

Asian Language & Culture Awareness

Arabic Language & Culture



*New York State Asian Languages Bilingual/ESL
Technical Assistance Center
(ALBETAC)*



Table of Contents

ARABIC	3
EDUCATION IN ARABIC SPEAKING COUNTRIES.....	5
DEMOGRAPHICS	6
• Arabic Speaking Population in the USA, NYS and NYC	6
❖ Facts and Figures	6
ARABIC LANGUAGE AND WRITING	7
<i>Brighton Beach Islamic Center Neptune Avenue, Brooklyn</i>	7
THE CULTURE	10
• Religion.....	10
• Family	11
• Customs and Manners.....	11
• Cultural Dos and Don'ts	11
❖ Do... ..	11
❖ Don't.....	11
• Islamic Calendar	12
• Islamic Holidays	12
• Arabic Surnames	12
• Cuisine of the Middle East and Arab World.....	13
FACTS OF INTEREST	13
• Did you know that.....	13
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS.....	14
• Arabic Literature in English Translation	14
• Arabic Wisdom - Proverbs and Sayings	14
• Famous Quotes.....	15
• Famous Arab Americans.....	15

ARABIC





Arabic is spoken in many of the countries of North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula. According to the CIA's *The World Factbook*, Arabic is spoken in twenty-nine countries in this part of the world. In addition, approximately 3.12% of the world's population has Arabic as their first language.

Asian countries where Arabic is spoken include Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

Please see the following chart for information on these countries.

Maps courtesy of www.theodora.com/maps used with permission.



FACTS ON ASIAN COUNTRIES WHERE ARABIC IS SPOKEN				
(from the CIA World Factbook https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/)				
	Bahrain	Iraq	Jordan	Kuwait
Area	741 sq. km.	438,317 sq. km.	89,342 sq. km.	17,818 sq. km.
Population	738,004 (July 2010 est.)	29,671,605 (July 2010 est.)	6,407,085 (July 2010 est.)	2,789,132 (July 2010 est.)
Capital	Manama	Baghdad	Amman	Kuwait City
Administrative Divisions	5 governorates	18 governorates, 1 region	12 governorates	6 governorates
Chief of State	King Hamad bin Isla Al Khalifa	President Jalal Talabani	King Abdallah II	Amir Sabah al- Ahmad al-Jabir al- Sabah
Government	Constitutional Monarchy	Parliamentary Democracy	Constitutional Monarchy	Constitutional Emirate
Exchange Rate (dinars per U.S Dollar)	0.376 Bahraini dinars (2009)	1,170 Iraqi dinars (2009)	0.709 Jordanian dinars (2009)	0.283 Kuwaiti dinars (2009)
GDP* (per capita)	\$38,400 (2009 est.)	\$3,600 (2009 est.)	\$5,300 (2009 est.)	\$54,100 (2009 est.)
Flag				

	Lebanon	Oman	Qatar	Saudi Arabia
Area	10,400 sq. km.	309,500 sq. km.	11,585 sq. km.	2,149,690 sq. km.
Population	4,125,247 (July 2010 est.)	2,967,717 (July 2010 est.)	840,926 (July 2010 est.)	29,207,277 (July 2010 est.)
Capital	Beirut	Muscat	Doha	Riyadh
Administrative Divisions	6 governorates	5 regions, 4 governorates	10 municipalities	13 provinces
Chief of State	President Michel Sualyman	Sultan and Prime Minister Qaboos bin Said al-Said	Amir Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani	King and Prime Minister Abdallah bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud
Government	Republic	Monarchy	Emirate	Monarchy
Exchange Rate (pounds/rials/riyals per U.S Dollar)	1,507.5 Lebanese pounds (2009)	0.3845 Omani rials (2009)	3.64 Qatari rials (2009)	3.75 Saudi riyals (2009)
GDP* (per capita)	\$13,100 (2009 est.)	\$23,900 (2009 est.)	\$121,700 (2009 est.)	\$20,400 (2009 est.)
Flag				
	Syria	United Arab Emirates	Yemen	
Area	185,180 sq. km.	83,600 sq. km.	527,968 sq. km.	
Population	22,198,110 (July 2010 est.)	4,975,593 (July 2010 est.)	23,495,361 (July 2010 est.)	
Capital	Damascus	Abu Dhabi	Sanaa	
Administrative Divisions	14 provinces	7 emirates	21 governorates	
Chief of State	President Bashar al-Asad	President Khalifa bin Zayid al-Nuhayyan	President Ali Abdallah Salih	
Government	Republic	Federation	Republic	
Exchange Rate (pounds/dirhams/rials per U.S Dollar)	46.8599 Syrian pounds (2009)	3.673 Emirati dirhams (2009)	203.05 Yemeni rials (2009)	
GDP* (per capita)	\$4,600 (2009 est.)	\$42,000 (2009 est.)	\$2,500 (2009 est.)	
Flag				

