



**Brigham Young University - Arabic  
STARTALK Student Program Curriculum**

**Target Proficiency Level:** Novice High

**Number of Hours:** 190 hours

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## **Brief Description of Program**

The BYU STARTALK Arabic Summer Camp builds on the considerable resources and expertise of the BYU undergraduate Arabic program and its pioneering approach to learning Arabic. Like regular BYU Arabic 101 students, STARTALK students will gain practical ability to use two varieties of Arabic: Standard Written Arabic and informal Spoken Arabic (in this case, Egyptian, the most widely understood Arabic vernacular). The written and spoken forms, although quite different from each other in some ways, are closely related and much of what one learns about one can be transferred to the other.

The objective of the 2008 BYU Summer Arabic Camp is to assist high school students to acquire at least Novice High proficiency in using both Written and Spoken Arabic. Initial focus will be on developing speaking ability, with more attention to literacy in the second half of each camp after students have the tools to interact verbally with the faculty, staff and each other. The program is designed to help every student succeed. It is very much about learning through doing. Given that BYU Arabic 101 credit will be awarded to those who opt for the fast track, grades will be determined by the same instruments used to assess regular BYU students: BYU's Arabic 101 mid-terms and final exam (which focus on one's ability to *use* Arabic), including language-use simulations conducted in one-on-one interviews. Student progress will also be evaluated from day to day as they are assessed on the completion of various real-world tasks.

## **What Enduring Understandings are Desired:**

Participants will acquire: 1) a good deal of real-world Arabic language and cultural proficiency, thereby building confidence in themselves as successful learners; 2) knowledge of how to move on to advanced-levels of proficiency in Arabic; 3) awareness that people from different cultures have far more in common than not; 4) awareness of the interconnectedness of humanity from coming to understand some of the rich interplay of Arabo-Islamic and Western cultures.

## **Content and Skills:**

Outcomes and goals:

**For Speaking:**

- Be able to introduce themselves (to older and younger people) and answer questions about self and family members by giving information about academic background and work.
- Be able to describe people and places important to them.
- Be able to ask for, give, and understand directions.
- Be able to express preferences regarding hobbies and sports
- Be able to perform basic social interactions
- Be able to order Arabic food at an Arabic restaurant
- Be able to call a friend and arrange a meeting/hangout

**For reading:**

- Be able to read and comprehend a variety of simple printed matter with near complete comprehension, including some: lists, street signs, short advertisements, weather reports, biographical sketches, personal letters, and descriptions of places.
- Be able to read and understand the main idea or find specific details in more complex documents, such as advertisements, newspaper articles, and letters.

**For writing:**

- Be able to correctly write the Arabic alphabet.
- Be able to write a short autobiography.
- Be able to fill out information cards with personal information (such as hotel registration and customs form).
- Be able to write short notes and messages, such as an invitation to a friend to come visit.
- Be able to write short paragraphs about familiar topics, describing people and places.

**For listening:**

- Be able to understand simple questions (about familiar subjects), greetings, and introductions.
- Be able to understand the general topic of some recorded announcements, advertisements, and simple news items.
- Be able to understand main ideas of conversations on familiar topics (a friend's report on a trip, a weather report).
- Be able to identify cognates and proper names

## **Key Vocabulary:**

Greetings, essential social formulae, and words and phrases necessary for: asking and giving directions, talking about oneself and family, likes/dislikes, the weather, ordering food....

## **Connections to Other Disciplines:**

The students will also become familiar with Middle Eastern geography, history and culture, including some of the challenges and accomplishments of Arab Americans.

## **Technology Integration:**

Participants will receive a thorough introduction to *Arabic without Walls*, the distance-learning program BYU has developed with the University of California Consortium on Language Learning and Teaching, in addition to the courseware students use at BYU in learning Arabic. We hope that all those who will not be returning to a high school or going on to a college with an Arabic program will continue their study of Arabic via *Arabic without Walls*.

## **Assessments:**

### **Performance tasks**

Tasks that the students will perform, based on the “can do list” presented under “content and skills:”

- Interview each other and present their findings to class
- Guessing game: the student is given the picture of a famous person/place and is asked to describe it to his peers, and they have to guess (who/what) (he/she) is describing).
- In-class activity: hand out maps and have students ask each other how to get places (and the teacher verifies them as they are performing them)
- Out-of-class activity: give students directions to get to a place on campus where they'd be able to find prizes
- Have students work in pairs and talk about their hobbies, and have them try to find someone that shares the same hobbies) (How do Egyptian teens spend their summer time?)
- Watch video clips to show different situations, and have the students “finish” the dialogue by expressing themselves either in a positive or negative way.
- Have Arabic speakers come to class and “mingle” with the students through creating situations in which the students have to pick up and perform some social interactions (agree on a time/place/activity) using culturally appropriate greetings.

## **Quizzes, Tests, Prompts, Work Samples**

- Vocabulary quizzes (e.g., matching descriptive adjectives to pictures)
- Writing samples (notes, short letters)

- Listening comprehension exercises (including some Disney movies)
- Reading comprehension exercises (including some comics, fun ads)
- Midterm and Final exams (all focused exclusively on *using* Arabic)

## **Unprompted Evidence (observations, dialogues)**

- Student Presentations
- Outcomes of the guessing games mentioned above
- Task performances (introductions, directions, buying food...)
- Observation of student interaction inside and outside of “class,” such as during meals, sports, and other activities

## **Required Resources:**

- *Alif Baa*
- *Al-Kitaab*, Part I
- Egyptian Arabic packet
- Arabic movies, cartoons, and music
- Realia

## **Differentiation of Instruction:**

Our students come from different language backgrounds and have had different levels of exposure to Arabic. They also have varying levels of language ability. We have the luxury of being able to distribute them across four different groups (two in each camp). Our teachers are also experienced in adjusting instruction to individual and helping students of different profiles succeed. The presence of teacher apprentices and TAs also helps us to better deal with the needs of individuals.

## **Instructional Strategies:**

- Interviews
- Role playing
- Games
- Activities based on Arabic movies and songs
- Working in pairs
- Presentations

## **What do they already know that will help them learn new information?**

- Some of the students have had some prior exposure to Arabic
- Some students are knowledgeable about Middle Eastern geography, history and culture
- At least one student has some facility in Hebrew (originally from Israel)
- All have previous language learning experience.

## **Links to relevant web sites:**

<http://arabicwithoutwalls.ucdavis.edu/aww/>

<http://arabic.byu.edu/>

<http://nmeirc.byu.edu/>