

100 BOOKS
FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
IN ARABIC



Cover illustration by Hanane Kai, taken from **[Your tongue is your horse]** لسانك حصانك, written by Fatima Sharafeddine, Kalimat, 2016. Winner of the BolognaRagazzi Award 2016 in the New Horizons category.

100 BOOKS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN ARABIC

Here is a selection of 100 children's books in Arabic published in various countries of the Arab world. This selection reflects the dynamism of a sector that has truly taken off in the past twenty years, with the publication of a wide range of titles whose quality is often recognised by international awards.

Organised by genre and in alphabetical order of title, this guide also includes a few translations into Arabic of books originally published in a different language, in the hope of helping build bridges between languages and cultures.

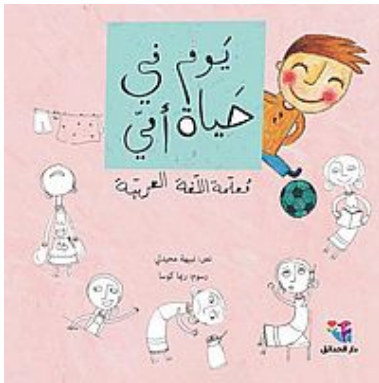
This selection was put together in its French version by "The Arab world reading committee" of the journal *Takam Tikou*, which brings together professionals from different horizons (The French National Library, The Institute of the Arab world, Libraries of the City of Paris). It is brought to you in English through collaboration between three national sections of the International Board on Books for Young People: IBBY France, IBBY Ireland and IBBY UK, all members of IBBY Europe. Many thanks to the contributors and translators!

This document, in both languages, can be downloaded from the IBBY Europe website:
www.ibby-europe.org

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PICTURE BOOKS



[A day in the life of my mother, an Arabic teacher] معلمة اللغة العربية، يوم في حياة أُمِّي،

Nabiha Mehaydli, ill. Rima Koussa

Beirut (Lebanon): Dar al-Hadaeq, 2017

28 pp; colour; 23 x 23 cm

ISBN 978-614-439-076-4

7 +

This young narrator's mum has a hard life! For a start she's late picking him up from school, her car has broken down as well as her washing machine and the gas has run out for the cooker. Problems keep piling up and the poor mum gets more and more exhausted. To give her some peace and quiet to mark her students' homework – the mum teaches Arabic – the father and the son try to stay quiet. But they keep hearing her cheering and groaning in her office because when mum is busy marking homework, her good mood comes back. That's when the day gets better! The illustrations, using a range of visual forms, are full of jokey humour and delightful details.



[A princess... In my own way!] أميرة... على طريقي!

Myrna Massad Rougier, ill. Zeina Bassil; trans. from French by Elissar Sani'

Asmar,

Beirut (Lebanon): Samir, 2013

32 pp; colour; 29 x 28 cm

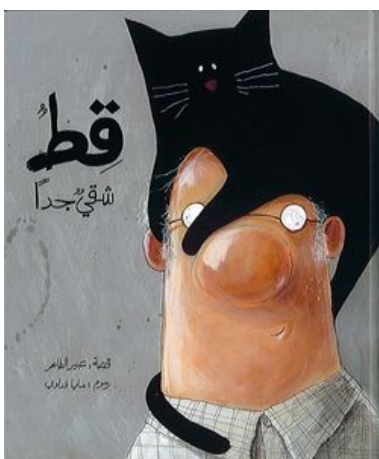
ISBN 978-9953-315-68-3

5 +

"I want to be a princess" says the little girl. "But why? You will be so bored!" warns her mum. A princess spends a lot of time waiting, while her prince is out having adventures, riding a white steed, waving his big sword, fighting dragons, and putting out fires. The little girl acts out being a prince. And she discovers that riding, fighting, and putting out fires suit her much more than being a princess. A fresh look at gender stereotypes, this wryly humorous picture book ends with the recognition that even the fiercest warriors can have contradictory desires...

Available also in French:

Princesse... Comme je veux ! ISBN 978-9953-315-60-7



[A very mischievous cat] قَطُّ شَقِيٌّ جَدًّا

Abir al-Tahir, ill. Maya Fidawi

Amman (Jordan): Dar al-Yasmin lil-Nachr wa al-Tawzi, 2014

40 pp; colour; 29 x 24 cm

ISBN 978-9957-866-65-5

6 +

For a long time, the old gentleman and the cat got on so well, they couldn't bear to be apart. But times change, and the cat is becoming more and more difficult to live with, turning the house upside down. The old gentleman decides the cat will have to go. He leaves the annoying animal outside his neighbour's house, then on a lonely street corner, but the cat keeps coming back. Perhaps the old gentleman needs to take the cat further away? What about leaving it at the South Pole? It seems a good plan but it turns out that the heart itself moves in mysterious ways. A simple and affecting text, with illustrations full of deadpan humour.



[Abc: We are the letters of the alphabet] أ ب ت نحن حروف الألفباء

Rayyan Shuqayr Kanan, ill. Farah Mar'i and Marian Mawsili

Beirut (Lebanon): Yuki Press, 2012

60 pp; colour; 23 x 22 cm

ISBN 978-9953-478-15-9

3 +

A traditional picture book with a double page for each letter. On the right there's a short rhyming text that uses words beginning with that letter, and on the left there is a drawing illustrating the words in the text. The pages have alternating red and blue backgrounds. A well put-together book with rhythmic, amusing rhymes that could be easily sung or set to music.



[Alya and the three cats] علياء والقطة الثلاث

Amina Hachimi Alaoui, ill. Maya Fidawi

Casablanca (Morocco): Yanbow al-Kitab, 2016

32 pp; colour; 22 x 29 cm

ISBN 978-9954-486-64-1

5 +

Maryam and Sami have three cats. There's Pacha, the black angora; Minouche, the grey tabby; and Amir, the Siamese. They love to sprawl on Maryam's stomach. But one day, this human cushion starts to grow and grow, and something starts moving around inside it. What can it be?

This book will be very helpful in talking about the arrival of a new sibling in the family. And the three cats, with their distinctive personalities, act in ways with which many children will identify. Maya Fidawi's illustrations are touching and amusing. This is a lovely picture book, with words by Amina Hachimi Alaoui, director of the Moroccan publishing house, Yanbow al-Kitab.



[Auntie 'Awcha] العمة عوشة

Fatima Sharafeddine, ill. Hanane Kai

Sharjah (United Arab Emirates): Kalimat, 2015

45 pp; colour; 28 x 22 cm

ISBN 978-9948-181-35-4

6 +

Auntie 'Awcha is an old lady who lives all alone. She is kind and gentle and everyone in the village loves her. Auntie 'Awcha has only one problem: she talks all the time! As soon as she meets someone she starts talking and doesn't stop. Her neighbours and the shopkeepers can't stand it anymore. But the day Auntie 'Awcha disappears, everyone worries. Funnily enough, the villagers miss her gossiping away. This is a hilarious book with illustrations full of inventive silliness, particularly the little pieces of paper which fly out of Auntie 'Awcha's mouth when she chatters.



[Aunty Zayyoun and the olive tree] العمة زيّون و شجرة الزيتون

Fatima Sharafeddine, ill. Sinan Hallak

Beirut: Asala; Ramallah: Tamer Institute for Community Education, 2010

24 pp; colour; 20 x 24 cm

ISBN 978-614-402-179-8

6 +

High up in a mountain-top village two lives run in parallel. There is Aunty Zayyoun who is a hundred years old and living in her little house. And there is an olive tree, more than three hundred years old. The two characters have a lot in common: they seem to have always been here, don't need much to eat, give away what they have, keep their secrets and survive the worst stormy weather. This is a very simple, poetic story, alternating in its account from one life to another. Its delicate and deliberately simple illustrations complement the strength of the poetry and gentle tone of this highly accessible story, all told through the voice of the characters. The text is fully vocalised¹.



[The big bad monster] وحشون الكبير الشرير

Ingrid Chabbert, ill. Guridi; trans. from French by Antoine Tohmé

Beirut (Lebanon): Samir, 2015

32 pp; colour; 29 x 22 cm

ISBN 978-9953-31-875-2

4 +

Little monster is dozing in the sun when a little girl in a red cloak comes along to disturb his peace. This Little Red Riding Hood is no shrinking violet. She can take a monster in her stride, however loudly he growls. Stubbornly, she insists that he should be friends with her. And even if she is forced to leave him alone in the end, she has not quite given up. Her parting gift is a book that may well change his life. A delightful, perfectly achieved picture book, with elegant and tender illustrations.



