SURVEY QUESTIONS

We need your help! Please take this anonymous, online survey to help us understand Arabic students' attitudes toward reading in English and Arabic. It will take 15 minutes or less.

If you choose to participate, you will be asked for your opinions. Your responses will help us make reading lists for future students.

Participation is completely voluntary and anonymous. Your choice to participate or not will not affect your standing at the university nor your grade in any way. If you agree to participate, please choose the course you are currently taking below.

This information will help us understand if we are getting responses from different sections; it will NOT identify you to the researchers.

If you have questions or comments about this survey, please email Summer Loomis (sloomis@gwu.edu) or Cory Jorgensen (cjor@gwu.edu).

a. Beginning Arabic at 9:35 am or 11:10
b. Beginning Arabic at 2:20 pm or 5pm
c. Advanced Arabic at 9:35 am or 12:45 pm
d. Advanced Arabic at 4:45 or 6:30pm
e. I am not enrolled in any of these courses.

2. These questions refer to reading texts in ARABIC.
   a. I am interested in reading fiction written in Arabic (like novels, plays, or short stories).
   b. I am interested in reading news written in Arabic.
   c. I am interested in reading non-fiction written in Arabic (like history, political science, or biographies).
   d. I am interested in reading poetry written in Arabic.

3. These statements have to do with reading texts in ENGLISH.
   a. I am interested in reading English translations of fiction (like novels, plays, or short stories) originally written in Arabic.
   b. I am interested in reading English translations of news originally written in Arabic.
   c. I am interested in reading English translations of non-fiction (like history, political science, or biographies) originally written in Arabic.
d. I am interested in reading **English translations of poetry** originally written in Arabic.

4. **Elegy over Mu‘awiya by al-Khansā’**

The seventh-century poet al-Khansā’ is among the most famous of classical Arabic female poets. She wrote mainly short poems called elegies that lament the death of a hero. The subject of the following elegy is al-Khansā’’s brother, Mu‘āwiyyah, who died in a battle with another tribe.

Let not mine eye hold back
Her moist and flowing tears.
Copious tears that flow as pearls, when they are unstrung
As they glide off their string one by one.
And I weep for the youth Mu‘āwiyyah,
Son of the noble tribe of Khḍārimah.
Resolute, a sure foundation, nobility itself is he,
Whether among lofty peaks or at the base of stalwart pillars.
His generosity meets a sizeable gift.
He always takes the moral high ground.
Let the god send rain on his tomb
In a trickle of unending drizzle.

5. There are NO correct answers so please choose the option [“disagree strongly” or “disagree” or “agree” or “agree strongly”] that best reflects your attitude:

a. To me, "Elegy over Mu‘āwiyyah" is boring.

b. I would like to read more by this poet in ARABIC.

c. I would read another text like this one even if it were not required in a class.

d. I would like to read more by this poet in ENGLISH.

e. Reading a text like "Elegy over Mu‘āwiyyah" in English motivates me to learn more Arabic.

6. **The Thousand and One Nights**, or **Arabian Nights**, is a series of stories of mainly Persian and Arabic origin. These include Sinbad the Sailor and Aladdin. The thousand and one tales are embedded in the frame story of King Shahrayar who, cheated on by his wife, kills her and exacts revenge on women by marrying, and then killing, a new maiden of his kingdom each night. The following excerpts are from the frame story:

"Shahrayar sat on his throne and ordered his vizier (the king's second in command), the father of the two girls, to find him a wife from among the princes’ daughters. The vizier found him one, and he slept with her and was done with her, and the next morning he ordered the vizier to put her to death. That very night he took one of his army officers’ daughters, slept with her, and the next morning ordered the vizier to put her to death. The vizier, who could not disobey him, put her to death. The third night he took one of the merchants’ daughters, slept with her till the morning, then ordered his vizier to put her to
death, and the vizier did so. It became King Shahrayar’s custom to take every night the
daughter of a merchant or a commoner, spend the night with her, then have her put to
death the next morning. He continued to do this until all the girls perished, their mothers
mourned, and there arose a clamor among the fathers and mothers, who called the plague
upon his head, complained to the Creator of the heavens, and called for help on Him who
hears and answers prayers.

Shahrazad, daughter of the vizier, begs her father to offer her to the king in marriage,
because she has a plan to save the daughters of the kingdom. Tired and exhausted, the
vizier went to King Shahrayar and, kissing the ground before him, told him about his
daughter, adding that he would give her to him that very night. The king was astonished
and said to him, “Vizier, how is it that you have found it possible to give me your
daughter, knowing that I will, by God, the Creator of heaven, ask you to put her to death
the next morning and that if you refuse, I will have you put to death too?” He replied,
“My King, and Lord, I have told her everything and explained all this to her, but she
refuses and insists on being with you tonight.” The king was delighted and said, “Go to
her, prepare her, and bring her to me early in the evening.”

The vizier went down, repeated the king’s message to his daughter, and said, “May God
not deprive me of you.” She was very happy and, after preparing herself and packing
what she needed, went to her younger sister, Dinarzad, and said, “Sister, listen well to
what I am telling you. When I go to the king, I will send for you, and when you come and
see that the king has finished with me, say, ‘Sister, if you are not sleepy, tell us a story.’
Then I will begin to tell a story, and it will cause the king to stop his practice, save
myself, and deliver the people.” Dinarzad replied, “Very well.”

That night Shahrazad proceeds to tell the king a story, ending it (upon daybreak) at a
suspenseful moment. As a result the king decides to spare her one night to finish the
story. Shahrazad skillfully continues her cliffhanger stories each night, ending them just
before the climax as morning breaks, and promising the king she will tell him the rest the
following night. The king continues to delay killing her, and in the end Shahrazad saves
herself and the maidens of the kingdom.”

