUAGE

Qais ibn Muttatiah (a Hypocrite) came to a gathering where Salman the Persian, Suhaib the Roman, and Bilal the Abyssinian were present (Allah be pleased with them). He remarked, 'Aws and Khazraj have rendered some service to this person i.e. the Messenger (peace be upon him) but I fail to understand what have these people done (to deserve honour).' Mu'ādh (Allah be pleased with him) stood, caught him by the neck and took him to the Prophet and told him what he had uttered. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stood up in a state of anger, while dragging his garment (indicating haste), until he entered the Masjid. Then the call was given, 'Gather for Salah.' He ascended the pulpit, praised Allah and exalted Him, then said,

أما بعد. أيها الناس. إن الرب رب واحد. والأب أب واحد. والدين دين واحد. وإن العربية ليست لأحدكم بأب ولا أم. إنما هي لسان فمن تكلم بالعربية فهو عربي.
'After praises to Allah (I say): O people! Verily The Lord is One Lord. The supreme ancestor is one ancestor. The religion is one religion. Arabicness is not for one of you through father nor through mother. It is a language.
So, whoever speaks Arab, he is an Arabi (person).'

Hadith narrated in Mukhtasar Tareekh Dimishq of Ibn Asākir with a Mursal chain.

SUBJECTS STUDIED TO ACQUIRE THE ARABIC LANGUAGE



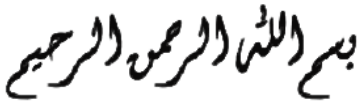

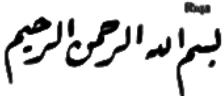


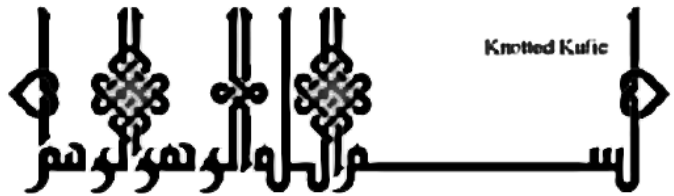


The study of Arabic philology/literature - Ilmul Adab - has many branches.

Sarf (morphology)		Nahw (syntax)	
Ishtiqāq (etymology)		Lughah (lexicology)	
Imlā' (spelling/diction)	Inshā' (literary composition)		Rasmul Khatt (calligraphy)
Balāghah (rhetoric) which separates into:			
Bayān (methods of conveying)	Badi' (methods of embellishing)	Ma'āni (methods of formatting)	
Jāhili Ashā'r (pre-Islamic Arab poetry) Uroodh (prose) and Qāfiyah (metres and rhymes)			

There are other branches invented in South-Asia, such as Ijrā' (practicing application of l'rāb) and Tarkeeb (sentence analysis).

