3

hámza

1 Say emphatically the expression 'absolutely awful'. Say it again, listening carefully. You will hear a catch of the breath before each a. We could represent it with an apostrophe: 'absolutely 'awful.
This is called a 'glottal stop', the glottis being that part of the throat which stops or releases breath when we speak. The stop is written in Arabic with a non-alphabetical letter called *hámza*.

ء *hámza*

hámza is never joined to anything in writing. **Write it** several times, starting with the hook:

ء ء ء ء ء ء ء ء

ء ء ء ء ء ء ء ء

Its form is simple enough, but it is used in many ways. You will see it in the following guises:

- above or below *'álif*: أ إ
- above *wow*, or *yā* without its dots: ؤ ئ ئ
- standing alone, on or near the line of writing: ء

Whole chapters have been composed about the correct positioning of *hámza*. For our purposes, it is sufficient if we learn to pronounce the glottal stop whenever we see the sign ء.
NB: Earlier texts show *hámza* on every initial *'álif*; this book follows the modern trend of showing *hámza* on initial *'álif* only when a glottal stop is pronounced.
We transcribe *hámza* with an apostrophe: '.
Many Arabic words apparently beginning with a vowel, such as *ab*, in fact begin with a glottal stop. The Arabic writing marks the stop in this initial position with *hámza*, but this is equally often omitted.
For clarity, from now on in this book we shall show initial *hámza* on the Arabic and in the transcription of all words which have it, thus: أب *'ab*.
hámza written above or below a ligature is a *detached form* in handwriting (1/3); it is therefore written after its supporting ligature is completed.
You may, if you wish, continue to write Arabic without initial *hámza* for a glottal stop; that is acceptable. In the middle or at the end of a word, however, a stop must be shown with *hámza*.
آ *'álif mádda* (1/2) is deemed to have an 'inbuilt' *hámza*; so whereas the stop is pronounced, no 'further' *hámza* is written on it: آ *'ā*.

Read and write:

أنباء	*'anbā'* news (items)	نبأ	*nába'* news (item)
نائم	*nā'im* asleep	الآن	*al-'ān* now
تنبّؤ	*tanábbu'* forecast	ثنائي	*thunā'ī* double

Open *S18.wav*. Read, listen and repeat.

Article

2 In Lesson 2 we learned the article ...ال: البيت , النيل .
When we attach the article to a word beginning with *hámza*, that *hámza* is no longer initial, and therefore has to be written (unless we have *'álif mádda*, see above). The article itself has no *hámza*.

Open *W10.pps* and watch the handwriting of الإبل *al-'íbil*, listed below.

Now **read and write:**

الأب الأب	*al-'áb* the father	أب أب	father
الإبل الإبل	*al-'íbil* the camels *W10*	إبل إبل	camels
الأنباء الأنباء	*al-'anbáʾ* the news items	أنباء أنباء	news items
الألماني الألماني	*al-'almánī* the German	ألماني ألماني	German
الآلات الآلات	*al-'ālát* the tools	آلات آلات	tools

Remember that initial *hámza* may be omitted in handwriting and print.

Open *S19.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat**.

The *'álif* of the article has no *hámza* because it is a 'weak' vowel, i.e. with no glottal stop. A few other words also begin with a weak (= unstopped) *'álif*. Read and write the two examples already known to us:

الابن الابن	*al-íbn* the son	ابن ابن	*ibn* son
الاثنين الاثنين	*al-ithnáyn* the two	اثنين اثنين	*ithnáyn* two

Open *S20.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat**.

Words of one letter

3 A few important words consist of one letter. **Read and write:**

ل ل *li* to, for ب ب *bi* with, by, in و و *wa* and

Open *S21.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat**.

It is a rule that one-letter words are written as part of the next word. **Read and write:**

لبنتي لبنتي *li-bíntī* for my daughter وأنا *وأنا *wa-'ána* and I

Open *S22.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat**.

*This *hámza* is now no longer initial, and must therefore be written (see paragraph 2 above).

In transcription we join such combinations with a hyphen, for clarity. Read the whole as one word.

A weak initial vowel (including that of the article) is dropped in pronunciation when another vowel precedes it in the same phrase. This occurs, for example, when a one-letter word is added before the article.

Read and write:

باليابان باليابان *bi-l-yābắn* (not *[bi-al-]*) in Japan

والنيل والنيل *wa-n-nīl* and the Nile

Open *S23.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat**.

Weak vowel rule: A weak vowel beginning a word is dropped in pronunciation when preceded by a vowel at the end of a word in the same phrase. The spelling is unchanged.

