

British Council's Pilot Arabic Speaking Competition 2021

Luma Hameed (PGCE, MA in Education/ Arabic & German)

The British Council introduced this year an exciting opportunity for students at schools in the UK to demonstrate their Arabic language speaking skills. This event is sponsored by Qatar Foundation International (QFI).

The competition has clear aims, including to :

- Raise the profile of Arabic
- Increase student's motivation for learning Arabic
- Develop vocabulary and improve pronunciation and speaking skills
- Raise confidence for oral examinations
- Inspire students to discover more about Arabic cultures
- Celebrate the skills of those who have Arabic as a Heritage language



Due to restrictions caused by Covid-19, the competition was held online on 29th March 2021, attendees were treated to presentations for up to two-minutes and then interacted with the judging panel in Modern Standard Arabic.

The topics including familiar topics such as 'Myself/ family and friends', 'Free time activities', 'Home, town, neighbourhood and region', 'Social issues', 'My studies & Life at school', 'Technology in everyday life', 'Customs and festivals in Arabic-speaking countries' and 'Global issues'.

The competition was divided into three categories: Beginner, Intermediate and Higher level and also tried to distinguish between Heritage and Non-Heritage learners.

It was an honour to be part of a judging panel with rich experience in teaching Arabic as a foreign language. The judging panel worked in teams to evaluate students' performance in a friendly way to allow students feel comfortable and express themselves and their theme in Arabic.

Some students showed an impressive ability to speak in modern standard Arabic and were motivated to bring their personal life and culture into this competition, while all gave interesting, moving, and thought-provoking presentations in Arabic.

It was a great experience and the event ended with a thrilling online celebration attended by Arabic language lovers, special guests and others with experience in

learning Arabic. The winners were introduced and their work celebrated by showing their performance on film or live.

The British Council hopes to be able to host such an event again in the future, and I would strongly encourage schools with Arabic language to be part of it.

Stay in touch

www.britishcouncil.org

TeachingArabic@britishcouncil.org



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