

Section 03

Guided Play Prompts

A Gift From The Sea

Companion Pack • EYFS 1 – Year 1 • Arabic B

ARABIC B PRINCIPLE

Your role is to make Arabic available, not to extract it.

If a child points instead of speaking, that is comprehension. If a child says the word in English, they have understood the concept — the Arabic label will come with repeated, low-pressure exposure. Never withhold praise because a child has not yet spoken in Arabic.

The children you are working with are learning Arabic as an additional language. Their first language may be English, Hindi, Urdu, Filipino, or any of the many languages spoken in UAE classrooms. For most of them, Arabic is something they hear at school — not at home, not with friends, not in the cartoons they watch.

We cannot expect children to produce Arabic spontaneously after a few exposures. What we can expect — and what we should celebrate — is that they begin to understand Arabic words, respond to them with actions or gestures, and eventually attempt them in their own speech. That progression (hearing → understanding → attempting) is normal and healthy second-language acquisition.

Talk Prompts (Section 02)

You follow the child

Reactive — you narrate what is already happening

Throughout the session, as you circulate

No special setup needed

A commentary track — brief, ambient, frequent

The child may not even notice you are teaching

Guided Play Prompts (Section 03)

The child follows you

Proactive — you engineer a moment and lead a sequence

Once per session, with one small group, for ~10 minutes

Specific materials prepared in advance

A mini-lesson disguised as play — sustained and scaffolded

The child knows you are playing with them — but not that you have a language objective

1

ENTER / SETUP

Create the physical conditions and position yourself at child height. Do not speak yet. The child sees you are available and interested.

2

MODEL

Go first. Use the target Arabic yourself with gesture and expression. The child hears both words before being asked anything.

3

INVITE

Offer a simple binary choice. Accept any response: pointing, gesturing, English, or echoing Arabic. All show comprehension.

4

EXTEND

Build on whatever the child gives you. If they point, name it. If they say English, bridge to Arabic. If they echo Arabic, expand it.

5

CHALLENGE

Only for confident children. Introduce one new element — a superlative, a third object, a question. Skip entirely if children are still working on the basic contrast.

This is not direct instruction. The play is real; the language is purposeful. For Arabic B children, the goal is comprehension and willingness to try — not accurate production.

NOTICE

Watch before you speak

JOIN

Enter play on the child's terms

NARRATE

Name what you see in Arabic

WAIT

Count to five after speaking

CELEBRATE

Respond with genuine warmth

THE DECISION RULE

Talk Prompts: use throughout the session as you circulate. Short, responsive, frequent.

Guided Play Prompts: use once per session, with one small group of 2–4 children, for about 10 minutes. Choose one prompt set per session — not all six.

PRACTICAL REMINDER

If a child walks away during a Guided Play sequence, let them go. If a child responds only in English, that is progress — they understood your Arabic. If a child watches silently, they are learning. The play must remain genuinely invitational.

Prompt Set A

Size Sorting

Small World / Maths Area

PHYSICAL SETUP

- Two shells of clearly different sizes
- Small world figures already in the area
- Optional: a third shell of medium size for Challenge

TIMING

8–10 minutes with 2–3 children

STORY CONNECTION

Rashid finds shells of different sizes on the beach. You can say **مِثْلَ رَاشِدٍ!** (Like Rashid!) when a child picks up a shell.

SUCCESS

The child picks up a new shell and looks at you expectantly, waiting for you to name it — or attempts the word themselves.

صَغِير / كَبِير

big / small

Enter

1

Sit beside the child at their level. Pick up the two shells and look at them with interest. Give the child a moment to notice. Smile. Do not speak yet.

Model كَبِيْرَة...صَغِيْرَة

2

Hold the small shell and say صَغِيْرَة. Pause. Hold up the big shell: كَبِيْرَة. Repeat 2–3 times. Use exaggerated size gestures — quiet voice and pinched fingers for صَغِيْرَة, louder and wide hands for كَبِيْرَة.

Invite كَبِيْر أَمْ صَغِيْر؟

3

Hold out both shells, one in each palm. Ask كَبِيْر أَمْ صَغِيْر؟ Accept any response: pointing, picking up, English, or echoing Arabic. Name it: كَبِيْرَة! نَعَمْ!

Extend الكَبِيْرَة جَدًّا! نَعَمْ!

4

If they pointed, name it. If English, bridge: "Yes! Big! كَبِيْرَة!" If they echoed Arabic, expand: الكَبِيْرَة جَدًّا! Offer another child a turn with new shells.