When the word ل (see above) is added before the article, the *'álif* of the article is dropped in writing too. **Read and write:**

للبنات للبنات *li-l-banắt* for (the) girls

للتمويل للتمويل *li-t-tamwīl* for (the) financing

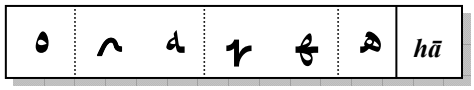
للبناني للبناني *li-l-lubnắnī* to/for the Libanese (man)

Open *S24-25.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat**.

Exercise **1** Add the article to these words, and pronounce your answer:
(a) ألماني (b) إبل (c) أنباء (d) أب (e) أوّل
Fit the translations to your answers: the first, the news, the camels, the German, the father.
Exercise 2 Add ل to your answers to Exercise 1. Translate into English. Then fit the pronunciation to the answers:
li-l-'anbáʾ, li-l-'áb, li-l-'almáǹī, li-l-'áwwal, li-l-'íbil.
The answers to these exercises follow paragraph 6 below.

Letters

4



By far the most complicated letter in this alphabet, *hā* represents the sound *h* (as in English 'he'). The *h* is sounded wherever you see the letter, even at the end of a word, or before a consonant, unlike English h. *hā* is a joined letter, shallow except in one case, with several possible forms:

- *هـ at the beginning of a word, or in the middle of a word after a disjoined letter,
- **ـهـ or ـه in the middle of a word after a joined letter,
- ـه or ***ـه at the end of a word after a joined letter,
- ه at the end of a word after a disjoined letter, or when standing alone.

* The initial form هـ is handwritten either هـ or هـ . Both ways are equally correct.
** The middle form ـهـ is seldom used in handwriting.
*** The final form ـه is very seldom found in print or typing.

Let us take the handwriting of this letter in stages. Everything rests on the line of writing except the lower part of ـهـ and ـه .

Write first several initial letters *hā*:

now the handwritten middle form:

then the two final forms, both used in handwriting:

and finally the 'isolated' form:



Open *W11.pps* and watch the handwriting of نهائي *niháʾī*, listed below.
Now **read and write:**

هي *híya* she		هو *húwa* he	
هامّ *hāmm* important		هم *hum* they	
هنا *húna* here		اهتمام **ihtimám* attention	
نهائي *niháʾī* final *W11*		تنبيه *tanbíh* warning	
انتباه **intibáh* caution		تمهّل *tamáhhal* SLOW DOWN	
اللّه **alláh* God		مهني *míhnī* professional	

* weak initial vowel (see paragraph 2 and the Weak vowel rule in paragraph 3, above)
** NB: 'historic' spelling (apparently superfluous *shádda*, and no *'álif* for middle *-ā-*).

Open *S26.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat**.

Letter variant

5

ة ـة ـة *tā marbūṭa*

This one is a 'curiosity'. It is not an alphabetical letter, but final/isolated *-hā* with the two dots of *tā*, and it is called *tā marbūṭa**, which means 'bound *tā*'. It occurs only at the end of words, and is commonly used to make certain words *feminine*. After a consonant, it has the sound *-a*; added to final ي... *-ī* it gives the combination ية··· *-īya*. In handwriting the dots of ة are often omitted; in print, never.

* the name of this variant contains a symbol (*ṭ*) which we have not yet studied. No panic. We shall learn it the next time it occurs.

Read and write, comparing the masculine ('m.') and feminine ('f.') forms of words you know:

grateful	ممنون	*mamnūn* (m., said of a male person)		
	ممنونة	*mamnūna* (f., said of a female person)		
important	هامّة	*hāmma* (f.)	هامّ	*hāmm* (m.)
third	ثالثة	*thālitha* (f.)	ثالث	*thālith* (m.)
Japanese	يابانية	*yābānīya* (f.)	ياباني	*yābānī* (m.)
German	ألمانية	*'almānīya* (f.)	ألماني	*'almānī* (m.)
Lebanese	لبنانية	*lubnānīya* (f.)	لبناني	*lubnānī* (m.)

Open *S27.wav*. Read, listen and repeat.

The feminine ending *-īya* carries the stress of the word on *ī*, as shown.

Exercise 3 Match these words with their sound and translation given in the list below.

The first one is done for you:

(a) ثنائي *thunā'ī* double (b) ممنونة (c) ليبية (d) اهتمام

mamnūna, ihtimām, lībīya; attention, grateful, Libyan

Excercise 4 Complete the word with the correct handwritten form of *hā*:

(a) نـائي (b) هامّ.. (c) ...انتبا (d) هـ.. (e) ي..

Read your answers aloud.

Exercise 5 Feminine (f.) or masculine (m.)?:

(a) ألماني (b) ممنونة (c) هامّ (d) هي (e) لبنانية

Read each word aloud.

The answers to these exercises follow paragraph 6 below.