[The black dot] النقطة السوداء

Walid Taher

Cairo (Egypt): Dar al-Shorouq, 2009

56 pp; colour; 23 x 23 cm

ISBN 978-977-09-2611-5

6 +

One morning, the children's playground is invaded by an enormous black bubble that occupies almost the entire space. At first, the children try to understand where it came from, then to get rid of it, but their efforts are in vain. They all try to accept the situation, all except Marwan. Having tried everything to get rid of the bubble, out of anger, he kicks it... And it starts to crumble! Finally, all the children will help him to overcome this cumbersome mass... Walid Taher, an Egyptian artist, has produced a very powerful and expressive work, based on a sophisticated graphic construction. The book won the 2010 Etisalat Award for Best Children's Book in Arabic.

¹ The term vocalisation refers to the various diacritics that are attached to Arabic letters in certain styles of writing and that indicate such features as vowels, consonant doubling and absence of any vowels. Vocalisation is essential for children learning to read Arabic, as it serves as an indication on how to pronounce the word correctly. The use of vocalisation diminishes as the child gets older and masters completely the reading skill. Therefore, stating whether the text is entirely or partially vocalised gives an information of the level of difficulty involved.



[Colour me draw me write me – Beirut] إكتبوني إرسموني لونوني بيروت

Michèle Standjofski
Beirut (Lebanon): Dar Onboz, 2009
104 pp; colour; 30 x 42 cm
ISBN 978-9953- 74-078- 2

All ages

Michèle Standjofski shows us the nooks and crannies of “her” Beirut: stopping to look at an architectural detail, doubling back to people sitting on a café terrace, enthusing over an ancient door, standing in a public park, and gazing at house fronts. Here is Beirut, set between sea and mountain, full of contradictions: houses abandoned or sporting flowery balconies, destroyed by war or wedged between glass buildings. Michèle Standjofski’s love of comics can be seen in the layout of the pages, the black line drawings, and the speech bubbles scattered through the charming text, written in Lebanese Arabic.



[The creatures on the bedroom ceiling] الغرفة سقف كائنات

Nabiha Mehaydli, ill. Hassan Zahr al-Din
Beirut (Lebanon): Dar Al-adaeq, 2011
35 pp; colour; 22 x 28 cm
ISBN 978-9953-496-69-6

6 +

Karim’s family is poor, but he is a happy boy. Every night when he stares at the ceiling above his bed, the damp spots come to life and adventures begin. He finds a patch of green grass for the hungry cow. And it must be her who sends him a glass of milk in the mornings, as a way of thanking him! One evening, there’s a surprise. All his friends have disappeared. His father has repainted the bedroom ceiling... That night, Karim tosses and turns, unable to sleep. The next day, he finds himself a notebook and a pencil and starts to write down his friends’ adventures. And so begins a long career...



[Crocolou loves to dress up] تمذوب يحب ان يكون جميلا

Ophélie Texier; trans. from French by Faten Ballout
Beirut (Lebanon): Samir, 2013 (Timdhûb).
23 pp; colour; 15 x 20 cm
ISBN 978-2-7427-7723-5

2 +

Crocolou loves to dress up. After a long shower with his favourite cuddly toy, he must choose what to wear. A cardigan or a shirt? This pretty pair of white pants? Trainers or boots? How about this wizard outfit? Is this some kind of important day? Who is Crocolou getting all dressed up for?

In this collection, we renew acquaintanceship with Crocolou, a cheeky little character already loved by French children and whose Arabic name is “Timdhûb” (from “timsah” *crocodile* and dh’ib, *loup* or wolf). A sensitive and enjoyable translation.

Other titles in this series:

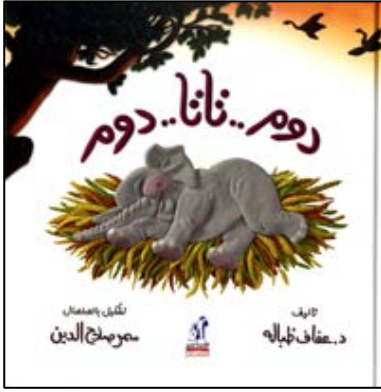
[Crocolou loves a fright] ISBN 978-9953-314-40-2 تمذوب يحب ان يشعر بالخوف

[Crocolou loves gardening] ISBN 978-9953-314-44-0 تمذوب يحب الزراعة

[Crocolou loves his little sister] ISBN 978-9953-314-38-9 تمذوب يحب أخته الصغيرة

[Crocolou loves his Mummy] ISBN 978-9953-314-42-6 تمذوب يحب ماما

[Crocolou loves to say no] ISBN 978-9953-314-39-6 تمذوب يحب ان يقول كلا

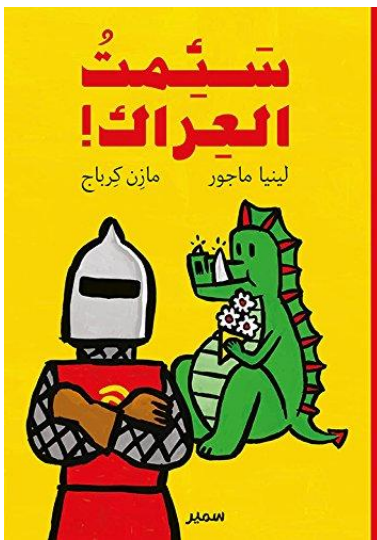


[Dum... Tata... Dum] دوم تاتا دوم

Afaf Tobbala, ill. Samar Salah al-Din
Cairo (Egypt): Nahdet Misr, 2008
24 pp; colour; 25 x 25 cm + DVD
ISBN 978-977-14-4282-0

6 +

Deep in the savannah, the Kukumba elephant family lives peacefully under the watchful eye of the sage, Kukumba the Elder. In spring, it's time for the tribe to move on. This is Kukumba Junior's first journey! But after plodding for an entire day, he's disappointed: the only scenery he's seen is dust and elephants' feet. To console him, Kukumba the Elder suggests they go on a little walk that might turn into an adventure. And back at the camp, Kukumba Junior tells his mother about an amazing day that has taught him a lot. This lively story is beautifully told, with a light touch, and the illustrations in modelling clay are inventive. The DVD includes a delightful animated film.



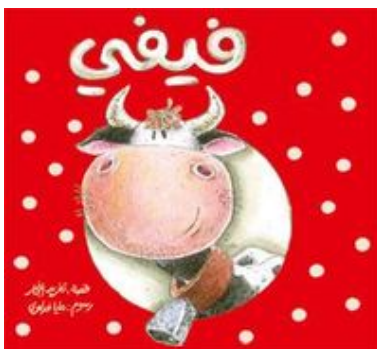
[Enough fighting!] سَيِّمَتُ الْعِرَاكُ

Lenia Major, ill. Mazen Kerbaj; trans. from French by Rita Boustany
Beirut (Lebanon): Samir, 2012
40 pp; colour; 34 x 25 cm
ISBN 978-9953-31458-7

4 +

A knight and a dragon are ready for a fight. The dragon scorches the knight's armour to ashes, chews up his two swords and mangles his three axes. The rise in number and power of the artillery used by the knight does not change a thing: this is an invincible dragon. Time for more subtle tactics. Will nine bouquets of flowers do the trick? The surprise ending is a treat. The rhyming text bounces along and the brightly coloured cartoon illustrations by Lebanese illustrator Mazen Kerbaj capture the ridiculousness of the situations.

Available also in French: **Suffit la bagarre !** ISBN 978-995-331-436-5



[Fifi] فيفي

Taghrid al-Najjar, ill. Maya Fidawi
Amman (Jordan): Dar Al-Salwa, 2012 (Ahsan Sadiq)
27 pp; colour; 22 x 23 cm
ISBN 978-9957-04-065-9

4 +

Uncle Saleh's birthday present to Dana is a real surprise. It's Fifi the cow. It doesn't seem to be such a crazy idea. Dana will have enough fresh milk every morning, and her friends will envy her for having a cow. But life with a cow is not that simple. Fifi doesn't like being tied to a tree. She prefers a good trample through mum's rose bed, a quiet sit on the bonnet of dad's car, and a tour of the house. And Fifi moos her way through every catastrophe. Eventually, of course, she has to be returned to Uncle Saleh's farm where she belongs. A hilarious book, with a rhythmic text, and illustrations that enhance the comedy.

