

Describing Yourself

Objective: By the end of the chapter, you will be able to:

- ask and answer questions about nationalities, cities, age, and marital status
- use the possessive word “dya” to indicate possession
- use demonstrative pronouns and adjectives in simple sentences
- ask questions about possession

Cultural Points

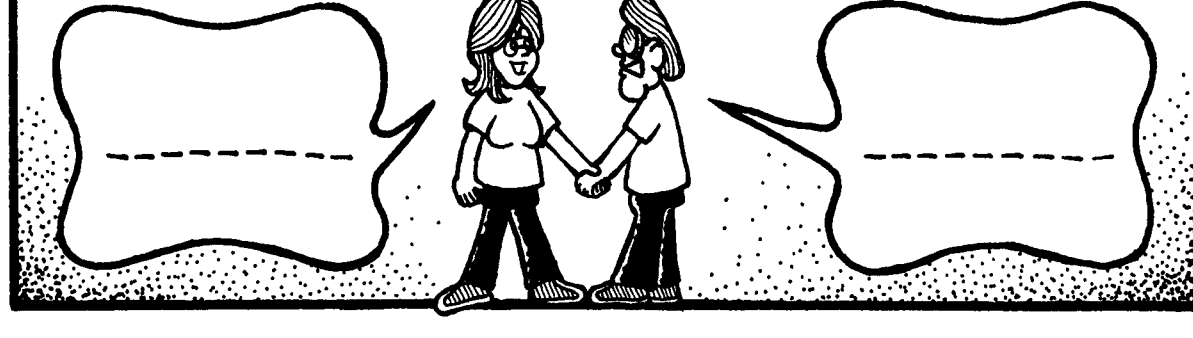
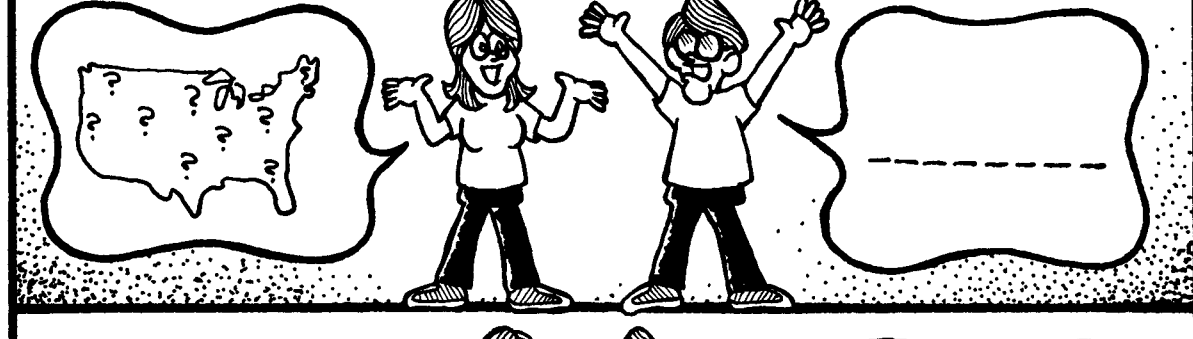
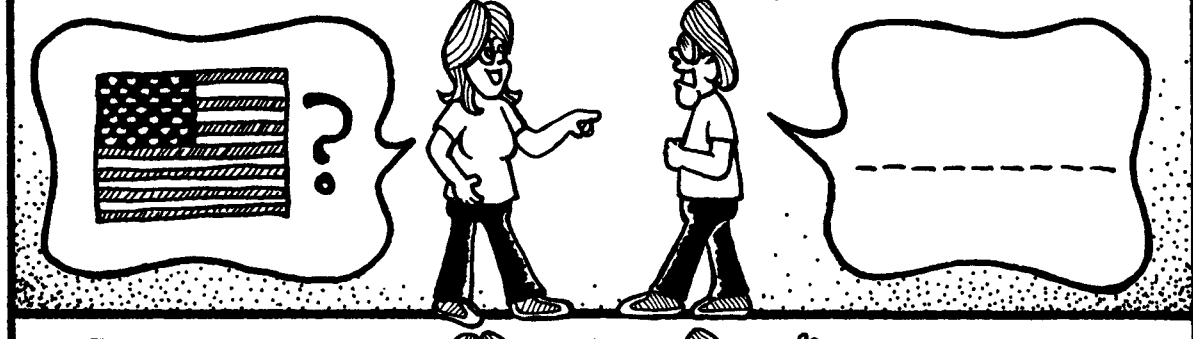
