

Respecting cultures

Key words

adorn, commemorate, cursive, embellish, paraphrase

Reading

1 Read the article about a special postage stamp. As you read, make brief notes to explain the following:

- a Eid mubarak
- b The designer
- c *Thuluth*

A Mark of Respect



1 Sometimes respect between cultures happens in the smallest forms. In 2002, the United States Postal Service issued a special stamp to honour and commemorate Islamic culture. The blue postage stamp was adorned with gold Arabic calligraphy, in celebration of both Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha. The text reads both 'Eid mubarak' in Arabic and 'Eid Greetings' in English, providing a simple bridge between languages and customs. Eid mubarak translates literally as 'blessed festival' and can be paraphrased as, 'May your religious holiday be blessed'.

The Eid stamp was designed by Zakariya, a calligrapher who specialises in the art, history and practice of Islamic calligraphy. The type of script chosen for the stamp is known in Arabic as *thuluth*. It is a large, elegant and cursive script, and first appeared in medieval times. *Thuluth* is written on the principle that one-third of each letter slopes. Zakariya describes it as "the choice script for a complex composition due to its open proportions and sense of balance."

15 The stamp design was created using carefully considered traditional methods and instruments. The designer used homemade black ink, with pens made from seasoned reeds from the Middle East and Japanese bamboo from Hawaii. The paper was prepared with a coating of starch and three coats of a special varnish that contains egg whites. It was then polished with an agate stone and aged for more than a year.

20 Zakariya's original black-and-white design was then embellished with colour using a unique computer program. The colours chosen - gold script on a blue background - are reminiscent of great works of Islamic calligraphy. Even the colours of this special stamp are a mark of respect.

2 Match the sentence beginnings and endings to make complete sentences. There are more endings than you need.

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| a The stamp was made to | 8 | 1 modified using computer software. |
| b The gold script was set | 4 | 2 by the US Postal Service. |
| c Zakariya is a specialist | 6 | 3 to slope one-third of each letter. |
| d The original design was | 1 | 4 on a blue background. |
| e The designer used | 7 | 5 the modern design. |
| f It was issued in 2002 | 2 | 6 in Islamic calligraphy. |
| | | 7 a varnish containing egg whites. |
| | | 8 commemorate Islamic culture. |

in celebration of both Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha. These are the two most important festivals in the Islamic calendar. The text reads... history and practice of Islamic calligraphy. Zakariya was trained in the Middle East, but is now based in Arlington, Virginia. The type of script chosen ... and aged for more than a year. The aging process gives the design a unique texture. ... using a unique computer programme. The programme allows designers to choose the perfect colouring. The colours chosen ...

Unit 2: Respecting cultures

- a The aging process gives the design a unique texture.
- b These are the two most important festivals in the Islamic calendar.
- c The program allows designers to choose the perfect colouring.
- d Zakariya was trained in the Middle East, but is now based in Arlington, Virginia.

4 Fill in the table below using words from the text only. You may use a dictionary or the glossary.

Word	Meaning	Synonym
Honour	To show respect for someone or something	Commemorate
Calligraphy	Handwriting, often decorative	Script
Design	An artistic arrangement	Composition
Embellish	To make something more attractive, especially with decorative details	Adorn

5 Choose the correct statements to complete the sentences:

- a The stamp has both English and Arabic translations to ...
 - 1 make it accessible to readers of both languages.
 - 2 reflect the attempt to honour both cultures.
 - 3 teach people Arabic.
 - 4 provide different messages in two languages.
- b The design was ...
 - 1 inspired by medieval styles.
 - 2 created on a computer.
 - 3 planned and thought out in great detail.
 - 4 chosen by the postal services.

c Zakariya was chosen to design the stamp because ...

- 1 he was friends with the person who commissioned the stamp.
- 2 he didn't charge a lot.
- 3 he had all the necessary tools and materials.
- 4 he was a renowned expert in Arabic calligraphy.