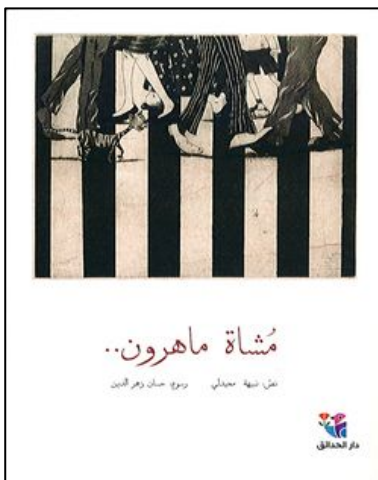


[The fox lays eggs] الثعلب يبيض

Hicham 'Alwan, ill. Fatima Hasrawiyan
Beirut (Lebanon): Dar al-Hadaeq, 2015
24 pp; colour; 21 x 26 cm
ISBN 978-614-439-056-6

6 +

Mrs Hen asks Mr Rooster to sit on the eggs while she goes to find a drink of water. Mrs Duck, passing by, is appalled: a rooster that lays eggs! Time passes and Mrs Hen doesn't return. A worried Mr Rooster goes to look for her and asks Little Fox to take over his egg sitting duties. When the other animals see the fox sitting on the eggs, there is uproar. Out comes the farmer, gun at the ready and off goes Little Fox. And now who's going to look after the eggs? When Mrs Duck returns and finds the farmer sitting there, she nearly faints from the shock and decides to find a more respectable barnyard. Still the farmer does a good job and Mr Rooster and Mrs Hen come back just in time to see the chicks hatch. A delightfully wacky picture book.

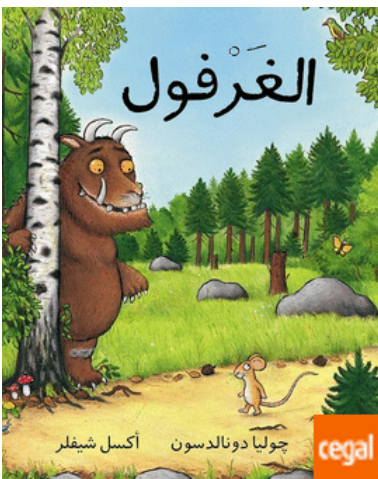


[Graceful passers-by...] مشاة ماهرون..

Nabihah Mehaydli, ill. Hassan Zahr al-Din
Beirut (Lebanon): Dar Al-Hadaeq, 2014
23 pp; black and white; 25 x 20 cm
ISBN 978-614- 139-021- 4

5 +

Looking down from her window, a little girl watches the ballet dance of passers-by as they cross the street. She watches them and calls out to them, but they ignore her. Now that she is grown up, when she is crossing the street she always looks up to where a little girl might be watching her from a balcony. The text, which is in rhyme, suggests the rhythm of pedestrians' footsteps. Each illustration is like a painting full of fine detail. The sepia colours chosen by the artist give us subtle and beautiful contrasts of light and shade. A picture book of rare delicacy and gorgeous poetry.



[The Gruffalo] الغرفول

Julia Donaldson, ill. Axel Scheffler; trans. from English by Nadia Fouda and Andy Smart
Doha (Qatar): Bloomsbury Qatar Foundation Publishing, 2015
32 pp; colour; 27x 21 cm
ISBN 978-99921-42-12-7

4 +

Here's the famous *Gruffalo* translated into Arabic. It's the story of a quick-witted mouse who uses cunning and intelligence to trick all the predators in the forest that dream of feasting on this little rodent. The mouse even manages to scare a terrifying monster called al-Gharfoul, the Gruffalo. The Arabic text written in rhyme is a joy to read. A superb translation to introduce Arab-speaking readers to this children's classic. The text is partially vocalised.

Read more Gruffalo adventures in:

The Gruffalo's Child ISBN 978-99921-42-50-9 **الصغيرة الغرفولة**



[How I became a storyteller] كيف صرت حكواتياً

Nabiha Mehaydli, ill. Rahf Chikhani
Beirut (Lebanon): Dar al-Hadaeq, 2016
27 pp; colour; 22 x 22 cm
ISBN 978-614-439-061-0

5 +

Jad belongs to the school drawing club, but the teacher doesn't like any of his drawings! She sees nothing but a purple dot on a sand-coloured background, where Jad has drawn an elephant, separated from his herd, lost in the vastness of the desert. The teacher realises that Jad's place is not in the drawing club but in the storytelling club. There he can give free rein to his imagination and tell his stories to the other children. And a storyteller is what Jad grows up to become. The illustrations, with their warm colours and blend of gouache, pastels, cut-outs and photos, beautifully express the joyfulness and optimism of this story.



[I didn't mean to...] لم اكن اقصد..

Samar Mahfouz Barraaj, ill. Lena Merhej
Beirut (Lebanon): Asala, 2007
16 pp; colour; 30 x 30 cm
ISBN 978-9953-470-06-1

3 +

Stories about mischievous little girls are rare in children's literature in Arabic. So this one is especially welcome. Our heroine's naughtiness has consequences, of course, and there are lessons to be learnt. But her eyes don't lose that cheeky twinkle, suggesting there is more fun to come. The comic strip illustrations are full of humorous details. The text, printed as if it is handwritten, is simple, direct and funny.

By the same author and illustrator:

[I also want...] ISBN 978-9953-488-19-6 انا ايضا اريد

[I'm looking for a hobby] ISBN 978-9953-513-91-1 أفشش عن هواية

[I want a pet] ISBN 978-9953-513-91-1 أريد حيواناً أليفاً



[I Don't Want To Go To Bed!] لا اريد ان انام!

Tony Ross; trans. from English by Najla Réaïdy Chahine and Rana Hayeck
Beirut (Lebanon): Hachette Antoine, 2013 (Qissat al-'âmîra al-saghîra)
32 pp; colour; 27 x 24 cm
ISBN 978-9953-266-53-4

3 +

The little princess doesn't want to go to bed. Why does she have to sleep if she isn't tired? And anyway, she's thirsty, and now it's her teddy Mourad's turn to be thirsty. And now there's a monster in the closet. And now, and now, and now... finally the pretty little tyrant falls asleep but when the King goes to give her one last goodnight kiss, she isn't there...

What a pleasure to find Tony Ross's little princess in an Arabic edition! A short, well-translated rhyming text, with brightly-coloured full-page illustrations which immediately attract the reader's eye.

Other titles in the collection:

[I don't want to go to the Hospital!] ISBN 978-9953-266-52-7

لا اريد ان اذهب الى المشفى!

[I want my Mum!] ISBN 978-9953-266-55-8 أريد ماما!

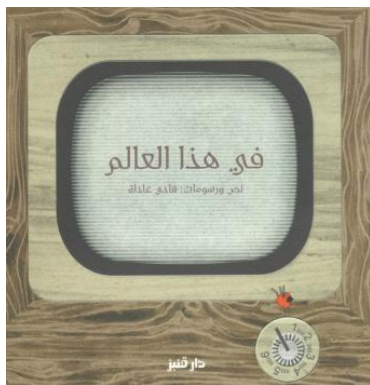
[I want food] ISBN 978-9953-266-54-1 أريد عشائي



[If I was a bird] لو كنت طائراً

Fatima Sharafeddine, ill. Amal Karzai
Sharjah (United Arab Emirates): Kalimat, 2009
24 pp; colour; 21 x 23 cm
ISBN 978-9948-15-145-6
6 +

A boy remembers the house he has had to leave: the garden where he used to play, his bedroom, his bed, his toys. The soldiers came and now his family live on the other side of the wall, in a cheerless, unfinished housing estate. Other people are happy now in the house that he loved. The spare poetic text movingly tells the story from the boy's perspective. Through subtle variations in tone and light, the watercolour illustrations contrast life on each side of the wall. And the book ends hopefully: 'We will go back some day'.



[In this world] في هذا العالم

Fadi Adleh
Beirut (Lebanon): Dar Onboz, 2008
32 pp; colour; 22 x 22 cm
ISBN 978-9953-465-10-4
6 +

Syrian author and illustrator Fadi Adleh looks at our world and the people in it with kindness, objectivity and humour. Adleh has a keen eye for contrasts and stages them with great subtlety. He constantly switches between words and images which gives unsuspected depth to deceptively simple prose and illustrations. Each double page offers a new discovery that will surprise, amuse or give readers food for thought, but never leave them cold. On the contrary, they'll be carried along by his wry irony as he casts a quizzical and philosophical eye on our world.



