

TEACHING TIDBITS: LANGUAGE STUDY EXTENSIONS

An ABC Escapade through Egypt

www.bernadettesimpson.com

Useful Sites for the Language Activities

Egyptian Arabic Proverbs and Sayings

<http://www.egyptianarabic.com/proverbs.htm>

International Proverbs

http://www.tentmaker.org/Quotes/international_proverbs.htm

<http://www.topics-mag.com/international/traditional-proverbs.htm>

Online Etymology Dictionary

<http://www.etymonline.com/>

Wordorigins.org

This is the list, some 400 word and phrase origins. The words and phrases are selected because their origins are inherently interesting or because some bit of folklore, sometimes true and sometimes false, is associated with the origin.

http://www.wordorigins.org/index.php/big_list/

Wordsmyth's Children's Dictionary and Thesaurus

<http://www.wordsmyth.net/>

World of Quotes: Egyptian Proverbs

<http://www.worldofquotes.com/proverb/Egyptian/1/index.html>

Possible Language Study Extensions

These learning extensions are geared toward students in the upper elementary and middle school grades. Modify or expand, and prepare the activities to suit the needs and abilities of the learners.

Browse activities [by topic](#) or [by letter](#).

by Topic

[Language Formation: "Borrowings"](#)

[Language and Linguistics: Phonograms and Logograms](#)

[Language and Culture: Songs and Proverbs](#)

[Literary Terms and Tools: Alliteration](#)

[Phonics](#)

[Language Use: Slang](#)

[Spelling: Regional Variations](#)

[Vocabulary: Word Sorts](#)

[Vocabulary: Synonyms](#)

Language Formation: "Borrowings"

Yogurt

Learners can explore the way that new words enter the English language by studying the etymology of words. Learners can research what other words in the English language were "borrowed" from Turkish other than yogurt. Learners can also research English words that are derived from Arabic (such as algebra, almanac, artichoke, gazelle, gerbil, giraffe, loofah, safari, and sugar).

Language and Linguistics: Phonograms and Logograms

Hieroglyphics

Learner can explore the ancient Egyptian system of writing, including some of the various phonograms and logograms. Compare to other languages (English and Arabic) the learner may know. Learners can write their own messages using hieroglyphs or create and define their own logograms. Learners can also research other ancient languages that used logograms.

Language and Culture: Songs and Proverbs

Lanterns

Learners can research and compare oral language traditions across regions and cultures. After learning about the song sung during Ramadan, learners can share any traditional songs from their culture, for example Christmas carols.

Nile

Learners can research and compare proverbs and sayings from Egypt and other countries. How do the different sayings reflect a region or culture? Learners may choose to illustrate the proverbs' literal meaning and/or write the meaning or explanation in their own words. See links above for useful resources.

Literary Terms and Tools: Alliteration

A - Z

Learners can analyze the alliterative phrases used in the book. Consider the different letters that can be used for the same sound (e.g. 'c' for /k/ or /s/). Find examples of phrases used in the book that do not reflect true alliteration (e.g. vowels, **t**raveling **th**rough, foxes excitedly, etc.). Try to correct these phrases to contain true alliteration or rewrite the phrases -

[Back to Topic Index](#)

changing simply the word order, expanding on the phrase, or starting a new phrase altogether. (e.g. expand on the 'B' phrase – balancing baladi bread on bicycles) Discuss when and why authors use alliteration. See Author Advice on www.bernadettesimpson.com for more information on alliterations and writing.

Phonics

A – Z

Learners can analyze the transliterations of the Arabic words used in the book. Do you agree with the spelling patterns used? Would you spell the word differently in English? Why? When might you choose to transliterate the words differently? (Consider differences in accent and pronunciation.) Learners can practice transliterating other Arabic words into the English alphabet, and if the learners are Arabic language users, they can even practice writing English words with the Arabic alphabet (which is a popular practice in modern day advertising and media).

Language Use: Slang

Zalamokka

After reading the 'Z' page, learners can explore the use of slang, considering the following questions (adapted from *Language Exploration and Awareness*):

- What is slang? How would you define “slang”? How do others define this word?
- Make a list of frequently used slang words (in English, Arabic, or both). Who else uses these words? List relationship to you (cousin, friend, neighbor). When do you use these words? When don't you use these words? Why?
- Are there slang words you hear but would never use? Why? Who uses them?
- Have you ever suffered consequences from using one of these words? Explain.
- How do people decide when, where, and with whom to use slang?

Spelling: Regional Variations

Yogurt

After reading the information on the 'Y' page about different ways to spell yogurt, learners can research and compare other differences in spelling between American and British English. (The book was written using American English spelling conventions.) Other words from the book and glossary to consider include favorite/favourite, colorful/colourful, traveling/travelling, skillfully/skilfully, centered/centred, meter/metre, plow/plough, fit/fitted, fiber/fibre, liter/litre, neighborhood/neighbourhood, and savor/savour. Learners can sort the words into groups based on spelling rule – -or vs. -our; -er vs. -re; -ll vs. -l; etc.

[Back to Topic Index](#)

Vocabulary: Word Sorts

A – Z

Using the list of phrases at the beginning of the book, learners can sort words into groups: nouns/verbs/adjectives/adverbs or food/places/actions/objects/animals or allow learners to determine groups.

Vocabulary: Synonyms

A – Z

Learners can search for synonyms for words such as delicious, buy, make, and favorite, using especially the pages concerning food. Learners can use a thesaurus to discover other possible synonyms for these words.

by Letter

[A-Z](#) [H](#) [L](#) [N](#) [Y](#) [Z](#)

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- H:** Learner can explore the ancient Egyptian system of writing, including some of the various phonograms and logograms. Compare to other languages (English and Arabic) the learner may know. Learners can write their own messages using hieroglyphs or create and define their own logograms. Learners can also research other ancient languages that used logograms.
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- N:** Learners can research and compare proverbs and sayings from Egypt and other countries. How do the different sayings reflect a region or culture? Learners may choose to illustrate the proverbs' literal meaning and/or write the meaning or explanation in their own words. See links above for useful resources.

[Back to Letter Index](#)

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[Back to Letter Index](#)

Resources

Andrews, Larry. (1998). Language Exploration and Awareness: A Resource Book for Teachers (2nd ed.). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
ISBN: 0-8058-2367-0

Want to share your teaching ideas with other readers? Submit them to me at bernadette@bernadettesimpson.com and I'll add them to the website.

[Back to Top](#)