*Gross Domestic Product

Source: The CIA World Factbook-

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2098.html>

For more information on Arabic speaking countries, you may visit the following websites:

<http://www.nationmaster.com/index.php>

NationMaster

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>

The CIA World Factbook

EDUCATION IN ARABIC SPEAKING COUNTRIES

EDUCATION AND LITERACY RATES IN ARABIC SPEAKING COUNTRIES				
Country	Years of Compulsory Schooling	Literacy Rate (Age 15 and over can read and write in these countries)		
		Total %	Male	Female
Bahrain	9 years	86.5%	88.6%	83.6% (2001 Census)
Iraq	6 years	74.1%	84.1%	64.2% (2000)
Jordan	10 years	89.9%	95.1%	84.7% (2003 est.)
Kuwait	8 years	93.3%	94.4%	91.0% (2005 Census)
Lebanon	10 years	87.4%	93.1%	82.2% (2003 Census.)
Oman	Education is free but not compulsory.	81.4%	86.8%	73.5% (2003 est.)
Qatar	6 years	89.0%	89.1%	88.6% (2004 Census)
Saudi Arabia	6 years	78.8%	84.7%	70.8% (2003 est.)
Syria	6 years	79.6%	86.0%	73.6% (2004 Census)
United Arab Emirates	7 years	77.9%	76.1%	81.7% (2003 est.)
Yemen	9 years	50.2%	70.5%	30.0% (2003 est.)

Sources:

- Statistics for the Literacy Rates are from the CIA's *The World Factbook*.
- Statistics for the Number of Years of Compulsory Education are from the *NationMaster* website, except for Oman. Statistics for Oman are from the document *Sultanate of Oman Ministry of Education: National Report on Quality Education in Oman 2004*, found on the UNESCO website.

The World Factbook-

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2103.html>

NationMaster-

http://www.nationmaster.com/red/graph/edu_dur_of_com_education-duration-of-compulsory&ob=ws

Background Note: Egypt March 2008-

www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5309.htm

UNESDOC: National Report on Quality Education in Oman 2004-

http://unesdoc.unesco.org/Ulis/cgi-bin/ulis.pl?catno=173801&set=492B3E89_3_3&gp=0&lin=1

For more information on education in Arab speaking countries, you may visit the following websites:

<http://www.nationmaster.com/index.php>

NationMaster

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>

The World Factbook

<http://www.unesco.org/education/en/worldwide/arab-states>

UNESCO Education page for Arab States

Note to Teachers: The school year in Arabic speaking countries, as well as the duration of the school day, may differ from New York State/City requirements.

DEMOGRAPHICS

- **Arabic Speaking Population in the USA, NYS and NYC**

- ❖ ***Facts and Figures***

ARABIC SPEAKING POPULATION IN THE UNITED STATES AND NEW YORK STATE¹	
	<i>Number of people (5 years and older) who speak Arabic at home</i>
United States	760,505
New York State	74,931

According to the 2008-2009 NYC BESIS*, there are 3,932 ELLs whose native language is Arabic. These students comprise 2.6% of New York City's total ELL population of 149,225 students.²

****Bilingual Education Student Information Survey***

Sources

1. U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey
2. The 2008-2009 Demographics of New York City's English Language Learners, The Chief Achievement Office- Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners, New York City Department of Education, Fall 2009

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Dearborn, Detroit, a metropolitan area in Michigan, is home to the largest concentration of Arab Americans in the United States. Arab Americans in the State of New York mostly live in New York City, although there are also Arabic populations in Syracuse and Buffalo.