Challenge أَيْنَ الأَصْغَر؟

5

Only if confident: add a third shell. Ask أَيْنَ الأَصْغَر؟ (Where is the smallest?). Point to each shell as you say it. If uncertain, simplify back to two shells.

WHAT YOU MIGHT SEE

Emerging

Child watches, picks up or points at shells, but does not speak Arabic. May say "big" or "small" in English, nod, or gesture.

Expected

Child echoes كَبِيْر or صَغِيْر during the binary choice, or repeats your Arabic after expansion. May use the adjective without a noun.

Exceeding

Child sorts a third shell without prompting, or spontaneously says كَبِيْرَة جَدًّا when picking up a new object.

Prompt Set B

Texture Discovery

Sensory Area

PHYSICAL SETUP

- A drawstring "feely bag" (opaque)
- One smooth pebble
- One rough shell or stone
- Optional: additional texture pairs

TIMING

8–10 minutes with 2–4 children

STORY CONNECTION

Rashid feels the rough rope and the smooth pearl. The contrast connects to Jeddo Khalid's diving equipment and treasures from the sea.

SUCCESS

A child reaches for a new object, feels it, and looks at you expectantly — or offers the Arabic word themselves.

خَشِن / نَاعِم

smooth / rough

Setup

1

Place the smooth pebble and rough shell in the feely bag before the session. Sit near the sensory table at child height. Have the bag visible but not yet open.

Narrate **أَغْمِضْ عَيْنَيْ!**

2

Close your eyes dramatically: **أَغْمِضْ عَيْنَيْ!** Reach in slowly. The performance draws children in. Pull out the pebble. Open your eyes.

Model **حَسِّن... نَاعِم!**

3

Stroke the pebble with pleasure: **نَاعِم!** Say **إِمْثَلَنَّ الرَّهْل!** (Like the sand!). Then pull out the shell, wrinkle your nose: **حَسِّن!** Place both side by side: **حَسِّن... نَاعِم.**

Invite **نَاعِمَ أَمْ حَسِّن؟**

4

Offer the bag to a child. As they touch an object, ask **نَاعِمَ أَمْ حَسِّن؟** Accept any response. Confirm: "Yes! **نَاعِم!**" or "Yes! **حَسِّن!**"

Connect **فِي الْقِصَّةِ!**

5

Link to the story: **نَاعِم... نَاعِم!** If confident, reverse the task: "Find **نَاعِم!**" — searching by touch is higher-order comprehension.

WHAT YOU MIGHT SEE

Emerging

Child reaches in, feels objects, pulls one out but doesn't name the texture. May smile, grimace, or say "smooth"/"rough" in English.

Expected

Child echoes **نَاعِم** or **حَسِّن** during the binary question, or copies your gesture while attempting the word.

Exceeding

Child finds a specific texture on request ("Find **نَاعِم!**") by touch alone. May name objects without being asked.

Prompt Set C

Weight Investigation

Maths / Science Area

PHYSICAL SETUP

- A heavy shell or stone
- A feather, cotton ball, or fabric
- A simple balance scale
- Optional: 2–3 additional objects

TIMING

8–10 minutes with 2–3 children

STORY CONNECTION

Rashid lifts the heavy shell that Jeddo Khalid brings from the sea. The divers carry heavy equipment and bring up heavy treasures.

SUCCESS

A child picks up a new object, mimes heavy or light before you say anything, or places it on the scale spontaneously.

خَفِيف / ثَقِيل

heavy / light

Enter

1

Sit at the table with the balance scale. Pick up the heavy shell. Before speaking, mime the weight: arm drops slowly, puff your cheeks, widen your eyes.

Model خَفِيف...ثَقِيل

2

Say **ثَقِيل**! in a strained voice holding the shell low. Pick up the feather, float it upward: **خَفِيف**! in a high, airy voice. Repeat: **خَفِيف...ثَقِيل**. At least twice.

Invite أَتَيْهُمَا ثَقِيل؟

3

Hold out both objects, one in each palm: أَتَيْهُمَا ثَقِيل؟ Let them pick one. Celebrate correct choices. If wrong, let them hold it, then offer the shell and mime **ثَقِيل** again.

Extend هَيَا نَتَحَقَّقْ!

4

Place both on the balance scale: هَيَا نَتَحَقَّقْ! (Let's check!). As the heavy side drops: **ثَقِيل**! Light side rises: **ثَقِيل** جَدًّا! Bridge English. Expand: **ثَقِيل** جَدًّا!