6 Find the sentences in the text that mean the same or imply the same as these. Write them in the spaces provided.

- a The style, which dates from the Middle Ages, is substantial, stylish and is written with all the characters connected.
 It (thuluth) is a large, elegant and cursive script, and first appeared in medieval times.

- b Honour between different people can occur in many ways, both large and minuscule.
 Sometimes respect between cultures happens in the smallest forms.

- c The stamp was well-planned and created using time-honoured techniques and tools.
 The stamp design was created using carefully considered traditional methods and instruments.

- d The stamp was produced by an expert in Arabic script.
 The Eid stamp was designed by Zakariya, a calligrapher who specialises in the art, history and practice of Islamic calligraphy.

Over to you

7 In what ways can you show respect for other cultures?

Language practice

1 Complete the sentences with the correct statement, question or negative form of the present perfect.

- a + I've bought a new stamp.
? Have you bought a new stamp?
- I haven't bought a new stamp.
- b + He has visited the museum every year.
? Has he visited the museum every year?
- He hasn't visited the museum every year.
- c + They have written a book recently.
? Have they written a book recently?
- They haven't written a book recently.
- d + I've eaten my dinner.
? Have you eaten your dinner?
- I haven't eaten my dinner.
- e + I've watched the news today.
? Have you watched the news today?
She didn't pass her exam.
- f + she passed her exam
? Did she pass her exam?
- She didn't pass her exam.

Grammar assistant

Present perfect

- Use the present perfect to talk about actions and situations that started in the past and continue up to the present.
I've studied English for nine years / for most of my life.
- Use *for* with a period of time or time expressions.
I've used the same computer since I was a child / since last year.

2 Complete the sentences with *for* or *since*.

- She's lived here *for* three years.
- a He's been a teacher at a school in Al-Ahmadi *since* 2001.
- b We've known each other *since* last summer.
- c I waited *for* nearly two hours.
- d I've felt ill *since* I got up this morning.
- e I'm starving! I've wanted to eat *since* 10 a.m.
- f My mother and father have been married *for* twenty years.
- g I've worked for the same company *for* three years.
- h I've been too busy to see my friends *since* last month.
- i The doctor said I have to wear this cast *for* six weeks.
- j I've been reading this book *since* this morning.

3 Complete the sentences with the correct present perfect form of the verbs in brackets and *for* or *since*.

- I *have enjoyed* (enjoy) reading books *since* I was a child.
- a My sister *has played* (play) the piano *for* two years.
- b I *have been* (be) in the school orchestra *for* six months.
- c My brother *has written* (write) short stories in his free time *for* over five years.
- d Nour *has read* (read) thirty books *since* last year.
- e Hassan *has visited* (visit) Qatar every year for business *since* 1997.

Is there a better restaurant nearby?

4 Table for four please.

4 Choose the most appropriate response.

- A To your cousin at his graduation ceremony.
- 1 Congratulations, you must be tired.
 - 2 Congratulations, you look relieved.
 - 3 Congratulations, you must be very proud.
 - 4 Many happy returns.
- B To your interviewer at the end of a job interview.
- 1 Please let me know as soon as possible.
 - 2 Thank you and I look forward to hearing from you.
 - 3 Who else are you interviewing?
 - 4 I really need this job.
- C To an important academic who is visiting your school. (You have been asked to greet them.)
- 1 I'm sorry my teacher isn't here.
 - 2 Do you need help with your luggage?
 - 3 I'm a big fan of yours.
 - 4 Welcome to our school.
- D To your father before he travels on a business trip.
- 1 Don't forget us.
 - 2 Have a safe journey.
 - 3 Take some food with you.
 - 4 Be careful.
- E To a shop assistant who you think has overcharged you.
- 1 I think I paid too little.
 - 2 Can you check the price of that please?
 - 3 I'd like to return this item.
 - 4 Do you have this in a different size?
- F To a waiter in a restaurant. (You don't know what you want to eat.)
- 1 What would you recommend?
 - 2 I'd like the bill please.