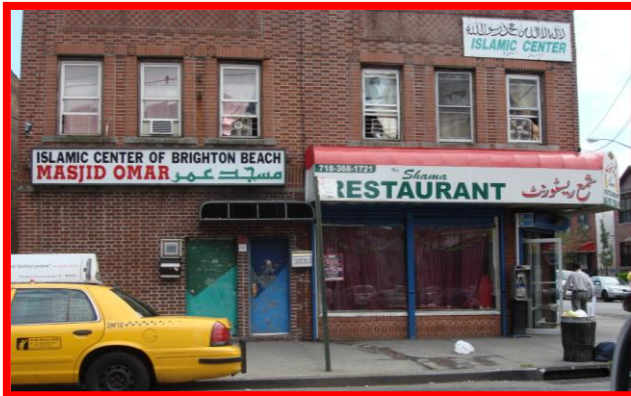
Foster Avenue



In New York City, Arabic neighborhoods in Brooklyn and Astoria, Queens feature Arabic



Pacific Avenue



*Brighton Beach Islamic Center
Neptune Avenue, Brooklyn*

ARABIC LANGUAGE AND WRITING

Arabs are unified by a common language, Arabic, a Semitic language related to Hebrew and Aramaic. The Semitic language family belongs to the Afro-Asiatic family of languages. This family included the languages of ancient Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, and Palestine. Classical Arabic is the sacred language of Muslims.

Arabic includes many guttural sounds (unlike English). All words begin with a consonant followed by a vowel. The English language contains many words with Arabic origin, such as: *checkmate, algebra, cotton, magazine, mummy, and sherbet.*

Letter Name	Isolated Form	Final Form	Medial Form	Initial Form
Alef	ا	ا		
Ba	ب	ب	ب	ب
Ta	ت	ت	ت	ت
Tha	ث	ث	ث	ث
Jeem	ج	ج	ج	ج
Ha	ح	ح	ح	ح
Kha	خ	خ	خ	خ
Dal	د	د		
Thal	ذ	ذ		
Ra	ر	ر		
Zai	ز	ز		
Seen	س	س	س	س
Sheen	ش	ش	ش	ش
Sad	ص	ص	ص	ص
Dad	ض	ض	ض	ض
Toa	ط	ط	ط	ط
Zhoa	ظ	ظ	ظ	ظ
Ain	ع	ع	ع	ع
Ghain	غ	غ	غ	غ
Fa	ف	ف	ف	ف
Qaf	ق	ق	ق	ق
Kaf	ك	ك	ك	ك
Lam	ل	ل	ل	ل
Meem	م	م	م	م
Nun	ن	ن	ن	ن
He	ه	ه	ه	ه
Waw	و	و	و	و
Ya	ي	ي	ي	ي

Some features of the Arabic language are:

- Arabic is written in script, not printed.
- The Arabic alphabet consists of 28 letters.
- Some additional letters are used in Arabic to write place names or foreign words containing sounds which do not appear in Standard Arabic, such as /p/ or /g/.
- Words are written in horizontal lines from right to left.
- Numerals are written from left to right.

Note to Teachers: Arabic speaking students may experience difficulty with capitalization because there is no distinction between upper and lowercase letters in the Arabic language.

The following chart provides some useful phrases in Arabic that will help create a welcoming and supportive environment for your Arabic English language learners.

USEFUL PHRASES FOR THE CLASSROOM

English	Pronunciation	Arabic (Writing)
Hello!	Salam Aleikum or Salam – Marhaba	السلام و عليكم - سلام مرحبا
My name is ...	Ismi ...	إسمي
What is your name?	Sho ismak? (m)/Ma Ismak	شو اسمك / ما إسمك
	Sho ismek? (f)/Ma Ismik	شو اسمك / ما إسمك
How are you?	Keef halak? (m)	كيف حالك
	Keef halek? (f)	كيف حالك
Fine (answer to How are you?)	Kowayyes (m)	كويس
	Kowayyesah (f)	كويسه
Thank you	Shukran	شكرا
Welcome	Afwan	عفوا
You are welcome.	Ahlan Wa Sahlan	أهلا و سهلا
Good-bye	Maaelsalama	مع السلامة
Please sit down	Min Fadlac Iglis	من فضلك إجلس
Please stand up	Min fadlac kef	من فضلك قف
Let's begin	Daana Nabdaa	دعنا نبداً
Good.	Gayed	جيد
Very good.	Gayed Gidan	جيد جيداً
Try again.	Hawel Mara Okhra	حاول مرة أخرى
This is the homework.	Hatha Howa Alwageb	هذا هو الواجب
Please open your book.	Min Fadlac Eftah Ketabac	من فضلك إفتح كتابك
Do you understand?	Hal Tafham	هل تفهم