[Kamal and Shoukri] كمال و شكري

Walid Taher
Cairo (Egypt): Dar al-Shorouq, 2014
30 pp; colour; 20 x 22 cm
ISBN 978-977-093-306-0
5 +

What a pleasure for a tiny bird to believe that he is a great eagle and for a tiny spider to imagine himself a terrifying animal! These two will quickly become great friends. They tell each other about their funny adventures, until the tyre of a bus bursts right next to them, causing a real fright... and bringing our two characters to their senses, no longer invincible superheroes, but tiny beasts! Author-illustrator Walid Taher offers us a really pleasurable read, enhanced by his dynamic illustrations with very bright colours, outlined in white pencil, abounding with details.



[Kot Kot the hen] الدجاجة باق بيق

Rania Zbib Daher, ill. Joëlle Achqar
Sharjah (United Arab Emirates): Kalimat, 2009
20 pp; colour; 19 x 25 cm + CD
ISBN 978-9948-15-051-0
3 +

Kot Kot the hen lives in a coop on the terrace of a suburban building, and she hates it. Unlike her friends, she is bored. It would be so much better to live on a farm in the mountains! One day, she jumps from the terrace and finds herself on Auntie Afaf's balcony. She confides in her, and Auntie Afaf agrees to drive her secretly to Uncle Suhayl's farm. There she will live the life she dreams of! This story is full of fantasy with joyful illustrations. Listening to the CD will double the pleasure. It has two audio versions of the story, with or without background music.



[Moabi, the mother of all trees] الموابي أم الأشجار

Mickaël El Fathi, translated from French by Samia al-Imam
Casablanca (Morocco): Yanbow al-Kitab, 2015.
[22] pp; colour; 22 x 29 cm
ISBN 978-9954-486-63-4
6 +

In stunning illustrations that are reminiscent of the Austrian artist Friedensreich Hundertwasser, Mickaël El Fathi tells the story of the moabi, the oldest known species of tree. The moabi grows only in the rainforests of the Congo Basin and, like many rare species, is unfortunately threatened with extinction due to human overexploitation. Through the spare, poetic text, we follow the growth of one remarkable tree as it witnesses the evolution of life on earth, from dinosaurs to humans. The moabi, steeped in ancient wisdom, hopes that someday man will come, not to cut it down, but to make peace with the forest.



[My alphabet] حروفي الأبجدية

Nabihah Mehaydli, illustrations by Mohamed Said Baalbaki
Beirut (Lebanon): Dar al-Hadaeq, 2007
31pp; colour; 26 x 24cm
ISBN 978-9953-464-23-7
3 +

Each page of this innovative alphabet features two letters, alongside two words that start with them. An illustration depicts the elements represented by these words in a composition that places these elements in context. On the following page the second letter is coupled with the following letter, and so on. It's a pleasing new take on the alphabet book. The book can be used together with a colouring book that reproduces the illustrations and a booklet that presents a letter and an image in a frame, and the reader has to stick the label for the corresponding word underneath.



[My ball] طابتي

Nadine Touma, ill. Lara Aswad Khoury
Beirut (Lebanon): Dar Onboz, 2010
64 pp; colour; 22 x 28 cm + DVD
ISBN 978-9953-465-21-0
3 +

At the beginning there's just a child, a red ball and a house. Then the ball escapes on bus number seven. It's off to find a mountain that it has seen only in a book. This picture book is magnificent; the illustrations are printed in bold colours, using silkscreen prints. The last page of this remarkable picture book lists all the shapes and colours used by the illustrator and gives details of the geometric calligraphy specially designed for this book. It won the Opera Prima Award at the Children's Book Fair in Bologna in 2012 and comes complete with a DVD of an animated version of the story.



[My feet] قدماي

Fatima Sharafeddine, ill. Loujayna al-Assil
Sharjah (United Arab Emirates): Kalimat, 2012
14 pp; colour; 16 x 16 cm
ISBN 978-9948-8577-1-6
0-3

A companion piece to *يدي* [My hands, see below] and produced by the same team, this little board book invites us into the world of feet while introducing notions of space and direction: left, right, ahead, up, down.



[My grandmother Nafissa] جدتي نفيسة

Taghrid al-Najjar, ill. Maya Fidawi
Amman (Jordan): Dar Al-Salwa, 2012 (Ahsan Sadiq)
27 pp; colour; 30 x 20 cm
ISBN 978-9957-04-061-1
6 +

What a busy, fit and creative granny this is! First, her grandson has a hard time keeping up with her during her morning exercises. Next she gives him a painting and drawing class where he learns how to mix colours. No sooner is that over, than they're off to the gallery with an armful of paintings for her new exhibition. Now there's just time for a meal before some shopping at the flea market. This frenetic day is recalled by the grandson and told through amusing illustrations that convey exactly the love and understanding between him and his very eccentric grandmother.



[My grandmother will always remember me] جدتي ستتذكرني دائماً

Samar Mahfouz Barraaj, ill. Maya Fidawi

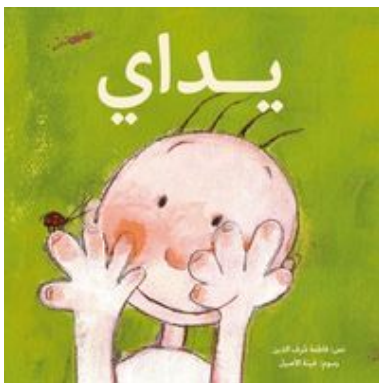
Beirut (Lebanon): Yuki Press, 2012

48 pp; colour; 26 x 19cm

ISBN 978-9953-478-17-3

7 +

When her grandmother starts forgetting where she's put her things and acting strangely, a little girl thinks at first that she's playing a joke on her. Her grandmother has always had a keen sense of humour. But the girl has to face up to the facts: something's not quite right. She asks her mother, who explains that grandmother is suffering from Alzheimer's disease. So the little girl does everything in her power to help her grandmother look after her memory. This is a subtly-told story that is nevertheless accessible to children. The little girl is the narrator and her point of view remains steadfastly upbeat and positive. The easy to read text is completely vocalised and printed as if handwritten.



[My hands] يدي

Fatima Sharafeddine, ill. Loujayna al-Assil

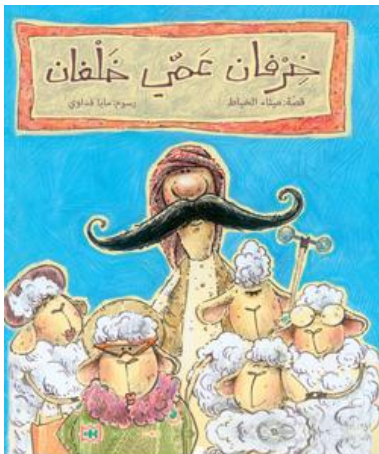
Sharjah (United Arab Emirates): Kalimat, 2012

14 pp; colour; 16 x 16 cm

ISBN 978-9948-8516-9-1

0-3

In a few bright and bold pages, Sharafeddine lists the wonderful things you can do with your hands: play ball, draw, hang on to the ropes of a swing, grab a cup of milk... This unassuming book is perfectly adapted to the youngest of readers, a joyful, refreshing read.



[My uncle Khalfan's sheep] خرفان عمي خلفان

Maitha' al-Khayyat, ill. Maya Fidawi

Amman (Jordan): Dar al-Salwa, 2013

32 pp; colour; 28 x 22 cm

ISBN 978-9957-04-073-4

4 +

Uncle Khalfan's sheep need a visit to the dentist. One has a cavity, another has dental plaque, a third needs braces, a fourth doesn't have any teeth at all and could do with false ones. Into the surgery they go and out they come with huge smiles on their faces. And we smile with them. There's a rhyming, rhythmic text with an engaging refrain that is repeated after each consultation. And it works perfectly with the comic illustrations, whose telling details are like knowing winks to the reader. The text is fully vocalised.