5 Choose the correct verbs to complete the sentences.

- a We **started** (began / **started**) off very early in the morning so that we could see the sun rise.
- b He thought they would all share the cost of the meal but unfortunately he (**ended** / finished) up paying for everybody.
- c A When is the (**end** / finish) of your school year?
B I'll be (ending / **finishing**) school in June.
- d A Did you (end / **finish**) that book I lent you last week?
B I read the (**beginning** / starting) of it but I haven't had time to read the rest yet.
- e The (**ending** / finishing) of the play was very disappointing, especially after it had (**begun** / started) off so well.

6 Write the appropriate preposition. Use some of the following: (through, on, of, with, in, for, amongst, outside, by).

- a I was **in** Qatar for three weeks.
- b My final exam is **on** Friday. the time I get home, I will have travelled 200 miles.
- c **by** We waited outside the restaurant **for** one hour.
- e The boy was walking **through** the doorway when he saw a squirrel outside.
- f **of** all the students who were there, she was the only one with high grades.
- g They talked **amongst** themselves until they reached a decision.
- h We knocked at the door but there was no one **in**
- i He was in prison **for** 12 years.

Writing

1 Read the customer reviews of books by Alan Villiers and Wilfred Thesiger.

- Underline all the words and expressions which introduce the reviewer's opinions.
- Circle all the adjectives which describe their opinions.

Sons of Sindbad: by Alan Villiers

In 1938, Alan Villiers embarked on a remarkable journey. He joined a crew of the best Kuwaiti sailors, and described his entire journey from the East African coast to the Arabian Gulf.

The full title is Sons of Sindbad: Sailing with the Arabs in their Dhows, in the Red Sea, Round the Coasts of Arabia, and to Zanzibar and Tanganyika – the Shipmasters and

thought it was fascinating! He used traditional sailing techniques and sailed by *dhow*. Isn't that incredible!

His account gives an important insight into sea travel in the past. He also took amazing photographs of his journey, which accompany the book.

For me, the adventures were more interesting than the nautical research, especially experiencing monsoon winds and pearl diving. Alan Villiers

travels that now I want to learn how to sail too! I can't wait to read more books by him. I am sure that they are all fantastic.



Arabian Sands: by Wilfred Thesiger

I have been a fan of Wilfred Thesiger since I was very young. As far as I am concerned, he is one of the best writers ever – and this is one of his best books. It describes his unique journey through the deserts of Arabia. His writings are brilliant, and there are a thousand anecdotes that make you feel as if you are travelling by his side! Wilfred Thesiger wrote *Arabian Sands* in

1959, but it is still very exciting to read today because it is so dramatic. Wilfred Thesiger studied at Oxford University before becoming one of the first British explorers to write about Arabia. Later, other explorers wrote similar books, but in my opinion only a few of these authors are as interesting.

And why was life in Arabia better than in Britain, according to Wilfred

Thesiger? You will have to read the book to find out!



2 Below make a list of all the facts in the reviews.

Alan Villiers' journey began in 1938.
 He sailed with a crew of Kuwaiti sailors.
 He sailed from the East African coast to the Arabian Gulf. He used traditional sailing techniques and sailed by *dhow*. He took photographs of the journey.
Arabian Sands describes a journey through the deserts of Arabia. Wilfred Thesiger wrote *Arabian Sands* in 1959.

3 Wilfred Thesiger studied at Oxford University before becoming an explorer.
 Discuss the questions in pairs. Make three lists. Students' own answers

- a What are the best-selling books in Kuwait at the moment?
- b How are traditional and modern stories in Kuwait different?
- c Who are the most well-known traditional and modern authors in Kuwait?

Best-selling books

.....

.....

Differences between traditional and modern stories

.....

.....

Traditional and modern authors

.....

.....

4 Now choose three of the topics below and write two or three sentences about each one. Give facts and express your opinions. Students' own answers

- a Your favourite book this year.
- b The difference between traditional and modern stories.
- c An author whom you admire.
- d A traditional Islamic art.

Topic 1:

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Topic 2:

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Topic 3:

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