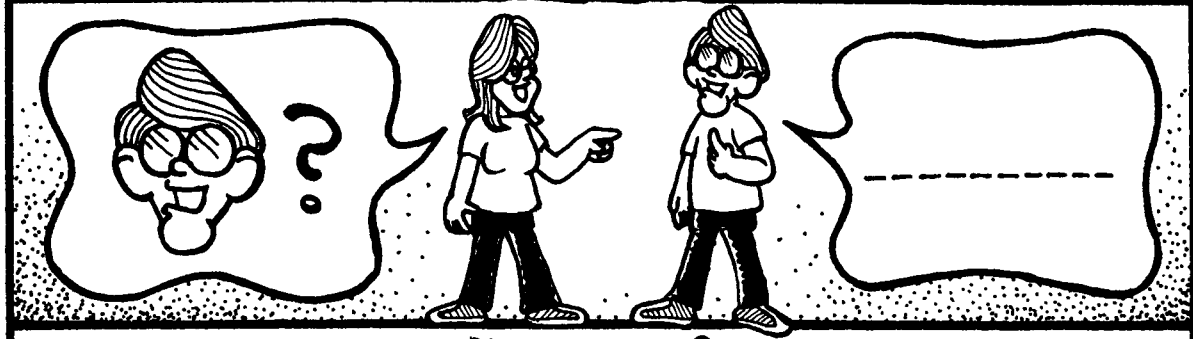
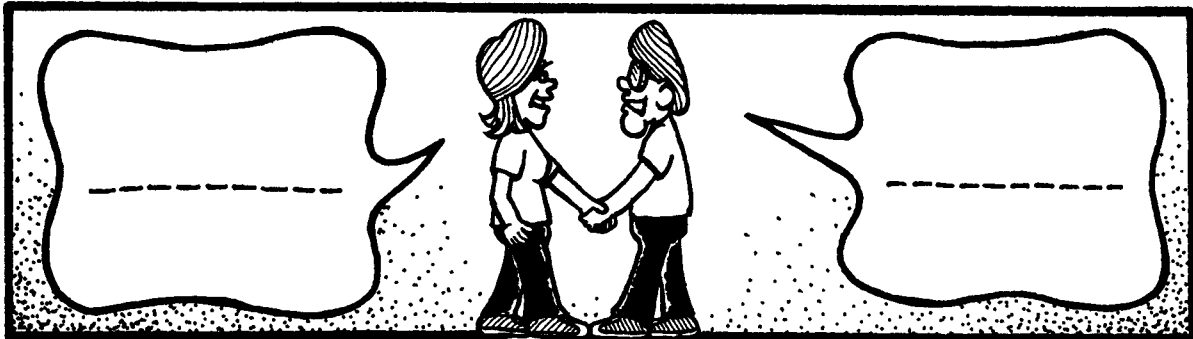
Avoid asking about the salary and age (sometimes) of people, especially women. Men should not enquire about the wives or other female relations of someone—this could be seen as expressing an inappropriate interest. People won't always tell you about their jobs and other personal concerns if not asked. Religion can be a sensitive issue and sometimes people are not willing to express their views.