[Near my house] قريب من بيتي

Fatima Sharafeddine, ill. Rebeca Luciani

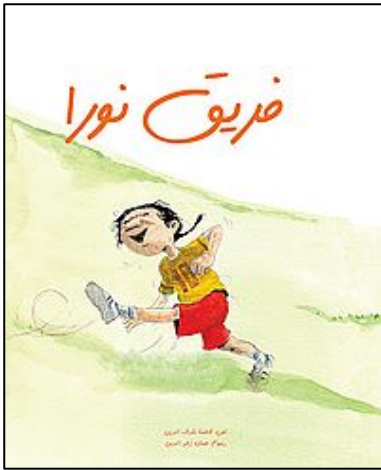
Sharjah (United Arab Emirates): Kalimat, 2014

24 pp; colour; 24 x 34 cm

ISBN 978-9948-223-29-0

4 +

A boy introduces us to his neighbourhood: a shop, the classroom, the bakery, the police station, the library, the fire station, the pharmacy, the mosque, the post office... For each place on our journey, there is a short rhyming text, which is vocalised, and a full-page illustration. Argentinian artist Rebeca Luciani's rich acrylic palette creates a colourful, newly imagined world. Each image, from the simplest to the most complex, is alive with eye-catching detail.



[Noura's team] فريق نورا

Fatima Sharafeddine, ill. Hassan Zahr al-Din
Sharjah (United Arab Emirates): Kalimat, 2015
28 pp; colour; 23 x 28 cm
ISBN 978-9948-181-33-0
6 +

Noura does not see why she should be barred from playing football just because she's a girl. So she puts together the village's first mixed team of boys and girls to play in the local league. With her father acting as their coach, her team trains hard and win their first match by a convincing margin. A second match brings another victory and, before long, Noura's team wins the gold medal given by the villagers. It's a theme that's new in Arabic children's literature and Zahr al-Din's illustrations add to the fun. The text is fully vocalised.



[Paddington and the Christmas surprise] بادنغتن ومفاجأة عيد الميلاد

Michael Bond, ill. R.W. Alley; trans. from English by Fatima Sharafeddine
Beirut (Lebanon): Hachette Antoine, 2013
32 pp; colour; 27 x 26cm
ISBN 978-9953-264-58-5
3 +

Here is the celebrated Paddington Bear from Peru, as always sporting his red hat and blue duffel coat. This well-known character from British children's fiction has always appealed to readers thanks to his innocence and his penchant for making one blunder after another... In this story, Paddington visits a London shopping centre during Christmas with the Brown family and Mrs Bird. But you can depend on Paddington to transform a simple outing into an adventure...

Other titles in the same series:

[Paddington] بادنغتن ISBN 978-9953-264-55-4

[Paddington at the carnival] بادنغتن في المهرجان ISBN 978-9953-264-57-8

[Paddington in the garden] بادنغتن في الحديقة ISBN 978-9953-264-57-8



[Sky] سما

Nadine Tuma, ill. Hassan Zahr al-Din
Beirut (Lebanon): Dar Onboz, 2015
44 pp; colour; 30 x 30 cm + CD
ISBN 978-9953-465-37-1
12 +

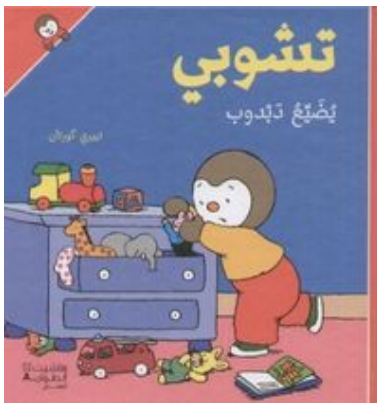
Sama (Sky) is a boy with a difference: he has blue skin. He is born in a town by the sea that everyone has forgotten about. Everybody in the town rejects him, except for one girl who helps him to realise his particular destiny: to awaken the town, and restore its life and dreams. The text is in Lebanese Arabic, the language is poetic and rhythmical. The beauty of Hassan Zahr al-Din's illustrations, the elegant typeface, and the imaginative layout, all combine to make this book a beautiful object in itself. The story can be listened to on the accompanying CD. This picture book received a Special Mention in the New Horizons section of the 2015 BolognaRagazzi Award.



[The stories and Adhar] حكايات و آذار

Husayn Nakhkhal, ill. David Habchi
Beirut (Lebanon): Dar Onboz, 2015
50 pp; colour; 32 x 20 cm + CD
ISBN 978-9953-465-38-8
9 +

This superbly illustrated book tells of a city flooded seven times by the sea and rebuilt seven times by its inhabitants. And in this city, a little boy, Adhar (March), who has just lost his mother, stands at her funeral counting the shoes and umbrellas of those come to pay their last respects. The text is extremely moving and subtle, and expresses perfectly the way the loss of a mother is experienced by a child. It is equally sensitive in its treatment of war and destruction, and a community's resurrection. The story is mainly written in Lebanese Arabic, with some parts in Modern Standard Arabic. An audio CD complements the book, where the text is read to music.



[T'choupi collection] سلسلة تشوبي، صديق الصغار

Thierry Courtin; trans. from French by Samar Mahfouz Barraaj
Beirut (Lebanon): Hachette Antoine, 2012
20 pp; colour; 17 x 16 cm
3 +

Hachette Antoine continues the publication in Arabic of the adventures of T'choupi, the beloved penguin-boy. We follow T'choupi to school and the supermarket, sharing his joy at having a little sister and his sadness when he loses his teddy. The text is fully vocalised, in an easy-to-read font.

[T'choupi loses his teddy] ISBN 978-9953-265-11-7 تشوبي يضيع ديدوب

[T'choupi loves his little sister] ISBN 978-9953-265-15-5 تشوبي يفرح بأخته الجديدة

[T'choupi gets lost at the supermarket] ISBN 978-9953-265-16-2

تشوبي يضيع في السوبرماركت

[T'choupi goes to school] ISBN 978-9953-265-12-4 تشوبي يذهب الى المدرسة



[Tonino, the invisible] طونينو الخفي

Gianni Rodari, ill. Alessandro Sanna; trans. from Italian by Arza Khodr
Beirut (Lebanon): Hachette Antoine, 2012
32 pp; colour; 34 x 24 cm
ISBN 978-9953-264-87-5
6 +

Who hasn't dreamed of being invisible when they haven't done their homework? Tonino has actually found the secret of how it's done. But if he finds it fun one minute – like when he stuffs himself in the cake shop – he quickly discovers that when no one can see you, no one can love and care for you. How can he become visible again? An old man, sitting on a park bench, is the one to break the spell. Rodari's idea, gently exploring basic principles of living, is complemented beautifully by Alessandro Sanna's illustrations, with the figures sketched in a few ink lines and flowing wisps of colour. A lovely book to discover, with a very good and successful translation into Arabic from the original Italian.



[Tweet, quack, moo] تويت كواك موووو
 Fatima Sharafeddine, ill. Hassan Zahr al-Din
 Sharjah (United Arab Emirates): Kalimat, 2010
 18 pp; colour; 18 x 18 cm
 ISBN 978-9948-15-598-0
 0-3

High up in a tree a bird chirps "Tweet". Two ducks swimming in the pond go "Quack quack". Three chickens pecking at corn go "Tuck, tuck, tuck". And so on all the way up to ten animals and ten different sounds. On the right-hand page you see the number with the words of the sound the animal makes and opposite, on the left-hand page, is a drawing of the animal. A good exercise in words, numbers and sounds. An excellent book for learning to count, with a very simple text plus attractive and comic illustrations.



[The Very Hungry Caterpillar] الدودة الشديدة الجوع
 Eric Carle; trans. from English by Mohammad Anani
 Cairo (Egypt): Dar al-Balsam, 2008
 [32] pp; colour; 21 x 29 cm
 ISBN 978-977-6171-14-5
 5 +

Tactile books in Arabic are something of a rarity, this bilingual edition in Arabic-Braille of a children's classic even more so. Dar Al-Balsam publishing company had already produced an Arabic version of Eric Carle's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* in 2005. This edition is based on the English-Braille adaptation from the Indian company Karadi Tales/ Dreaming Fingers. Over 34 different textures were used in the making of this book.



[What if ...!] لو ماذا!
 Fatima Sharafeddine, ill. Hiba Farran
 Beirut (Lebanon): Asala, 2009
 colour; 13 x 13 cm + CD
 ISBN 978-9953- 513-86- 7
 3 +

What would happen if a cockerel swallowed a bar of soap? If the neighbours hung out their washing on the clouds? If it rained colouring pencils? If elephants could fly and ants could swim? And if all our dreams could come true? Readers can discover for themselves in this marvellous madcap picture book whose pages ingeniously fan out to create a fresh combination of pictures every time. It comes with a CD of music that is just as wacky and inventive.