Challenge ثَقِيل أَمْ خَفِيف؟

5

Offer a third object. Ask them to predict before testing: ثَقِيل أَمْ خَفِيف؟ Then test on the scale: هَيَا نَتَحَقَّقْ! Connect: **ثَقِيل** رَاشِد!

WHAT YOU MIGHT SEE

Emerging

Child hefts objects, feels the difference, names in English or copies your heavy-arm gesture. Watches the scale with interest.

Expected

Child echoes **ثَقِيل** or **خَفِيف** when holding objects or watching the scale. May combine mime with the Arabic word.

Exceeding

Child predicts **ثَقِيل** or **خَفِيف** for a new object before testing. May use **ثَقِيل** جَدًّا when the scale tips dramatically.

Prompt Set D

Speed Game

Outdoor / PE Area

PHYSICAL SETUP

- Open outdoor space with room to run
- Optional: coloured bibs (white and blue)
- No other equipment needed

TIMING

10 minutes with 3–6 children

STORY CONNECTION

Rashid runs quickly along the beach then slows to watch Jeddo. The fish imagery connects to the sea and the pearl diving world.

SUCCESS

Children anticipate the command — slowing before you finish saying بِبُطءٍ, or freezing at the first sound of صَدْفَةٌ.

بِبُطءٍ / بِسُرعةٍ

fast / slow

Gather بِسْرَعَة، بِيْطَاء

1

Bring children together. "We are fish!" Wave arms like fins. Say بِسْرَعَة with quick, energetic voice and بِيْطَاء slow and drawn-out. The vocal quality teaches the meaning.

Model بِيْطَاء...بِسْرَعَة !

2

Run fast calling بِسْرَعَة! Slow to a gentle walk: بِيْطَاء... Do this 3–4 times. Children copy movement first — expected. Then try standing still and calling بِسْرَعَة to test word-only response.

Play صَدْفَة!

3

Call بِسْرَعَة! and بِيْطَاء! randomly. Add صَدْفَة! (shell!) as a freeze command — everyone curls up like a shell. Three commands: fast, slow, freeze. Several rounds.

Extend أَرْق /أَبْيَض

4

If confident: split into two colour groups. White fish swim بِسْرَعَة, blue fish بِيْطَاء. Call أَرْق أَبْيَض بِسْرَعَة or أَرْق بِيْطَاء — processing two Arabic words. Only if basic game is smooth.

Cool down بِيْطَاء...بِيْطَاء

5

Slow the game. Whisper بِيْطَاء...بِيْطَاء... as you walk back together. Reinforces the slow word as the last thing they hear. Acknowledge any child who whispers alongside you.

WHAT YOU MIGHT SEE

Emerging

Child follows the group, responding to movement and other children rather than the Arabic alone. Freezes for صَدْفَة because others freeze.

Expected

Child responds correctly to بِسْرَعَة and بِيْطَاء when you stand still, or responds to colour commands. Processing the word, not copying your body.

Exceeding

Child calls out بِسْرَعَة or بِيْطَاء themselves, or whispers بِيْطَاء during cool-down. May want to be the "caller".

Prompt Set E

Story Retelling

Book Corner / Reading Area

PHYSICAL SETUP

- Three story sequence cards
- A quiet corner or cushioned area
- The book itself nearby
- Optional: a small pointer

TIMING

8–10 minutes with 1–2 children

STORY CONNECTION

The connectives are functional language for retelling any story. This teaches narrative structure through Arabic using *A Gift From The Sea* as familiar content.

SUCCESS

The child picks up a card and offers the connective before you do, or retells to a friend using the Arabic sequencing words.

وَأَخِيرًا / ثُمَّ / أَوَّلًا

first / then / finally

Sit alongside

1

Position yourself side by side (not opposite). Spread three sequence cards in order. Give the child time to look. If they pick up a card, let them. If they point, name it.

Scaffold ...أَوَّلًا

2

Point to the first card. Say *أَوَّلًا*... slowly, anticipatorily. Pause 3–5 seconds. Whatever they offer, respond warmly, then model: "*أَوَّلًا*, Rashid went to the beach with Jeddo."

Prompt ...نُتِمُّ

3

Move to the second card. Say *نُتِمُّ*... with the same anticipatory tone. Pause. If silent, model yourself. The pattern *أَوَّلًا*... *نُتِمُّ*... is being established through your voice.

Celebrate ما شاء الله!

4

After any contribution, respond with genuine warmth: *إما شاء الله*! This carries real cultural and emotional weight. If the child retold in English, celebrate — they sequenced events.

Extend ...وَأَخِيرًا

5

Third card: *وَأَخِيرًا*... If the child reaches for a card and offers any connective, step back and let them lead. If they want to retell again, let them — repetition is where acquisition happens.