For more information on the Arabic language, you may visit the following websites:

<http://www.omniglot.com/writing/arabic.htm>

Omniglot: Writing Systems and Languages of the World

<http://www.lerc.educ.ubc.ca/LERC/courses/489/worldlang/Abdulmanan/home.html>

World Languages: Arabic - The Arabic Language: A Resource for ESL Instructors Teaching Arabic Students

THE CULTURE

While each Arab country has its own unique and individual cultural identity, there are shared thematic and cultural practices throughout the Arab world. Notions of honor, hospitality, and generosity are similar across the Middle East, as are certain gender roles and dynamics.

- **Religion**

Masjid-i-Hazrati Abu Bakr Islamic Center Flushing, Queens



Although Arabs share a common culture and language, not all Arabs are Muslim. The great majority of Arabs are Muslim, while the remaining ten percent are Christian or have other religions.

Here are some interesting facts about the Muslim religion:

- Islam as a religion emerged from Arabia in the 7th century AD.

- Muhammad, the main prophet of the Muslim religion, was born in Mecca (in present-day Saudi Arabia) in 570 AD.
- Today, one fifth of the total Muslim population of the world is Arab.
- Muslims follow the holy book called the Qur'an, which was originally written in Arabic.

Beit El Maqdis Mosque Ladies Entrance Bay Ridge, Brooklyn



Note to Teachers: *In the Muslim world, Friday is the day of rest and the holy day of the week.*

A Muslim must pray five times every day: at Dawn, Noon, Afternoon, Sunset and Evening.

Alcohol and pork consumption is forbidden by Islam.

- **Family**

Arab families are typically very close, and home life is seen as the reward for hard work. Family life is quite private, but Arab hospitality is well known.

Some special features about Arab families are:

- The honor code dictates certain behaviors among family members in order to preserve a family's reputation and help its members in times of need.
- For men, honorable behavior traditionally means providing economic support for the family and defending the reputation of relatives, especially women.
- For women, honorable behavior means being loving mothers and wives, managing efficient and generous households, and acting in a modest and respectable manner.
- Hospitality and generosity are offered sincerely, with sincerity and kindness expected in return. Friendships that result are often intense.

For more information on Arabic families, you may visit the following website:

<http://www.ameu.org/page.asp?iid=211&aid=255&pg=1>

AMEU-Americans for Middle East Understanding

- **Customs and Manners**

- Good manners and generosity are reflective of a person's character and reputation.
- Hospitality is valued in the Islamic tradition.
- The customary greeting is *salaam alaykum* followed by shaking hands and saying *kaif halak*.
- Cross-gender friendship and dating are frowned upon in most Muslim societies.
- For men, walking hand-in-hand is acceptable, as it is a sign a friendship.
- Alcohol and pork consumption are forbidden by Islam.

- **Cultural Dos and Don'ts**

- ❖ **Do...**

- ...gesture and eat with the right hand, since the left hand is considered unclean and reserved for hygiene.
- ...reciprocate thoughtfully if you receive gifts.
- ...smile and greet your host or guest with warmth.
- ...kiss members of the same sex on both cheeks when greeting.
- ...take and give food without reservation, and accept food that is offered with a smile.

- ❖ **Don't**

- ...point with the index finger at another person.
- ...beckon (use the finger to call somebody).
- ...cross your legs when sitting since showing the bottom of your shoe or foot is offensive.
- ...admire an item excessively when visiting, since your host may feel obliged to give it to you. (When offered a gift, it is impolite to refuse.)

- ...initiate discussions on politics or religion, or inquire after members of the opposite sex. A male visitor asking about the health of a wife or daughter, for example, is frowned upon.
- ...initiate hugging or shaking hands with a member of the opposite sex.

- **Islamic Calendar**

- The first year of the Islamic calendar began on July 16, 622.
- The Islamic calendar's inception point is the Hijra (Muhammad's flight from Mecca to Medina), and thus, each year is designated H or AH (Anno Hegirae – "in the year of the Hegira" *Latin*).
- The Islamic calendar consists of 12 lunar months (based on the phases of the moon) and about 354 days in a year. A new month begins when the crescent moon is first seen.