[When I open this book / Don't open this book!] حيننا أفتح هذا الكتاب / لا تفتحي هذا الكتاب
 Fatima Sharafeddine, ill. Fereshteh Najafi
 Sharjah (United Arab Emirates): Kalimat, 2013
 Colour; 25 x 17 cm
 ISBN 978-9948-202-10-3
 4 +

"Open this book" or "Don't open this book!" You have to choose whether to relax in the land of familiar everyday pleasures or dare to explore the realm of monsters, fairies and fantastic beasts. This beautiful dual folding picture book opens out into a concertina and comes in its own box. It is the result of collaboration between the Lebanese author Fatima Sharafeddine and the Iranian illustrator Fereshteh Najafi. The text is gentle and poetic in the land of the everyday and bouncy and jokey in the land of scary fantasy. The illustrations, on the one side in restful colours and on the other in vibrant hues, are full of details to discover. It received a special jury mention in the New Horizons category of the 2014 BolognaRagazzi Awards.



[Why not?] ؟ ما المانع ؟

Taghrid al-Najjar, ill. Hassan Manasrah
Amman (Jordan): Dar al-Salwa, 2013
32 pp; colour; 28 x 22 cm
ISBN 978-9957-04-072-7
6 +

Every night during the month of Ramadan, it's the responsibility of Samia's father to wake up the villagers so that they can eat before dawn. But one night he is too ill to go out and, with some reluctance, he gives way to Samia's entreaties to take his place. Picking up his lantern, she walks around the village beating his drum and calling to each sleeper to get up. The villagers are surprised to see her, but after hearing her story, they invite their children to join in with their own musical instruments and bit by bit the band gets bigger and more tuneful. The illustrations capture the party atmosphere of this joyful group of children in a pretty Palestinian village.



[Your tongue is your horse] لسانك حصانك

Fatima Sharafeddine, ill. Hanane Kai
Sharjah (United Arab Emirates): Kalimat, 2016
28 pp; colour; 28 x 25 cm
ISBN 978-9948-13-645-3
7 +

This book challenges its readers with a series of tongue twisters, which become surprisingly and amusingly muddled. Its originality lies in its vibrant, mesmerising illustrations. These use geometric shapes in bold primary colours in imaginative combinations that hide the calligraphic text, constructing a clever and lively visual game in which the jumbled expressions are expressed in a humorous confusion of shapes and words. This book was awarded the 2016 BolognaRagazzi Award in the New Horizons category.

FOLK TALES



[The amazing tree] الشجرة العجيبة

John Kilaka; trans. from German by Samia Al-Imam
Casablanca (Morocco): Yanbow Al Kitab, 2012
32 pp; colour; 22 x 29cm
ISBN 978-9954-486-53-5
5 +

One day, the animal kingdom is ravaged by a drought that is soon followed by famine. A solitary tree continues to bear its wonderful fruit - fruit that prove impossible to pick as it remains stubbornly attached to the tree. Rabbit suggests seeking advice from wise old Tortoise. Tanzanian artist John Kilaka retells this enchanting fable, with illustrations in the Tingatinga style of painting. This style was developed by Edward Saidi Tingatinga during the second half of the 20th century in Tanzania. It produces illustrations that are bright and colourful with a contemporary feel. The contrast between the traditional tone of the story and the highly original illustrations really enhances the book's charm.



[The Indian merchant and the Sindhi parrot: an Eastern tale]

تاجر الهند وبيعاء السند. حكاية من الشرق

Nabihah Mehaydli, ill. Fadi Adleh
Beirut (Lebanon): Dar al-Hadaeq, 2009
26 pp; colour; 29 x 24cm
ISBN 978-9953-496-27-6

6 +

On a visit to Sindh a merchant bought a magnificent parrot, which had captured his heart. Before setting out on another trip to the same region, he asked the bird if it wished for anything from its native land. "Just ask my brothers to pay me a visit and admire how I am caged in your spacious home," said the parrot. On arriving in Sindh, the merchant passes the message on to a parrot... which falls dead at his feet! When he returns home, he recounts this story to his own parrot which promptly also drops down dead, or so the merchant thinks. The merchant removes its body from the cage... and the bird flies off as swiftly as it can, thanking the merchant and the Sindhi parrot! The beautiful illustrations subtly echo Eastern decorative motifs.



[Joha and his donkey at the market] جحا وحمارة في السوق

Odile Weulersse, ill. Rebecca Dautremer, trans. from French by Nadine Khoury
Beirut (Lebanon): Academia International, 2012
32 pp; colour; 29 x 22cm
ISBN 978-9953-374-38-3

6 +

This is an Arabic translation of a charming book, originally in French, inspired by the character of Joha, alias Nasreddine: the half-crazy, half-wise hero of traditional oral tales found across the Eastern and Southern Mediterranean. He is portrayed here in the guise of an impish child. Mischievous little Joha's donkey has been stolen. He tells a crowd of villagers gathered around him about how his father had tracked down the thief when his own mount was stolen and, by way of punishment, made the thief eat a plateful of chillies. You must discover for yourself the humorous – and surprising – conclusion to this tale.

Also available:

[Joha, his father and the donkey] ISBN 978-9953-374-39-0 جحا وأبوه والحمارة

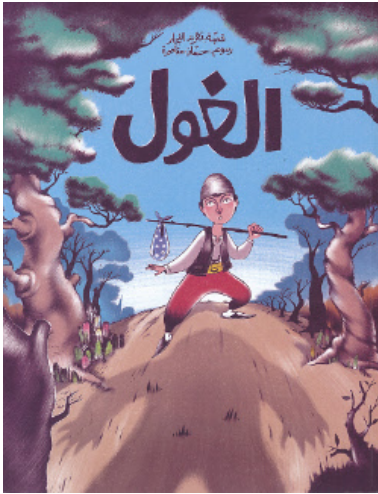


[Kalila and Dimna] كليلة ودمنة

Ibn Al-Muqaffa', ill. Mohamed Said Baalbaki
Beirut (Lebanon): Dar al-Hadaeq, 2008
61 pp; colour; 25 x 20cm
ISBN 978-9953-496-25-2

9 +

Beautifully illustrated, this collection brings together seventeen fables drawn from *Kalila and Dimna*, a pillar of classical Arabic prose literature, by the author-translator Ibn Al-Muqaffa'. This volume of wisdom intended for kings is said to have been written in India during the 4th century by a Hindu sage named Pilpay or Bilbay. By the 6th century the book's fame had spread far and wide, so much so that the Persian King Khosrow sent for a copy from India and had it translated into Pahlavi. Translations into Syriac and Arabic followed, and countless other languages, while some of its fables were brilliantly adapted by La Fontaine. This version is notable for making the text accessible to children without distorting it.



[The ogre] الغول

Taghrid al-Najjar, ill. Hassan Manasrah
Amman (Jordan): Dar al-Salwa, 2015
35 pp; colour; 21 x 27cm
ISBN 978-9957-0407-8-9
6 +

Little Hassan lives in a quiet village – perhaps a little too quiet. Its inhabitants live in fear of the ogre who roams through the neighbouring mountains. Their children are forbidden from laughing out loud or making a noise when they play, since their cries risk waking the monster from his sleep. Hassan bravely decides to set out and confront the beast for himself. We might suppose their encounter will be a terrifying ordeal for both child and ogre, but it doesn't turn out quite that way. The illustrations are full of details that reflect daily life in a traditional Middle Eastern village. The illustrator plays cleverly with perspective and multiple points of view. A stunning book.

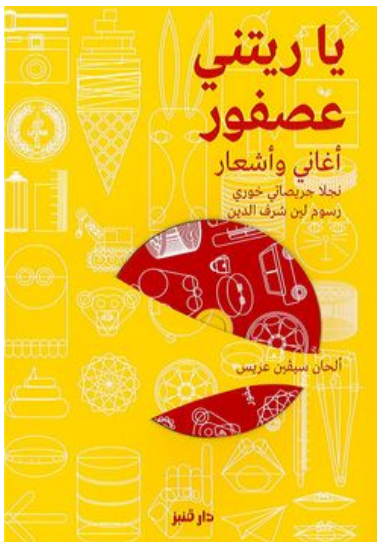
POETRY, RHYMES AND SONGS



[Flock of birds] طير يا طير

Najla Jreissati Khoury, ill. Hiba Farran, music by Sivine Ariss
Beirut (Lebanon): Dar Onboz, 2013
34 pp; colour; 20 x 20 cm + CD
ISBN 978-9953-465-32-6
3 +

This beautiful, square-format picture book is full of songs and nursery rhymes in Lebanese Arabic. Its lively illustrations by Hiba Farran depict birds sketched in bold colours and with plenty of humour. Readers will find delightful, original renditions of the nursery rhymes sung or spoken on a CD, with musical accompaniment composed especially for the book by Sivine Ariss. A lovely way to bring these nursery rhymes to life.



