

Lessons 11–12 Arabic homes: the Majlis

- Do you have a Majlis in your home?
- How is it decorated?
- Do you think that the use of a Majlis has changed over the years?

Reading

- 1** Read a short introduction to the Majlis. Do you agree with the description? What other information would you add?

The Majlis is the traditional centre of life in GCC countries. The literal translation of the word is 'a place for sitting'. In the Majlis, the head of the family hosts guests and family members to converse on religious topics and day-to-day life, and to share memories.

- 2** Read a short explanation of trends in Majlis design. What do you understand the job of an interior designer to be?

The Majlis was and always will be the most important space in the Arabic home. Fresh styles, perspectives and interpretations are being introduced by creative interior designers, while respecting the basic layout of the traditional Majlis. Themes vary and include Islamic, modern, classic, business and luxury. Clients express their tastes by carefully choosing designs, décor and lighting that will be admired by visiting guests and family.

Speaking

- 3** Look at the images above and in your groups compare their design.
- 1 What different styles can you see?
 - 2 Are the designs similar?
 - 3 What countries do you think these are in? Why?



Lessons 13–14 **The mosque**

- What does the mosque you attend look like?
- What size is it? What kind of minaret does it have? What colour is it?

Reading

1 In pairs, look at the images of the two famous Arabic mosques in Oman and Abu Dhabi. Match the descriptions to the pictures of the mosques.

- 1 There are four narrow, pencil-shaped minarets. _____
- 2 This mosque is made of white and brown sandstone. _____
- 3 This mosque is made of white marble. _____
- 4 There is one major prominent, tall minaret and two smaller minarets. _____
- 5 There are three balconies on each minaret. _____
- 6 This mosque has a central balloon-shaped, golden dome. _____
- 7 This mosque has bright, yellow display lights. _____
- 8 This mosque has many white, spherical domes. _____

Did you know?

The Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque dome is made of white marble.

Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque is a prime example of contemporary Islamic architecture and was inaugurated in May 2001 by the Sultan of Oman.

Abu Dhabi



Oman



Language Focus

- 2 Think about the following questions.
- 1 What do you notice about the descriptions in the activity?
 - 2 Are they long or short?
 - 3 Why do we use longer phrases?
 - 4 In what sort of texts would you expect to find such descriptions?

Use of English

A *noun phrase* is a group of words with a noun or pronoun as its head noun. The head noun is what the noun phrase will be describing. The words around the head noun describe it.

Noun phrases are commonly found in written, descriptive texts:

The minaret → *The tall, narrow minaret.*

Minaret in this example is the head noun and the other words complete the phrase.

Noun phrases can be long (complex) or short. You can add more descriptive words to give more detail. The words describing the head noun usually come before it:

the doors ...

the solid doors ...

the large, solid doors ...

the beautiful, large, solid doors ...

the new, beautiful, large, solid arched doors ...

Language Focus

- 4 One of the key features of a mosque is the minaret. Look at the photograph. How would you describe the minaret?
- Work with your partner and think of different words you could put in the gaps to complete the phrase below – with minaret/s as the head noun.

The _____
_____ minaret.



Speaking 21st

- 3 Sit opposite a partner and describe the picture of the mosque your teacher gave you. The listener should follow the description and draw a picture of the mosque. When you have finished, see if your partner's drawing is accurate. Then change places. Who has the most accurate drawings?

Lesson 15 Recycle

- Look at the photographs below. What can you see? Where might you see the metal structure in the first picture? What does it do? What are the yellow lights in the second photograph? Why are roads important to us?

- 1 Read the article. Choose the correct heading for each paragraph from the list below. Write the heading number next to the correct section.

- Roads, roads, roads
- Any port in a storm
- In the beginning
- Camel trading
- What's next?
- Sea trade only
- Developing trade



Transport and Trade in the UAE

- A** ____ Before the 1970s, there was little to no transport infrastructure within the United Arab Emirates. Although the UAE has a proud history of sea trading, as it is on the trade route between East and West, internal transport and trading was not as well-developed.
- B** ____ The UAE has a long history as an international trading centre. By the 1870s, Dubai had already been identified as the principal port in the Gulf area, but in the early 1900s it was declared a free port; that's when Dubai really started to develop as an international port. Deep-sea merchant ships then began to anchor offshore, transferring their goods onto dhows to transport them to Dubai and Khan Creek. Of course, at that time, there were many problems associated with moving goods from one area to another. For example, before purpose-built containers were introduced, the port provided basic warehouse facilities, but most goods were simply stored on the sand awaiting collection. Before 1959, moving goods from dhows to the port was slow and had caused some problems, until a crane was brought from Scotland to improve the process. Before the government decided to expand the UAE's ports in 1976 and 1979, the level of trading was limited. Then in 1976, the government started building the port at Jebel Ali, which was completed in 1979. Jebel Ali Port is the biggest man-made harbour in the world and has improved the UAE's trade immensely.
- C** ____ As mentioned previously, the internal transport infrastructure was not as well-developed and this created a lot of barriers to trading. Before the 1970s, there were only sand tracks along the beach between Abu Dhabi and Dubai. However, the UAE Government soon realised the importance of opening up communication highways across the Emirates and they built single-lane roads, later replacing them with two-lane highways. Today, the UAE has an amazing network of communication highways, not only connecting the different emirates, but also connecting the UAE with other regions.
- D** ____ The next step for transport in the UAE is the creation of Emirates Rail. The railway will provide more infrastructure for trade and the transportation of cargo and goods, which will have a huge impact on business not only in the UAE, but in the greater Gulf region.