- **Islamic Holidays**

Muslim holidays begin at sundown the day before they are listed in the calendar.

HOLIDAY		DATE	
		2010	2011
Muharram	The Muslim New Year	Dec. 8, 2009	Dec. 7, 2010
Mawlid al Nabi	The prophet Muhammad's birthday	February 26	February 15
Ramadan	The month of fasting	August 11	August 1
Eid al-Fitr	Ramadan ends	September 10	August 30
Eid al Adha	The Festival of Sacrifice	November 15	November 6

Source: *Infoplease* - <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0760942.html>

Note: The above dates may vary slightly because the Islamic calendar is based on direct observation of the moon.

- **Arabic Surnames**

The twenty most common last names in the Arab States and their rank*:

COMMON SURNAMES IN THE ARAB STATES							
1	Ali	6	Mansoor	11	Hana	16	Musa
2	Ahmed	7	Rahman	12	Qasim	17	Mahmoud
3	Ahmad	8	Abdel	13	Samad	18	Nasser
4	Haddad	9	Naser	14	Mansour	19	Hasan
5	Mahmood	10	Hanna	15	Hadad	20	Malik

*Source: *Allnames.org* - http://allnames.org/surname_top_2.html

- **Cuisine of the Middle East and Arab World**

Middle Eastern food can be separated into three distinct regional categories: Levantine cuisine, Mesopotamian cuisine, and Arabian cuisine.

- **Levantine cuisine**, or the food of Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, Palestine, and Syria, depends heavily on pita bread and its culinary versatility. Many dips and sauces, such as Tahina, hummus, and baba ghanouj, originated in Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine.
- **Mesopotamian food**, which includes the cuisine of Iraq, northern Syria, and Iran, relies on beans, particularly lentils and chickpeas, as well as hearty vegetables such as okra, potatoes, and eggplants. Lamb and beef are the primary meats of the region.
- **Arabia**, in contrast to the agrarian, vegetable-heavy Levant and Mesopotamia, has a culinary history of Bedouin (nomad) utilitarianism. The gulf states (Oman, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Yemen, Kuwait, and Bahrain) have historically relied on transportable foods such as wheat, barley, rice, meat, and palm fruits such as dates and figs. As nomads, there were little or no stable farming communities far from the coastal areas. Thus Arabian cuisine consists of stews and meaty rice platters.



A Large Plate of Mezes (Appetizers) in Petra, Jordan

** This photo is a file from the Wikimedia Commons.
It was originally posted to Flickr as Mezes
(<http://flickr.com/photos/29937441@N00/215461567>)
15 January 2006, 03:12:15*

For recipes from the Middle East and Arab World, you may visit the following website:

<http://www.knowledgehound.com/topics/middleer.htm>

Knowledge Hound: The How-To Hunter

FACTS OF INTEREST

- **Did you know that...**

- Many ancient-Greek writings, including the work of Aristotle, were introduced to Europe during the late Middle Ages by Islamic scholars.
- The Arab astronomer Al-Khwarizmi wrote several scientific books in the ninth century. Latin scholars later translated his work in the 13th century--introducing Europeans to the word "Algebra" and the place-value decimal system still in use today.

- The modern use of the Scientific Method was developed in early Muslim philosophy.
- Arab mathematician Ibn Al-Haitham advanced the science of optics in the 10th century, by solving particular problems related to the refraction of light.
- These familiar English words have their medieval origins in the language and scientific contributions of Islamic scholars: alkali, alchemy, alcohol, algorithm, almanac, zenith and zero.
- Muslim physician Ibn Sina (Avicenna) is widely credited as the grandfather of modern medicine. His compiled texts provide the basis for nearly all modern scientific research methods.
- North African Arabs ('Moors') ruled parts or all of Spain for 700 years. As a result, Spanish contains approximately 5,000 words of Arabic origin.
- Languages written with Arabic script include: Persian/Farsi and Urdu.
- There are Arabic speaking populations in Turkey, Iran, Central Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa.
- The oldest university in the world is Egypt's Al-Azhar, which was built as a mosque and theological school in 969 AD.
- A Muslim geographer, Al-Idrisi, created the first map of the entire world (as it was known at that time) around 1154.
- The first doctor who identified the cause of hay fever was a Muslim doctor, Al-Razi, born in 865 AD.
- *A Thousand and One (Arabian) Nights*, the most famous collection of tales in the world, has no known author.
- Muslims built the world's first hospitals during the time of the caliphs.
- By the 800s, Muslim traders identified and studied the seven climate zones which are still used by geographers today.
- Islam's two holiest cities, Mecca and Medina are in Saudi Arabia.
- The world's largest oil reserves are in Saudi Arabia.
- Abu Dhabi (United Arab Emirates), Dubai ---

