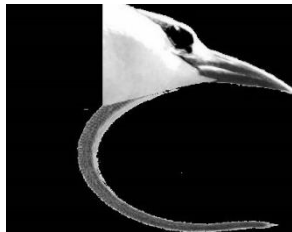


1st Group

I call it the “Bird’s head with a tail” group, simply because this is the way I see it. And as I’m the one who introduces them to you, you need to see them through my eyes until you master them. Then, of course you are free to see them through your own eyes.

The following picture is created to let you keep it in your memory and never forget how to write the letters of the 1st group.

- 1- No beans (This is the name I created for the first letter in the first group.)



As you see, we have a head of a bird. This is the way we write the letters of this family: a head of a bird with a tail, not really sure what kind of tail, but I imagine a tail of a rat. However, this is not the point, our point is that it is a tail.

So when we draw it, or in other words, when we write it by hand the shape will be like this:

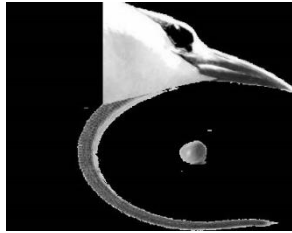


And this is the first letter I introduce to you: the letter has a very unique Arabic sound which, in my opinion, is not found in any other language.

Usually books will describe it as “H”, which is completely wrong, as we already have the letter “H” itself in Arabic.

The letter we are looking at is very close to “H”, but try to suffocate the air in your throat on its way out.

2- One bean below



As you see, the second member or letter in this family is very similar to the first one. The only difference is that it is written with one bean under the head.

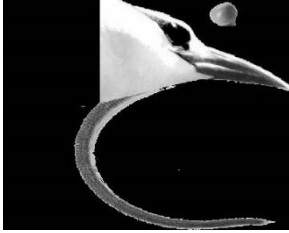
So when we draw it, or in other words, when we write it by hand the shape will be like this:



And this is the second letter I introduce to you: the letter has the same sound as the letter “G” in the English word “game” according to the modern Arabic dialect pronunciation. Also, it is the same sound as in the word “general” according to classical Arabic pronunciation.

Thank God, that was easy.

3- One bean above



As you see, the third member or letter in this family is very similar to the first one too: it is written with one bean above the head.

So when we draw it, or in other words, when we write it by hand the shape will be like this:



Usually books will describe it as “KH” and that is almost ... wrong.

The sound is explained more correctly by the sound “X” in Russian or “CH” in the German word “MACHEN” or the letter “J” in Spanish.

By these three members we finished the “Bird’s head with a tail group”. But before we move to the next group or family, I would like to use the first group as an example to explain some important points about Arabic writing:

When explaining Arabic letters, it is very important to be aware of the following: which part of the letter we write above the line and which part we write under the line.

This is the main point: “the line”.

For example: let’s say that we need to write any of the letters that belong to the “bird’s head and tail” family. With this family we need to write the head above the line and the tail under the line, like in the example below:



It is also very important to mention the following about Arabic writing:

In this family all the letters will be written in their complete form only if they are at the end of the word. This means that in this family - as in most families or groups of Arabic letters - we remove the part under the line if the letter is in the beginning or between other letters in the word. Then we connect it on the line to the letter that comes before or after it, as in the example below:

The letter in this family will be written as follows in the beginning of the word or in between other letters:



But letters in Arabic are connected by drawing the connection on the line between the letters. So, if we assume that we have a word that contains three letters and all the letters are the letter “ح”, we write the first and the second ones like this:



(Remember: In Arabic we write from right to left!)

But as they will be in the same word, we need to connect them. Then they will be like this:



Now we need to connect the third letter. As we know, it will be written in its complete form because it is at the end of the word. Therefore, the whole word will be like this:



And if we assume that the word starts with letter “ح”, then letter “ج” and finishes by letter “خ”. It will be like this:



*As you see, we didn't write any vowels like O, E or A. This makes it an impossible word to pronounce because it contains only consonants.

The point is that the Arabic language has no letters for vowels unless they are long, stretched sounds. Instead of having short vowels, we use what I call "signs". The signs should be drawn above or under the letter in order to show us the sound of the vowel. This helps us to move from one consonant to another.

In order to clarify this, I will explain the idea by English letters:

First of all, let's take the sound of the word "handle" and assume it's an Arabic word. Then, if we write the word the same way as we pronounce it, it should be "handel".

And Because Arabic doesn't have short vowels, we use signs instead.

Accordingly, the word "handel" will be written like "hndl". Then we will draw the sign of the sound "A" above the letter "H". This is to let the reader know that "A" is the sound that helps the reader to move from the consonant "H" to the next consonant "N".

And in the same way as we have a sign for the sound of the letter "A", we also have a sign for the letter "E". But we draw this sign under the letter - not above.

So in the word "hndl" we should draw the sign of the vowel "E" under the letter "D". This is to let the reader know that the sound of "E" is what will help to move from the consonant "D" to the consonant "L".

Very strange, huh?

You can't really imagine what I'm saying, can you?

Ok, let me put it in a different way followed by some examples:

We have three main signs:

- The one we pronounce like the vowel "A" in the word "Cat"
- The one we pronounce like the vowel "O" in "bones" or "OO" in "moon".
And don't ask me how to make the difference, because Arabs usually don't even feel the difference, so you just need to remember the pronunciation of the words.
- Finally, the one we pronounce like the vowel "I" in the English word "bit".

- We draw the sign of the letter "A" above the letter like this:



- We draw the sign of the letter “i” under the letter like this:



- We draw the sign of the letter “O” above the letter like this:



Let's create three words with no real meaning - just as examples:

- A word like "gag" will be written like this in Arabic:

جَجَج

- A word like “gig” will be written like this:

جج

- A word like “gog” will be written like this:

جج

But these signs will be used if the vowel sound is short, so what if we need to use long vowels?

In this case we have a letter for the vowel and we write on the line by itself as a normal letter.

Two of the three “vowel-letters” have no family, so let’s look at them right away:

The long vowel “A” is just a standing stick on the line like this:



Yes,

That’s it,

Even if you are not convinced, it is a letter.

And for the letter “O”, it’s easier!

Do you remember the sign of the sound “O”?

It is the same shape, just make it a letter - standing as a real man - between letters, not above or under them placing the circle on the line and the rest of it under the line like this:



But be careful!

These two “vowel-letters” cannot be connected to the letters after them, even if it is the same word.