Nationalities, Cities, and Marital Status

Vocabulary and Expressions

Where are you (masc.) from?	mnin nta?	منين نت؟
Where are you (fem.) from?	mnin nti?	منين نت؟
I am from the U.S.	ana mn mirikan.	أنا من مريكان.
I am American.	ana mirikani (ya) .	أنا مريكاني(ة).
I am from Morocco.	ana mn l-mğrib.	أنا من المغرب.
I am Moroccan.	ana mğribi (ya) .	أنا مغربي(ة).
Are you ... ?	weš nta/nti ... ?	واش نت / نت ... ؟
Are you from the U.S.?	weš nta/nti mn mirikan?	واش نت / نت من مريكان؟
Where are you from in the U.S.?	mnin nta/nti f mirikan?	منين نت / نت ف مريكان؟
And you?	u nta/nti?	و نت / نت؟
city	mdina	مدينة
state	wilaya	ولاية
big (fem.)	kbira	كبيرة
small (fem.)	şğira	صغيرة
Excuse me. (to man / woman)	smħ li / smħi li	سمح لي / سمحي لي
I am not ...	ana maši ...	أنا ماشي ...
but	welakin	ولكن
engaged (fem.)	mxtuba	مخطوبة
married (masc. / fem.)	mzuwj / mzuwja	مزوج / مزوجة
No, not yet.	lla mazal / lla baqi	لا مزال / لا باقي
Are you a tourist?	weš nta/nti turist?	واش نت / نت تريسْت؟
I work with the Peace Corps.	ana xddam(a) mεa hay'at s-salam.	أنا خدام(ة) مع هيئة السلام.

Exercise: Complete each section of this dialogue.



Demonstrative Adjectives & Demonstrative Pronouns

This, **that**, **these**, and **those** are used often in Arabic, like in English. But, unlike in English, in Arabic we must be aware of whether they act as adjectives or pronouns. Think about how we use these words in English. Sometimes, we use them before a noun. When we use them before a noun, they are called demonstrative adjectives.

***This** car is John's. I like **these** towels.
I want **that** book. **Those** flowers smell lovely.*

Sometimes, we use them by themselves. In this case, they are called demonstrative pronouns.

***This** is John's. I like **these**.
I want **that**. **Those** smell lovely.*

It isn't necessary to know their names, but it is necessary to pay attention to whether they are before a noun or not. Let's first look at the pronoun forms in Arabic, which you will use often even as a beginner.

Demonstrative Pronouns

this (masc.)	hada	هَذَا
this (fem.)	hadi	هَذِي
these (plur.)	hadu	هَؤُولَئِكَ
that (masc.)	hadak	هَذَاكَ
that (fem.)	hadik	هَذِيكَ
those (plur.)	haduk	هَؤُولَئِكَ

These forms may be used at the beginning of a sentence, in the middle or at the end of a sentence, or in questions. In Arabic, these pronouns can represent people.

This is a chair.	hada kursi.	هَذَا كُرْسِي.
This is a table.	hadi ṭbla.	هَذِي طَبْلَة.
This is Abdallah.	hada Abdallah.	هَذَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ.
This is Aicha.	hadi Aicha.	هَذِي عَيْشَة.
What's this? (masc. object)	šnu / aš hada?	شْنُو / أَشْ هَذَا؟
What's this? (fem. object)	šnu / aš hadi?	شْنُو / أَشْ هَذِي؟
Who is this? (masc.)	škun hada?	شَكُونْ هَذَا؟
Who is this? (fem.)	škun hadi?	شَكُونْ هَذِي؟
What is that? (masc. object)	šnu / aš hadak?	شْنُو / أَشْ هَذَاكَ؟
Who is that? (fem.)	škun hadik?	شَكُونْ هَذِيكَ؟

At first, you may have difficulty knowing whether to use the masculine or feminine form of **this** or **that**. Moroccans should understand you even if you make an error with gender, however.

Exercise: Write as many correct sentences as you can using the words from the following table.

e.g. hada rajl mzyan. هَذَا راجل مزيان.
(This is a good man.)

hada هَذَا	wld (masc. sing.) ولد	mzyan (masc. sing.) مزيان
hadi هَدِي	bnt (fem. sing.) بنت	mzyanin (masc. plur.) مزيانين
hadu هَدُو	qhwa (fem. sing.) قهوة	mzyana (fem. sing.) مزيانة
hadak هَذَاكَ	wlad (masc. plur.) ولاد	mzyanat (fem. plur.) مزيانات
hadik هَدِيكَ	rajl (masc. sing.) راجل	kbir (masc. sing.) كبير
haduk هَدُوكَ	dar (fem. sing.) دار	kbira (fem. sing.) كبيرة
	eyalat (fem. plur.) عائلات	kbar (masc./fem. plur.) كبار
	mdina (fem. sing.) مدينة	frhan (masc. sing.) فرحان
	bnat (fem. plur.) بنات	frhanin (masc. plur.) فرحانيين
	blad (masc. sing.) بلاد	frhana (fem. sing.) فرحانة
		frhanat (fem. plur.) فرحانات

Transcription Reminder – see page 1 for the full table with all transcription characters.