[If I were a bird: songs and poems] يا ريتني عصفور: أغاني وأشعار

Najla Jreissati Khoury, ill. Line Sharafeddine, music Sivine Ariss
Beirut (Lebanon): Dar Onboz, 2015
222 pp; colour; 22 x 30 cm + CD
ISBN 978-9953-465-35-7
6 +

A bold undertaking: 222 pages of nursery rhymes, illustrated with strikingly graphic plates, in large format hardback. A bright red CD of the collection is tucked inside the yellow tones of the cover. Najla Jreissati Khoury continues to shine a light on Lebanon's oral heritage by publishing the nursery rhymes that she has collected over the years. A stunning, original book that stands out from other nursery rhyme collections. This anthology invites the reader to discover the nursery rhymes (some well-known, others less well-known) that have cradled generations of Lebanese children.



[Lyrics and songs] كلمات و أغنيات

Hassan Abdallah, ill. Hassan Zahr al-Din and Ahmad Qaabour
Beirut (Lebanon): Dar al-Hadaeq, 2007 (Al-anachid al-moumti'a)

15 pp; colour; 17 x 24 cm + CD

ISBN 978-9953-464-88-6

3 +

This publication is a collection of children's songs in Arabic and comes with a CD. The texts are nicely illustrated; the letters are sometimes used graphically in the layout. Sheet music is provided at the end of the book.

In the same series:

[Seasons: Children's songs] فصلول. أناشيد للصغار ISBN 978-9953-464-84-8

[Hello: Touta children's songs] صباح الخير. أناشيد للصغار من توتة توتة ISBN 978-9953-464-02-2

صباح الخير. أناشيد للصغار من توتة توتة



[Nursery rhymes] عذيات

Najla Jreissati Khoury, ill. Georges Abou Mehia, Marwa Arsanios, Nadine Touma, Elissa Raad, Ralph Doumit, Fadi Adleh, Ghadi Ghosn, Rena Karanouh
Beirut (Lebanon): Dar Onboz, 2009

188 pp; colour; 22 x 18 cm + CD

ISBN 978-9953-465-13-5

6 +

Najla Jreissati Khoury has been collecting Lebanese nursery rhymes for many years. In this book each rhyme is vividly brought to life, not just via an illustration – eight illustrators in all have taken part – but also thanks to the brilliantly playful use of typography and page design, unique within this genre. The collection is aimed at both younger and older readers, and even includes "instructions for use" when a particular rhyme needs to be accompanied by gestures or spoken out loud as part of a game. The book can be used alongside an audio CD that contains eleven rhymes to enjoy.



[Rhymes and rhymes] عذيات و عذيات

Najla Jreissati Khoury

Beirut (Lebanon): Dar Onboz, 2009

192 pp; 22 x 18 cm

ISBN 978-9953-465-12-8

13 +

Najla Jreissati Khoury has collated a wide range of Lebanese nursery rhymes. She puts them in context then analyses and compares them to nursery rhymes from other cultures. The typography and layout of the book are of a high quality. The publication targets fans of the genre as well as forming a useful reference book. As there are no illustrations, the publication is aimed more at adults who can then use the rhymes with children.



[Rhymes for tiny tots 1 (box set)] أهازيج الطفولة المبكرة ١

Taghrid al-Najjar, ill. Hiba Farran

Amman (Jordan): Dar al-Salwa, 2010 (Ahazij al-toufoula al-moubakkara)

14 pp + 14 pp + 14 pp; colour; 21 x 15 cm + CD and DVD

ISBN 978-9957-04-056-7

0-3

This is a little box set of three board books, accompanied by an audio CD, which plugs a significant gap in children's literature in Arabic. It's an unusual collection of rhymes, little ditties and finger songs drawn from Middle Eastern tradition (Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, Jordan and Egypt). Hiba Farran's illustrations are superb, complemented by a dynamic page layout which plays with typography. The CD's musical arrangement is excellent. A DVD containing 32 rhymes presented in animated form is also available. Each of the three books can be bought separately, as can the CD.



[Rhymes for tiny tots 2 (box set)] أهازيج الطفولة المبكرة ٢

Taghrid al-Najjar, ill. Hiba Farran

Amman (Jordan): Dar al-Salwa, 2010 (Ahazij al-toufoula al-moubakkara)

14 pp + 14 pp + 14 pp; colour; 21 x 15 cm + CD and DVD

ISBN 978-9957-04-076-5

0-3

Far from being a simple rehash of a successful formula (see previous entry), this second compilation explores new themes from the Middle East's rich heritage of music and songs for children. As with the first box set, the CD is accompanied by three board books superbly illustrated by Hiba Farran. The rich musical accompaniment is enhanced through the introduction of electronic music and the active participation of children whose voices blend with the singer's. Moreover, a glossary of words unique to Middle Eastern dialects is included at the bottom of each song. A DVD version is also available. Each of the three books as well as the CD can be bought separately.



[Shawqi and me. From the birds collection. Tales from the Prince of Poets,

Ahmad Shawqi] شوقي و أنا. ديوان الطيور. من حكايات أمير الشعراء احمد شوقي

Ahmad Shawqi, ill. Mohamed Said Baalbaki

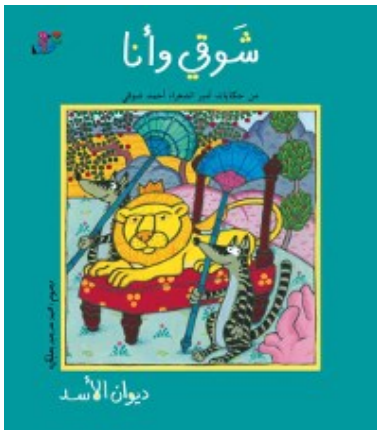
Beirut (Lebanon): Dar Al-Hadaeq, 2009 (Shawqî wa 'ânâ)

46 pp; colour; 28 x 25 cm

ISBN 978-9953-496-38-2

9 +

Ahmad Shawqi devotes these six poems to birds. Published by the Lebanese publisher Dar al-Hadaeq, this book forms an integral part of the excellent series dedicated to the works of the Egyptian 'Prince of Poets', and are notable for their humour and situational comedy. A collection to be enjoyed in its entirety!



[Shawqi and me. From the lion collection. Tales from the Prince of Poets,

Ahmad Shawqi] شوقي وأنا. ديوان الأسد. من حكايات أمير الشعراء احمد شوقي

Ahmad Shawqi, ill. Mohamed Said Baalbaki

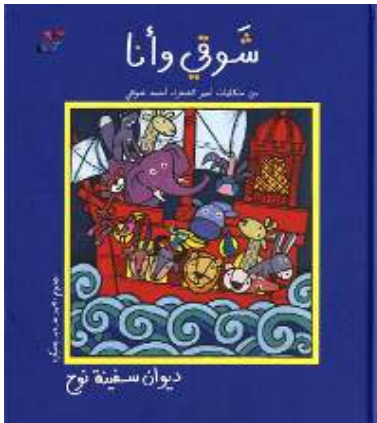
Beirut (Lebanon): Dar Al-Hadaeq, 2009 (Shawqî wa 'ânâ)

46 pp; colour; 28 x 25 cm

ISBN 978-9953-496-37-5

9 +

Five poems, taken from Shawqi's Lion collection, present the king of animals and his subjects with a great deal of humour. Shawqi explores power relations, flattery and intrigue. The text is fully vocalised. Mohamed Said Baalbaki's beautiful illustrations capture Shawqi's wit. It is as if his characters are winking at the reader, creating a special connection with us. It's a fine choice of illustrator for this major work.