WHAT YOU MIGHT SEE

Emerging

Child points at pictures, acts out parts, or retells entirely in English. Engages with sequencing but doesn't use Arabic connectives.

Expected

Child echoes *أَوَّلًا* or *نُتِمُّ* and anticipates the next connective. May combine Arabic connective with English: "*نُتِمُّ*, they found the big shell."

Exceeding

Child uses *أَوَّلًا*, *نُتِمُّ*, or *وَأَخِيرًا* independently when picking up cards. May retell without adult prompting.

Prompt Set F

Boat Building

Construction / STEM Area

PHYSICAL SETUP

- Construction materials: blocks, corks, cardboard, tape
- A water tray nearby for testing
- Optional: pictures of traditional dhows

TIMING

10–12 minutes with 2–3 children

STORY CONNECTION

Jeddo Khalid's pearl diving boat is central to the story. Building connects children to the cultural heritage while reinforcing vocabulary from earlier prompt sets.

SUCCESS

*A child carries their boat to the water tray unprompted, or says **هَلْ تَطْفُو** to a friend. Spontaneous Arabic in self-directed play is the highest level.*

Mixed Vocabulary

boat, float, big/small, try again

Notice هَذَا قَارِبٌ؟

1

Look at what the child has built. Don't interrupt. At a natural pause, crouch beside them: هَذَا قَارِبٌ؟ (Is this a boat?). If yes, you have permission to enter their play.

Compare كَبِيرٌ أَمْ صَغِيرٌ؟

2

Hold a smaller block next to their construction: كَبِيرٌ أَمْ صَغِيرٌ؟ This reactivates the contrast pair from Prompt Set A in a new context. Expand: "Your boat is كَبِيرٌ!"

Test هَلْ يَطْفُو؟

3

Gesture toward the water tray: هَلْ يَطْفُو؟ (Does it float?). Say it slowly, twice. Mime floating with your flat hand. Place the boat gently in the water together.

Persevere حَاوِلْ مَرَّةً أُخْرَى! حَاوِلْ مَرَّةً أُخْرَى!

4

If it sinks: حَاوِلْ مَرَّةً أُخْرَى! (Try again!) then اِسْتَمِرْ! (Keep going!). Mime rolling up sleeves. Help modify, test again: هَلْ يَطْفُو؟ Repetition gives multiple hearings.

Celebrate مَا شَاءَ اللهُ!

5

When it floats (or effort deserves celebration): مَا شَاءَ اللهُ! If they test other objects, ask هَلْ يَطْفُو؟ for each. Connect: اِمْتَلْ قَارِبَ جَدُو! (Like Jeddo's boat!)

WHAT YOU MIGHT SEE

Emerging

Child builds and tests, responds with nods, pointing, or English. Takes boat to water tray when you gesture (comprehension). Says "big"/"small" in English.

Expected

Child echoes هَلْ يَطْفُو when placing boat in water, or uses كَبِيرٌ / صَغِيرٌ from Prompt Set A. Transferring vocabulary across contexts.

Exceeding

Child uses اِسْتَمِرْ to encourage themselves, or says هَلْ يَطْفُو to a friend before testing. Spontaneous Arabic in a self-directed task.

PLANNING SUGGESTION

Choose two Guided Play Prompt sets per week. Write them on your weekly plan. Prepare the physical materials the evening before. During the session, use one in the morning and one in the afternoon — or use the same one with two different groups if the first group responded well.

A sensible rotation across a three-week block: two prompt sets per week, cycling through all six by the end. But there is no fixed order — follow the children's energy and curiosity. If children are deeply engaged in construction, use Prompt Set F three times that week rather than forcing rotation.

A Size Sorting

Small World / Maths

صَغِيرٍ / كَبِيرٍ

B Texture Discovery

Sensory Area

خَشِنٍ / نَاعِمٍ

C Weight Investigation

Maths / Science

خَفِيفٍ / ثَقِيلٍ

D Speed Game

Outdoor / PE

بِطْءٍ / بِسْرَعَةٍ

E Story Retelling

Book Corner

وَأَخِيرًا / ثُمَّ / أَوَّلًا

F Boat Building

Construction / STEM

Mixed Vocabulary

R e m e m b e r

Talk Prompts are your constant companion.
Guided Play Prompts are your focused intervention.
Both are essential. Neither replaces the other.

For children learning Arabic as an additional language, the journey from hearing a word to using it independently can take weeks of repeated, low-pressure exposure. Trust the process.