š:	the /sh/ sound as in “she”	a:	the ‘a’ in “father” or the ‘a’ in “mad”
x:	the ‘ch’ in the German “Bach” or the Scottish “loch” See page 144.	i:	the ‘ee’ in “meet”
ġ:	the French “r,” like a light gargle	u:	the ‘oo’ in “food”
ṭ:	pronounced like ṭ, ḍ, and ṣ, but with a lower pitch and a greater tension in the tongue and throat.	k:	the normal /k/ sound
ḍ:		q:	like the English /k/ but pronounced further back in the throat. See page 144.

Demonstrative Adjectives

this/these (masc. / fem. / plur.)	had	هَدَّ
that (masc.)	dak	داك
that (fem.)	dik	ديك
those (plur.)	duk	دوك

As you can see, the **this/these** form (**had**) is the same for masculine, feminine, and plural. For all the demonstrative adjectives, you must use the definite article in front of the nouns that follow them. This means using an “1” in front of “moon letters” or doubling the first letter of “sun letters” (see page 160).

this man	had r-rajl	هَدَّ الرَّاجِل
this woman	had l-mra	هَدَّ الْمَرَا
these men	had r-rjal	هَدَّ الرَّجَال
these women	had l-ḡyalat	هَدَّ الْعِيَالَات
This city is big.	had l-mdina kbira.	هَدَّ الْمَدِينَةَ كَبِيرَةَ.
That house is big.	dik ḍ-ḍar kbira.	دِيكَ الدَّارَ كَبِيرَةَ.

Talking about a General Situation



Sometimes in English, we use the words **this** and **that** to talk about general situations, not about specific things.

*Some of the students are always late for class. I don't like **that**.*

In Arabic, different expressions are used for these meanings.

this (general situation)	had š-ši	هَدَّ الشِّي
that (general situation)	dak š-ši	دَاكَ الشِّي

After some experience hearing native speakers, you should be able to know when to use the normal demonstrative pronouns and when to use these expressions. Some examples:

What is this? (this thing, this object)	aš hada?	أش هدا؟
What is this? (situation, affair)	aš had š-ši?	أش هد الشي؟
I want that. (that thing, that object)	bğit hadak.	بغيت هداك.
That's what I want. (a situation or outcome)	dak š-ši l-li bğit.	داك الشي اللي بغيت.

Using a Demonstrative Pronoun to Express Duration

With a present tense verb form, an active participle expressing current activity, or an equational sentence, the demonstrative pronoun **hadi** is used to express duration, like the English present perfect tense or present perfect progressive tense. It is used with a time expression and **u** (and) followed by the rest of the sentence:

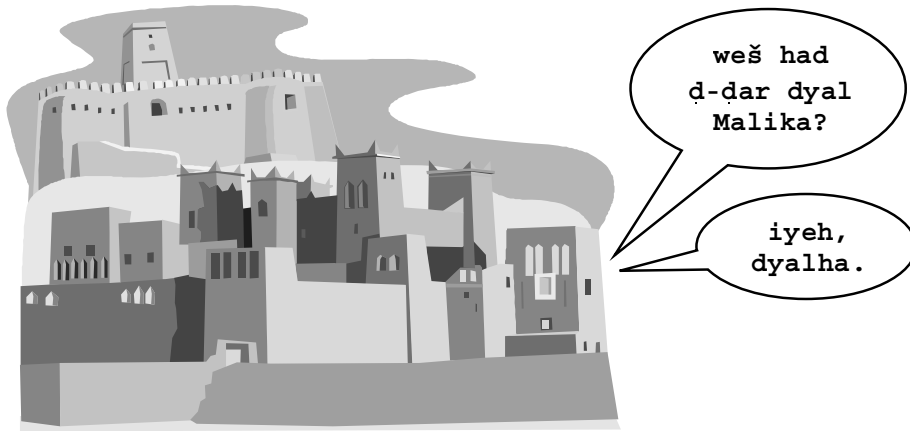
hadi + time expression + u + rest of sentence