6

س ـسـ *sīn*
ش ـشـ *shīn*

The letters called *sīn* and *shīn* represent the sounds *s* (as in English 'see') and *sh* (as in English 'she') respectively. These are joined letters; the short and full forms are used like the short and full forms of ب. Short-form *sīn* and *shīn* are shallow and rest on the line of writing. The full form has a deep clockwise swing down and up again. The two letters differ only in the dots, which are always situated as shown.

Despite appearances, these are not toothed letters (1/6). In handwriting we often 'iron out' the

indentations of these letters into a shallow curve, thus:

Middle short form: ـسـ Initial short form: سـ

Isolated full form: س Final full form: ـس

Write several examples of each letter, the first with indentations and dots, the remainder with a curve and the dots run together into a circumflex (see 1/3):

سـ ـس سـ ـس سـ ـس سـ ـس

شـ ـش شـ ـش شـ ـش شـ ـش

sīn and *shīn* are sun letters (2/5) , so the ل of the article assimilates: *as-*, *ash-*.

You may occasionally see a printed or typed word extended in the middle, so:

لبنـــان for لبنان *lubnắn*

This is purely a matter of style. Don't confuse this extension with the handwritten 'ironed-out' *sīn*.

Open *W12.pps* and watch the handwriting of مسؤول *mas'ūl*, listed below

Read and write:

السنة	*as-sána* the year	سنة	*sána* year
الاسم	*al-ísm* the name	اسم	*ism* name
الأساس	*al-'asắs* the basis	أساس	*'asắs* basis
شاي	**shāy* tea	شيء	**shay'* thing
الشمس	*ash-shắms* the sun	شمس	*shams* sun
شمالي	*shimắlī* northern	شمال	*shimắl* north
سؤال	*su'ắl* question	مسؤول	*mas'ūl* responsible *W12*
التأسيس	*at-ta'sīs* the foundation	تأسيس	*ta'sīs* foundation**
		ملابس	*malắbis* clothes

* Note from the recording the different pronunciation of شيء *shay'* (vowel-combination *-ay-* followed by final *hámza*) and شاي *shāy* (long vowel *-ā-* followed by consonantal *-y*).

** (the *action*, not the body)

Open *S28.wav*. **Read, listen and repeat.**

NB: In English, the letter s is often pronounced as z ('the Wars of the Roses'). The Arabic letter س is always pronounced *s*, never as *z*.

Exercise 6 Read aloud the following signs:

(a) بيت بالأثاث (b) انتباه ! (c) ملابس للبنات (d) تمهّل

What do they mean in English?

The answers to this exercise are given on the next page.

Answers to exercises

1 (a) الألماني *al-'almắnī* the German (b) الإبل *al-'ibil* the camels
(c) الأنباء *al-'anbắ'* the news (d) الأب *al-'áb* the father (e) الأوّل *al-'áwwal* the first
2 (a) للألماني *li-l-'almắnī* for the German (b) للإبل *li-l-'ibil* for the camels
(c) للأنباء *li-l-'anbắ'* for the news (d) للأب *li-l-'áb* for the father
(e) للأوّل *li-l-'áwwal* for the first
3 (b) *mamnűna* grateful (c) *lībĭya* Libyan (d) *ihtimắm* attention
4 (a) نهائي *nihắ'ī* (b) هامّ *hāmm* (c) انتباه *intibắh* (d) هو *húwa* (e) هي *híya*
5 (a) *'almắnī* m. (b) *mamnűna* f. (d) *hāmm* m. (c) *híya* f. (e) *lubnānĭya* f.
6 (a) *bayt bi-l-'athắth* House with Furniture (b) *intibắh!* CAUTION!
(c) *malắbis li-l-banắt* clothes for girls (d) *tamáhhal* SLOW DOWN

Tests

1 Write the letters as a word. For example (a) ش م س is شمس:
(a) ش م س (b) ا ل ا س م (c) ا ل م م ث ث ل (d) أ ن ب ا ء (e) ث ن ا ء ي

2 Read aloud your handwritten answers to Test 1. For example, (a) is *shams*.

3 Read aloud. For example, (a) is *al-ihtimắm*:
(a) الاهتمام (b) اللبنانية (c) الألمانية (d) بالأوّل (e) بالثالثة

4 Put into the masculine form. For example, (a) is ممنون:
(a) ممنونة (b) يابانية (c) اللبنانية (d) مسؤولة (e) للثالثة

5 Pronounce your answers to Test 4. For example, (a) is *mamnűn*.

6 In the last three lessons you have read and written all the following words. Fill in the missing letter in each one, in the right form. The first is ن, making لبنانية:
(a) لبـانية (b) اهتمام (c) ...الملاب (d) البـوت (e) ثانـي

If you have difficulty, you will find word (a) in paragraph 5 above, (b) in paragraph 4 above, (c) in paragraph 6 above (without its article), and (d) and (e) in 2/3.

*