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Alif Baa: Introduction To Arabic Letters And Sounds [With DVD]



Synopsis

The best-selling Alif Baa is the first volume of the Al-Kitaab Arabic language program and is now available in a new third edition. In this new version of the introduction to Arabic letters and sounds, English-speaking students will find an innovative integration of colloquial and formal (spoken and written) Arabic. Together, the book and new companion website provide learners with all the material necessary to learn the sounds of Arabic, write its letters, and begin speaking Arabic, including interactive, self-correcting exercises to enhance learning. The online component also gives instructors additional online grading options.

FEATURES

- Four-color design throughout the book features over 100 illustrations and photographs
- Gives learners and instructors color-coded options for the variety of language they wish to activate in speaking: Egyptian, Levantine, or formal Arabic (MSA)
- Introduces over 200 basic vocabulary words in all three forms of spoken and written Arabic side by side, including expressions for polite social interaction, and activates them in interactive homework exercises and classroom groupwork
- Includes video dialogues in Egyptian and Levantine, filmed in Cairo and Damascus
- Includes video footage of an Arabic calligrapher, capsules on Arabic culture, and images of street signs from Morocco, Egypt, and Lebanon
- Includes new English-Arabic and Arabic-English glossaries, searchable in the companion website
- Textbook includes a convenient DVD with the basic audio and video materials (no interactive exercises) for offline study that will play in iTunes and compatible MP3 players
- New companion website (sold separately) alkitaabtextbook.com features a fully integrated set of interactive exercises with all the video and audio materials and additional online course management and grading options for teachers

Alif Baa provides the essential first 20-25 contact (classroom) hours of the Al-Kitaab program, accompanied by 40-50 homework hours. Students who complete Alif Baa should reach a novice-intermediate to novice-high level of proficiency.

Book Information

Series: Al-Kitaab Arabic Language Program

Paperback: 248 pages

Publisher: Georgetown University Press; 3 edition (June 30, 2010)

Language: Arabic

ISBN-10: 1589016327

ISBN-13: 978-1589016323

Product Dimensions: 0.2 x 8.8 x 11 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.3 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.7 out of 5 stars See all reviews (153 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #3,166 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #4 in Books > Reference > Words, Language & Grammar > Study & Teaching #13 in Books > Textbooks > Humanities > Foreign Languages #16 in Books > Reference > Foreign Language Study & Reference

Customer Reviews

I used this book for the first 5 weeks in my first semester of Arabic at The University of Texas. The Syllabus for that class was designed by Mahmoud Al-Batal himself, so I know that we used the book the way the Authors intended. We did every single exercise from every single chapter (using the al-kitaab website mentioned in the book) and I found this approach to be very helpful. One of the biggest challenges in learning Arabic is distinguishing between the various foreign sounds between there less foreign counterparts. For an English speaker, these sounds are usually very difficult to distinguish and correctly produce initially. As such, many of the exercises are appropriately devoted to differentiating these harder-to-hear sounds from the ones that English speakers are more familiar with. Also, this newest addition has vocabulary given in three different dialects/registers. This book is designed this way to suit a multitude of purposes, so you do not need to learn all three if you do not want to. Many college programs teach only formal Arabic during there introductory courses, so if you find it too confusing to try and learn 2 or 3 different ways to say something, then don't. At UT, most classes learn formal Arabic and one of the two dialects. This was difficult at first, but it got easier as the course progressed. I'm now at the end of my first year (we're about to start chapter 12 of Al-Kitaab 1) and it has gotten much easier to distinguish between these two registers. We usually speak in the dialect we're using, and write essays/tests in formal Arabic which fairly closely models how you would use these registers in real life. Anyway, I have one suggestion: in Alif-Baa, they often introduce vocabulary words before you will know how to write them.

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