7. There are NO correct answers so please choose the option [“disagree strongly” or
“disagree” or “agree” or “agree strongly”] that best reflects your attitude:
   a. To me, reading this frame story from Arabian Nights is boring.
   b. I would like to read more from Arabian Nights in ARABIC.
   c. I would read another text like this one even if it were not required in a class.
   d. I would like to read more from Arabian Nights in ENGLISH.
   e. Reading a text like this frame story from Arabian Nights in English motivates me
to learn more Arabic.

8. Below are the opening paragraphs of Naguib Mahfouz’s *The Thief and the Dogs* and was
translated by Trevor Le Gassick, M.M. Badawi, and John Rodenbeck. Naguib Mahfouz is
one of Egypt’s most celebrated authors and a winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature.
The narrator of this novel, Sa’id, has just been released from prison.
"Once more he breathed the air of freedom. But there was stifling dust in the air, almost unbearable heat, and no one was waiting for him; nothing but his blue suit and gym shoes. As the prison gate and its unconfessable miseries receded, the world – streets belabored by the sun, careening cars, crowds of people moving or still – returned. No one smiled or seemed happy. But who of these people could have suffered more than he had, with four years lost, taken from him by betrayal? And the hour was coming when he would confront them, when his rage would explode and burn, when those who had betrayed him would despair unto death, when treachery would pay for what it had done.

Nabawiyah. ‘Ilīsh. Your two names merge in my mind. For years you will have been thinking about this day, never imagining, all the while, that the gates would ever actually open. You’ll be watching now, but I won’t fall into the trap. At the right moment, instead, I’ll strike like Fate. And Sana? What about Sana?

As the thought of her crossed his mind, the heat and the dust, the hatred and the pain all disappeared, leaving only love to glow across a soul as clear as a rain-washed sky.

I wonder how much the little one even knows about her father? Nothing, I suppose. No more than this road does, these passersby or the molten air.

She’d never been out of his thoughts, where bit by bit she’d taken shape, like an image in a dream, for four long years. Would luck now give him some decent place to live, where such love could be equally shared, where he could take joy in being a winner again, where what Nabawiyah ‘Ilīsh had done would be no more than a memory, odious, but almost forgotten?"

9. There are NO correct answers so please choose the option [“disagree strongly” or “disagree” or “agree” or “agree strongly”] that best reflects your attitude:
   a. To me, reading this excerpt from The Thief and The Dogs is boring.
   b. I would like to read more from The Thief and The Dogs in ARABIC.
   c. I would read another text like this one even if it were not required in a class.
   d. I would like to read more from The Thief and the Dogs in ENGLISH.
   e. Reading a text like this excerpt from The Thief and The Dogs in English motivates me to learn more Arabic.

10. The Stone of Laughter is a novel written by Lebanese writer Hoda Barakat; the following excerpt was translated by Sophie Bennett. In this novel, Barakat’s characters are living through the devastating Lebanese civil war (1975-1990).

"What does a house lose, exactly, when the people who live there leave it empty? The stale air in the rooms and corridors and the thick layer of dust that had gathered on the furniture since the air was emptied of human breath were enough to banish any idea Khalil may have had in his head that Madame Isabelle would enter with her slow huddled gait, or lean back on the sofa next to the door. She will not whisper in that quiet, frail voice of hers which had become, as old age drew closer, more clipped and neat like her
little body, like her bluish gray plait that was always tied up behind like a cake and which
she fixed in place with a little black silk net.

The apartment seemed completely empty, but empty of more than the presence of its
owners, even though the things in it remained exactly where they were. It was only the
rugs, which had been taken up after the end of spring and put in the corners of the inner
rooms, that gave the house the air of being in more of a hurry than anywhere else to let
summer loose in its rooms, for the neighbors' rugs were still sunning themselves on the
balconies and summer seemed hesitant to enter the city, for it was well-known that the
city was high on the list of places in deep trouble."

11. There are NO correct answers so please choose the option [“disagree strongly” or
“disagree” or “agree” or “agree strongly”] that best reflects your attitude:
   a. To me, reading this excerpt from The Stone of Laughter is boring.
   b. I would like to read more from The Stone of Laughter in ARABIC.
   c. I would read another text like this one even if it were not required in a class.
   d. I would like to read more from The Stone of Laughter in ENGLISH.
   e. Reading a text like this excerpt from The Stone of Laughter in English motivates
me to learn more Arabic.

12. Please rank the following skills in terms of their importance to you in your Arabic
studies, using 1 as the MOST important to you:
   a. Reading
   b. Writing
   c. Listening
   d. Speaking

13. The following statements are about your personal attitude towards Arabic language
learning right now. There are NO correct answers so please choose the option [“disagree
strongly” or “disagree” or “neutral” or “agree” or “agree strongly”] that best reflects your
attitude.
   a. I am learning Arabic in order to travel to Arabic speaking countries.
   b. I am worried about my ability to do well in my Arabic class.
   c. I am determined to achieve a level of proficiency in Arabic that would allow me
to function in it comfortably in my professional activities.
   d. I would take Arabic even if it were not a required class.

14. Please tell us about your plans for studying Arabic language or literature in the future.
   After I finish my current course . . .
   a. I intend to take another Arabic language course at this university.
   b. I intend to take another Arabic language course at another school in the US.
   c. I intend to take another Arabic language course in an Arabic-speaking
country.
   d. I intend to take a course on Arabic literature in ARABIC.
   e. I intend to take a course on Arabic literature in ENGLISH.
15. Which category below includes your age?
   a. 18-20
   b. 21-29
   c. 30-39
   d. 40-49
   e. 50-59

60 or older