ARABIC CALLIGRAPHY

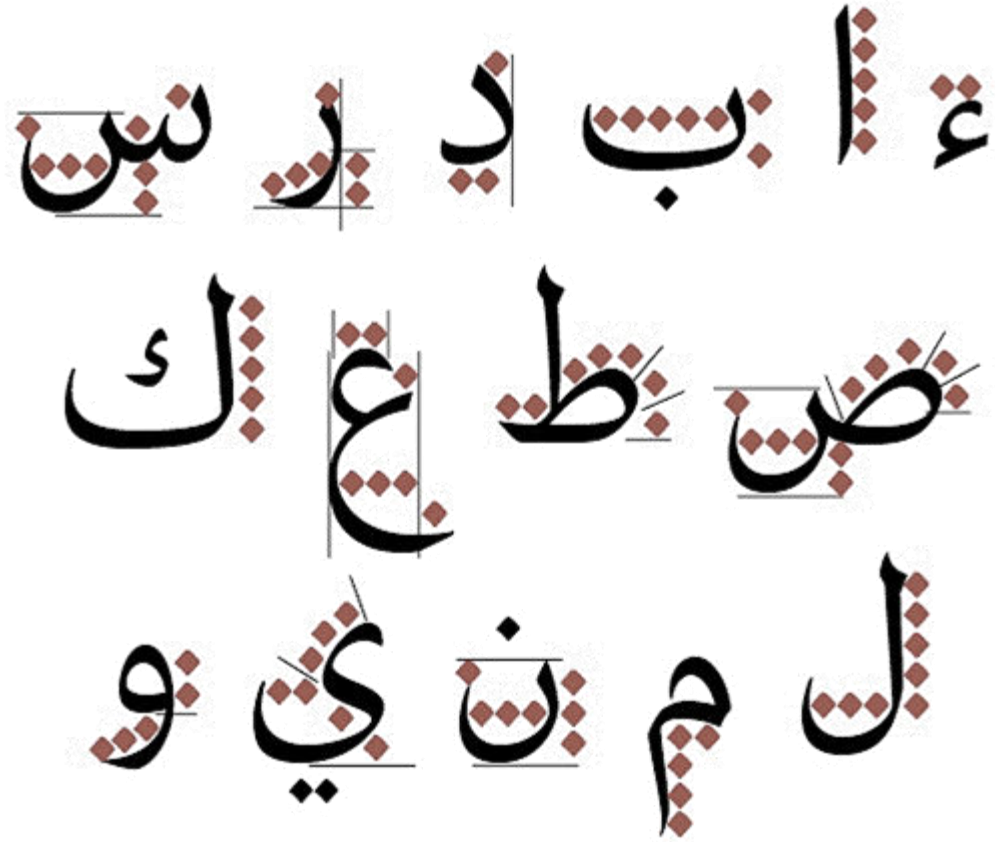
Arabic calligraphy is unique across the world for being unparalleled in its artistic expression, geometry and beauty. The oldest script is Kufic.

Naskh	 <small>Naskh</small>	 <small>Early Kufic</small>	Early Kufic
Diwani	 <small>Diwani</small>	 <small>Eastern Kufic</small>	Eastern Kufic
Riqa'a	 <small>Riqa'a</small> <small>© M Saif-ud-Din 1997</small>	 <small>Foliate Kufic</small>	Foliate Kufic
Thuluth	 <small>Thuluth</small>	 <small>Knotted Kufic</small>	Knotted Kufic
Muhaqaq	 <small>Muhaqaq</small> <small>© M Saif-ud-Din 1997</small>	 <small>Square Kufic</small>	Square Kufic

ACTIVITY

The most ancient form of writings preserved today are carvings using a stylus. The most ancient pens known to have been used are reed pens. Can you explain what these are?

Arabic/Islamic calligraphy is one of the most unique forms of art. Each script is known as a Khat. Each Khat uses a system of rhombic dots to form the shape and typography of a letter. Can you practice writing your name in your preferred script?



MUSHAF UTHMANI (ALLAH BE PLEASED WITH HIM)

Sayyidina Abu Bakr compiled one official state copy of the Mushaf for preservation. Sayyidina Uthman had a standardised Mushaf compiled which was then copied and distributed across the Islamic empire.



Mushaf Uthmani, known in historical circles as The Samarkand Kufic Qur'an.

TWO ORTHOGRAPHIES OF MASĀHIF IN USE TODAY



MADINAH/ UTHMANI

15 line Mushaf
Naskh font

Better for those who know Arabic.
Each page ends in an Ayah and each
Juz has 20 pages. No Ruku' signs.



INDO-PAK/SOUTH AFRICAN/MAJEEDI

Most often 13 line Mushaf
Nasta'leeq font

Simplified for those who do not know
grammar rules, such as recognising mute
letters, Alif and Hamza, when to stop etc.

Please note that as part of the miracle of the Qur'an, all Musāhif are the same, corresponding to Mushaf Uthmani. It is a misnomer to refer to only the Uthmani orthography as Mushaf Uthmani. Majeedi and Uthmani refer to the names of the respected calligraphers.

