In the Name of Allah,
the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful

Lesson 6: Vowel Sounds

The Arabic language has two kinds of sounds: letters and vowel sounds. In this book, we will explore the vowels first.

There are three حَرَكَات (ha-ra-kaat), or vowel sounds in Arabic. The chart below shows how the vowels are drawn, their names in Arabic, and how they are shaped using your mouth.

Vowel	Name in Arabic	Sound	Length	Mouth Shape
سَ	فَتْحَة (fatHa)	a	1 count	Open mouth
سُ	ضَمَّة (dhamma)	u	1 count	Circle lips
سِ	كَسْرَة (kasra)	e	1 count	Lower jaw

It is important before we continue that you master these sounds cleanly. Unlike English, vowel sounds in Arabic carry their own meaning. If you were to pronounce one vowel sound like another, or forget a vowel sound, it can change the meaning. Here is an example:

Word	Pronunciation	Meaning
ذَهَبَ	dha-ha-ba	He went
ذَهَبُ	dha-ha-bu	Gold

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Letters and Vowel Sounds					
بِ	بُ	بَ	إِ	أُ	أَ
be	bu	ba	e	u	a
ثِ	ثُ	ثَ	تِ	تُ	تَ
thi	thu	tha	ti	tu	ta
حِ	حُ	حَ	جِ	جُ	جَ
He	Hu	Ha	ji	ju	ja
دِ	دُ	دَ	خِ	خُ	خَ
di	du	da	Khi	Khu	Kha

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رِ ri	رُ ru	رَ ra	ذِ dhi	ذُ dhu	ذَ dha
سِ si	سُ su	سَ sa	زِ ze	زُ zu	زَ za
صِ Si	صُ Su	صَ Sa	شِ she	شُ shu	شَ sha
طِ Ti	طُ Tu	طَ Ta	ضِ Di	ضُ Du	ضَ Da

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عِ	عُ	عَ	ظِ	ظُ	ظَ
'i	'u	'a	Zhi	Zhu	Zha
فِ	فُ	فَ	غِ	غُ	غَ
fi	fu	fa	ghi	ghu	gha
كِ	كُ	كَ	قِ	قُ	قَ
ki	ku	ka	qi	qu	qa
مِ	مُ	مَ	لِ	لُ	لَ
mi	mu	ma	li	lu	la

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هِ he	هُ hu	هَ ha	نِ ni	نُ nu	نَ na
يِ yi	يُ yu	يَ ya	وِ wi	وُ wu	وَ wa
			ءِ	ءُ	ءَ

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Lesson 6: Practice

Now that you know the letters and vowels, you can begin reading! Read each word below.

رَجَعَ return	نَظَرَ warn	فَعَلَ to do	سَأَلَ ask	ظَلَمَ oppress	عَبَدَ worship
كَذَبَ to reject	عَمِلَ to work	كَفَرَ disbelieve	تَخَذَ to take	جَعَلَ to make	عَلِمَ know
أَمَرَ command	أَكَلَ eat	وَعَدَ promise	قُتِلَ killed	دَخَلَ enter	ذَكَرَ remember
سَمِعَ heard	شَكَرَ be grateful	غَفَرَ forgive	كَتَبَ write	خُلِقَ created	خَشِيَ fear
حَكَمَ to judge	بَعَثَ resurrect	وَجَدَ find	تَبِعَ follow	بَلَغَ reach	تَخَذَ take
حَمَلَ carry	شَهِدَ witness	ضَرَبَ hit	صَبَرَ endure	نَصَرَ help	رَزَقَ provide