

Heritage Arabic eBook

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Title: What's in the news? (media Arabic)

Domain: The activity aids in Vocabulary Expansion, enriching the language learner's vocabulary by initiating interactions in which new words can be tried out and understood. Heritage learners' knowledge of vocabulary can be considerably different from that of non-heritage learners. Unlike non-heritage learners, HLs often have a more extensive knowledge of vocabulary in their dialects than in MSA. Yet, their familiarity with a home or community dialect can help build a strong vocabulary in MSA, due to the significant similarity between the two forms.

The activity also aims at developing the students' ability to progressively create with and comprehend different forms of language including words, phrases, sentences, questions, connected sentences, and paragraphs that are appropriate to their performance level (Novice, Intermediate, Advanced). Some examples include:

- Writing short social media posts and responding to the posts of their peers
- Giving a formal presentation on a matter of importance to their local community

Modes of communication: Interpretative and Presentational

Proficiency/Performance Range: Intermediate to Advanced

Objectives:

- (1) Students will be able to discuss styles of journalistic writing (such as headlines, news articles, captions, etc.) using vocabulary specific to Arabic news media
- (2) Students will be able to analyze Arabic word morphology

Pre-Class Preparation:

1. Collect a number of headlines in Arabic about current events that students are likely to be familiar with. For example, find headlines with proper names or other simple words that are recognizable to students so that they can better identify them based on their context, morphology, or root letters. Copy and paste 6-8 these headlines onto a single document to be distributed to students in class during Step Three.
2. Collect a number of photos documenting events that are currently in the news. Print these photos so that there is one photo per group of students (each group should be of 3-4 students).

Step One: IN CLASS

1. In small groups, have students create a list of some broad categories that may come up in conversation about current events—such as politics, sports, local news, food, cinema, etc. Have students write these words on the board. As a class, have each group read their list aloud, and make sure all students know the meaning of each new vocabulary word.

2. Have students return to their groups and make a new list in Arabic of five recent news stories found in the media. In order to encourage conversation, you might want to propose some probing questions that test the students' knowledge of what is going on (e.g.: Which countries just had national elections? Which countries did the president just visit? Where did x storm just hit? Who just won the World Cup? etc.)
3. Hand-out the headlines that you collected during pre-class preparation. In small groups, have students read the headlines aloud and attempt to translate them into English. After 5-10 minutes, reconvene as a class and read each headline aloud, asking students for their translations. Discuss any differences in translation that might have occurred between groups.
4. Have students write their own headlines based on the new stories they have discussed in their groups. Have everyone share their news headlines on the board. As a large group, discuss each headline, correcting spelling and grammar as needed.

Step Two: AT HOME

1. Have students look at a news source (or sources) in Arabic (see [External Links](#) for suggested websites). On the website, have each student find one photo with caption and one headline to bring to class.

Step Three: IN CLASS

1. Divide the class into groups of 3-4 students and have students share the photos with captions and the headlines they collected.
2. Hand out the photos that you collected during pre-class preparation. Have each group write one photo caption and one headline for each photo based on the style and conventions of Arabic journalistic writing.
3. Have students exchange their photo captions and headlines with a different group to peer edit them together for grammar, spelling and clarity.

Step Four: AT HOME

1. Have each student use their headline as the inspiration for writing a short news story (at least 100 words) to bring to class. Depending on the proficiency level, students should be asked either to write sentences with bullet points narrating the story, or to write a paragraph.

Step Five: IN CLASS

1. Have students exchange their articles and peer edit them together for grammar, spelling and clarity.
2. Have the editors write their names on the originals and hand everything in for grading. *You may also want to have students do another round of revisions before they turn in their final product for grading.