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS

• Arabic Literature in English Translation

- One Thousand and One Nights (The Arabian Nights) - a collection of stories, compiled by various authors, translators and scholars over thousands of years and dating from .approx. 800-900 AD.
- Rihlah – Travels of Ibn Battuta – travel writer, born in Morocco in 1304, who traveled to almost every part of the Islamic world (75,000 miles) in 25 years.

• Arabic Wisdom - Proverbs and Sayings

- A scholar who does not produce is like a cloud that doesn't rain.
- Wisdom consists of ten parts: nine parts silence and one part a few words.
- Examine what is said, not him who speaks.
- Only three things in life are certain: birth, death and change.
- The best generosity is giving without being asked.

- The generous is never satisfied with riches.
- If you have much, give of your wealth; if you have little, give of your heart.
- He who has health has hope; and he who has hope, has everything.
- In the desert of life the wise person travels by caravan, while the fool prefers to travel alone.
- Every beetle is a gazelle in the eyes of its mother.

• Famous Quotes

- You can tell whether a man is clever by his answers. You can tell whether a man is wise by his questions. ~Naguib Mahfouz (Egyptian writer, Nobel prize winner)
- Every society has its traditions, laws, and religious beliefs, which it tries to preserve. ~Naguib Mahfouz (Egyptian writer, Nobel prize winner)
- Like the seasons of the year, like history, truth always repeats itself... THE PATH OF VISION. ~Ameen Rihani (Lebanese writer)
- I do believe that one way to bring cultures together, to develop trust between people and countries and religions, is through education. And through music and art and basketball and activities and joys that people share worldwide, regardless of ethnic background or religious orientation. ~Steve Kerr (Lebanese-American athlete)
- All our words are but crumbs that fall down from the feast of the mind. ~Khalil Gibran (Lebanese American writer)
- A poet is a bird of unearthly excellence, who escapes from his celestial realm arrives in this world warbling. If we do not cherish him, he spreads his wings and flies back into his homeland. ~Khalil Gibran (Lebanese American writer)

• Famous Arab Americans

- Dr. Elias Corey, organic chemistry professor at Harvard University and 1990 Nobel Prize winner in Chemistry
- Dr. Ahmed H. Zewail, physics professor at Caltech, and 1999 winner of the Nobel Prize in Chemistry
- Khalil Gibran, (1.6.1883–4.10.1931), Lebanese American artist, poet and writer
- Paul Albert Anka, (born 7.30, 1941, in Ottawa, Ontario), Canadian singer, songwriter and actor.
- Omar Sharif (born 4.10.1932), Academy Award-nominated Egyptian actor.. He has acted in Arabic, French, and English feature films. Sharif is most famous for his roles in Doctor Zhivago and Lawrence of Arabia.
- Vince Vaughn (born 3.28.1970), American film actor.
- Joseph Abboud (born circa 1950 in Boston, Massachusetts), award-winning American menswear fashion designer and author.
- Doug Flutie, retired NFL quarterback and winner of Heisman Trophy and Pro-Bowl honors.
- Mitch Daniels, Governor of Indiana, is a first-generation Syrian- American and a major supporter of the Arab-American Institute.
- Steve Jobs, co-founder of Apple Inc., was born to a Syrian father.
- Gen. John Abizaid (ret.), commanded American military operations in the Middle East and the Horn of Africa from 2003 until 2007.

- Tony Shalhoub, Emmy and Golden-Globe Award-winning star and producer of *Monk* television show.
- Ralph Nader, US politician and political activist.
- Salma Hayek, actress and model, was born to a Lebanese father.
- George Mitchell, former senator from Maine and senate majority leader.
- Shakira, musical artist and model, was born to a Lebanese father.
- Paula Abdul, multi-platinum selling and Emmy- and Grammy Award-winning singer, dancer, jewelry designer, and choreographer.
- Shannon Elizabeth, actress and model, was born to a Palestinian, Syrian, Iraqi, Lebanese, and Persian father.