

Useful Resources and Tools for Teachers and Learners of Arabic

By Ilham Samra Zayat and Nacheda Baroud Tizani

Ilham Samra Zayat

I have a Master Degree in teaching English as a second language (TESOL) from the University of Los Angeles, California. I have been teaching for the past 14 years, and I am currently teaching at New Horizon, Pasadena. I was a master teacher in the Aldeen Startalk summer program for 4 years. I presented in several conferences including ACTFL, ISNA, CAIS, NCOLCTL, NECTFL, CLTA and Startalk. In addition, I participated in translating the national standards of teaching Arabic as a foreign language. With other volunteer teachers of Arabic, I established the National Arabic Teachers' Association (NATA), and I am currently the president elect.

Nacheda Baroud Tizani

I have a certificate in Early Childhood Education. I have been teaching Arabic at New Horizon for the past 16 years. I worked on designing the assessment booklet of "Hayya Natakallam Maan" and formatting pictures for "Lughati Al-Islamiyya". I presented in several national conferences including ACTFL, ISNA, CAIS, NCOLCTL, NECTFL and the Muslim Conference. I was a master teacher in Aldeen Startalk summer program for 4 years. Also, I worked with other volunteer teachers in establishing The National Arabic Teachers' Association, and I am a member on the review committee for the newsletter.

Proposal

To meet the needs and interests of the 21st century learners, and overcome the scarcity of appropriate Arabic teaching materials, the presenter will share several interesting websites and newsletters that provide supplementary materials, activities and best practices to enhance teaching and learning Arabic for different levels.

Online resources provide useful material that are language based like stories and songs in addition to content based texts that cover other subjects like history, math, and Islamic Studies. The websites also offer a wide variety of real-life communicative activities for different language levels. The uses and benefits of these resources are great. They can be used as:

- Supplementary teaching material,
- homework,
- assessment,
- motivational tool,
- entertainment, and
- tools for differentiated learning

Following is a list of the websites and a brief description of each.

1- Ajeeb Sakr: <http://afl.sakhr.com>

This website provides a comprehensive experience attained through a thorough coverage of the language, culture, history and civilization of the Arab World. It includes five different language levels, with 12 lessons aimed to develop the four language skills and cultural awareness.

2. Kidsjo: <http://www.kids.jo/main/lessonCat.aspx>

This website includes general information, stories, lessons, multiple-choice quizzes, songs, painting, and games.

3. International Children's Digital Library: <http://en.childrenslibrary.org>

The website's mission is "to support the world's children in becoming effective members of the global community who exhibit tolerance and respect for diverse cultures, languages and ideas by making the best in children's literature available online free of charge." It includes about 45 Arabic books that can be searched by age, characters, and genre.

4. Harf Kids: <http://www.harfkids.com/index.aspx>

This site is updated monthly and contains entertaining, interactive and educational content including: Qur'an, Islamic stories, cartoons, songs, site forum, educational corner, and games.

5. Aswaat Arabiyya: http://laits.utexas.edu/aswaat/video_s.php

This site provides listening materials and accompanying activities that are intended for the various levels of proficiency from Novice to Superior. These listening materials have been selected from television stations throughout the Arab world and they treat a wide variety of topics and listening genres

In addition to the websites, teachers can utilize the National Arabic Teachers Association newsletter to keep them informed about current theories and methods, teaching activities, and upcoming conferences and workshops.