I've been waiting for you for two hours. (Literally: This is two hours and I am waiting for you.)	hadi saɣtayn u ana kan-tsnak.	هدي ساعتين و أنا كنتسناك.
He's been asleep for a long time. (Literally: This is a long time and he is sleeping.)	hadi muda u huwa naɣs.	هدي مدة و هو ناعس.
He's been in Morocco for three years. (Literally: This is three years and he is in Morocco.)	hadi tlt snin u huwa f l-mağrib.	هدي تلت سنين و هو ف المغرب.

Asking about Possession

The possessive word **dya1** (ديال) may be used with **mn** (من) to mean “whose.”

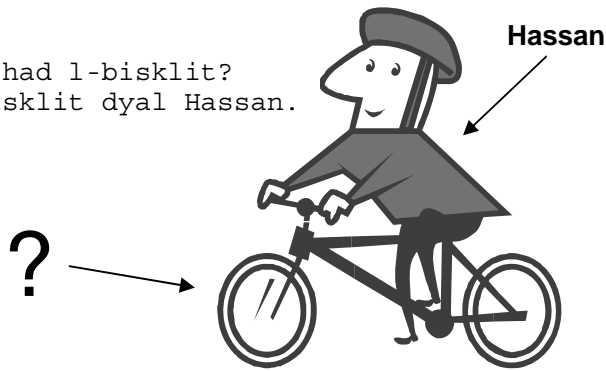
Whose book is this?	dya1 mn had l-ktab?	ديال من هد الكتاب؟
This is Amber's book.	had l-ktab dya1 Amber.	هد الكتاب ديال أمير.
Is this Hicham's book?	weš had l-ktab dya1 Hicham?	واش هد الكتاب ديال هشام؟
No, it's not his.	lla, maši dya1u.	لا، ماشي ديالو.
Whose house is this?	dya1 mn had d-ɖar?	ديال من هد الدار؟
This house is Malika's.	had d-ɖar dya1 Malika.	هد الدار ديال مليكة.
Is this house Malika's?	weš had d-ɖar dya1 Malika?	واش هد الدار ديال مليكة؟
Yes, it's hers.	iyeh, dya1ha.	إيه، ديالها.



Exercise: Ask a question about possession for each picture. Then, give the correct answer. The first one is done for you.

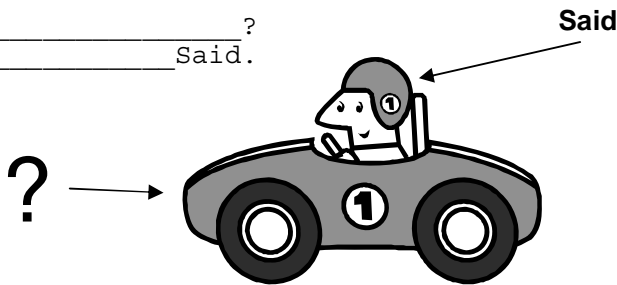
Q: dyal mn had l-bisklit?
A: had l-bisklit dyal Hassan.

ديال من هَد البسكليت؟
هَد البسكليت ديال حسن.



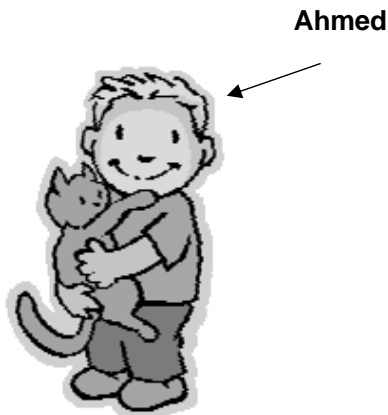
Q: _____?
A: _____ Said.

? _____
سعيد. _____



Q: _____?
A: _____ Ahmed.

? _____
أحمد. _____



?

Q: _____ ?
A: _____ Aziz.

?



? _____
عزیز. _____