Why Learn Arabic?

Talk with the world—and friends at home! With nearly 300 million people who speak Arabic as a first language across 26 countries, Arabic is one of the top five languages in the world. Arabic is also an increasingly useful language in the U.S.: as of 2014, there were 1.1 million Arabic speakers in the U.S.

Enhance employment opportunities! The United States considers Arabic to be a critical language defined as one of the non-Western European languages essential to U.S. national security, which could lead to scholarships and great jobs for students interested in learning it.

Unlock the ancient foundations of Middle East religious traditions. Arabic is spoken by Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant Christians, Sunni and Shia Muslims, Baha’i, Druze, and Ahmadiyya groups in the Middle East.

Unravel the secrets of Arabic calligraphy! Unravel the secrets of Arabic calligraphy: learn to read thousand-year old inscriptions, including the first dotless Kufic-style manuscripts, the elaborate arabesque carvings in Andalusian palaces and even wild Egyptian graffiti!

Discover the source! Arabs have made huge contributions in medicine, astronomy, mathematics and philosophy. Read original texts that preserved and furthered the world’s knowledge, and learn more about the cultures that have contributed coffee, cotton, chess and the number zero to humanity.

Enjoy music, film and TV shows broadcast to 330 million people in Northern Africa, the Mediterranean and the Arabian Peninsula, from Egyptian comedies and Lebanese Arab pop to breaking news about the region in its source language.

Learn to read and write “backwards.” Arabic is written from right to left—a perfect language for lefties. It’s easy to write with your right hand, too!

Grow your brain. Arabic is a very logical language; words with the same ‘root’ letters generally share meanings. For example, the letters ‘k-t-b’ are found in kitab (book), katib (writer) and maktab (office).