[Shawqi and me. From the Noah's Ark collection. Tales from the Prince of

Poets, Ahmad Shawqi] شوقي وأنا. ديوان سفينة نوح. من حكايات أمير الشعراء احمد شوقي

Ahmad Shawqi, ill. Mohamed Said Baalbaki

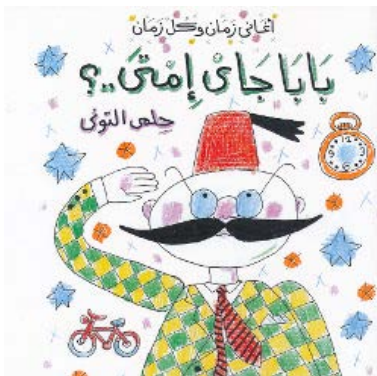
Beirut (Lebanon): Dar al-Hadaeq, 2009 (Shawqî wa 'ânâ)

49 pp; colour; 28 x 25 cm

ISBN 978-9953-496-39-9

8 +

A selection of seven fable-like poems, taken from the collection about Noah's Ark by the Egyptian 'Prince of Poets', Ahmad Shawqi. These witty poems depict episodes in the lives of animals made to share daily experiences, and to forget the differences that will resurface between them once they reach dry land. The text is fully vocalised, which helps with reading the poems. Stuck on the Ark, where they must tame their primary instincts, the animals are brought to appealing life by Mohamed Said Baalbaki's beautiful illustrations, which convey the humour of the situation in his distinctive style.



[When is daddy coming?] بابا جاي امتي؟

Helmi al-Touni

Cairo (Egypt): Dar al-Shorouq, 2015 (Aghani zaman wa koul zaman)

20 pp; colour; 22 x 22 cm

ISBN 978-977-09-3335-0

3 +

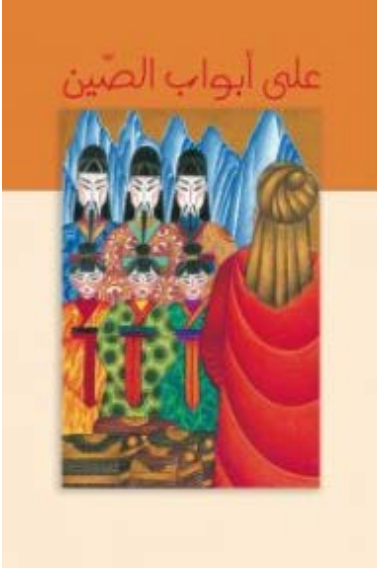
This picture book is part of a collection of three publications, each one featuring illustrations to accompany a well-known nursery rhyme in Arabic. The vibrant, colourful and amusing pictures were created by Helmi al-Touni, an Egyptian artist who is also a keen children's illustrator. He is one of the first Arab artists to be interested in this genre, dedicating much of his talent to it. The three books express his philosophy: to encourage young people to connect with their Arab and especially Egyptian heritage. It is a shame, however, that the picture books have no audio support or sheet music so that individuals who do not know the rhymes could still sing them.

Other titles:

[There once was a woman] ISBN 978-977-09-3334-3 كان في واحدة ست

[Long live Abou al-Fassad] ISBN 978-977-09-3333-6 يحيى أبو الفصاح

BEGINNER READERS



[At the gates of China] على أبواب الصين

Hassan Abdallah, ill. Intilaq Mohammad Ali

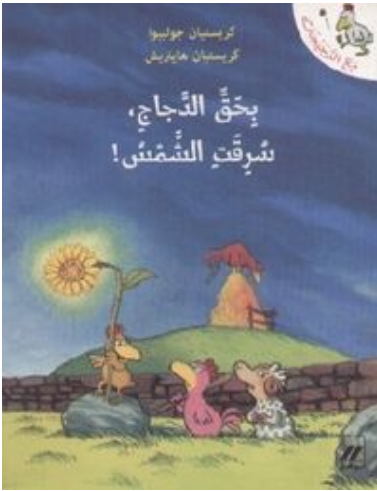
Beirut (Lebanon): Dar Al-Hadaeq, 2007 (Al-silsila al-qisasiyya lil-fatayan wa-l-fatayat)

14 pp; colour; 21 x 14 cm

ISBN 978-9953-496-15-3

9 +

This story is inspired by the *History of the Prophets and Kings* of Al-Tabari. It describes the arrival of the Arabs at the border of China and the negotiations that allowed the commander of the Arab forces and the Emperor of China to avoid going to war. The bold illustrations are inspired by Persian miniatures. This is a small book that helps the reader discover, through fiction, a little known period of Arab history.



[The cheeky chicks series] سلسلة مع الدجاجات

Christian Jolibois, ill. Christian Heinrich; trans. from French by Najla Réaïdy Chahine

Beirut (Lebanon): Naufal / Hachette Antoine, 2012

46 pp; colour; 19 x 15 cm

6 +

This is a wonderful series, first published in French and now available in Arabic. Meet Carmela, a little hen who longs to see the sea and will let nothing stop her from getting there. And here's Carmelito who has always wanted to travel in space: but how could he do that when the universe is so big and he is so tiny? The Arabic translation keeps the story as fresh and pacy as in the original. Readers will smile with delight and gasp in amazement at the adventures of the ever charming cheeky chicks. The text is in a clear font and is fully vocalised.

[Cheeky chicks hullabaloo] ISBN 978-9953-264-25-7 هرجات ومرجات عند الدجاجات

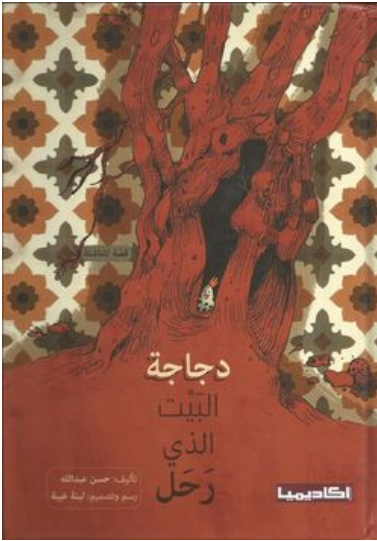
[The henhouse in the stars] ISBN 978-9953-264-22-6 قن على الأرض وقن في النجوم

[The little hen who wanted to see the sea] ISBN 978-9953-264-21-9

الدجيجة التي أرادت أن ترى البحر

[Shucks! They stole the sun!] ISBN 978-9953-264-24-0 بحق الدجاج، سُرقت الشمس

[Someday my brother will come] ISBN 978-9953-264-23-3 يوم يأتي أخي



[The chicken they left behind] دجاجة البيت الذي رحل

Hassan Abdallah, ill. Lina Ghaibeh
Beirut (Lebanon): Academia International, 2013
46 pp; colour; 24 x 17 cm
ISBN 978-9953-379-65-4
9 +

The speckled hen lives a quiet and comfortable life, and little is required of her. But then the war comes, the family that takes care of her flees, and she is left alone to fend for herself. Somehow, she survives. She learns how to find her own food, whatever the weather, and how to avoid those animals that want her as their dinner. She becomes tough and resourceful. When the family returns at the end of the war, they find a changed bird. The story in this beautifully produced book is told in short chapters of a few pages each. The text is fully vocalised.



[Super Mum] ماما سوپر

Gwendoline Raisson, ill. Sinan Hallak; trans. from French by Elissar Sani' Asmar
Beirut (Lebanon): Samir, 2011
31 pp; colour; 18 x 14 cm
ISBN 978-9953-313-82-5
7 +

Arthur's mum has eaten a blue chilli truffle and acquired super powers. Naturally, she uses them to keep Arthur safe. But Arthur doesn't want to look like a baby who can't look after himself. He's had enough, and, from now on, he will take on Gaspard, the class bully, all by himself. This first-person narrative about Arthur's initial steps on the road to independence is as convincing as it is whimsical and funny. Sinan Hallak's witty illustrations capture both Super Mum's antics and Arthur's gradual transformation.

NOVELS



[Ajwan. A science-fiction story] أجوان. قصة من الخيال العلمي

Noura Ahmad al-Noman
Cairo (Egypt): Nahdet Misr, 2012 (3rd edition)
424 pp; 19 x 13 cm
ISBN 978-977-144-539-5
13 +

Ajwan escapes on the last spaceship after her planet is destroyed. She is pregnant, and this new child stirring in her gives her hope. But she is drugged and the child is stolen from her womb. As part of her quest to find her child and against her convictions as a pacifist, she joins an elite fighting group that is defending the 'Federation', her galaxy's ruling union, against rebel forces. This is a gripping novel, with a labyrinthine plot. In turn tough and tender, in a style that is smooth and fluid with a text that always feels true. This science-fiction novel is very unusual in youth literature in the Arab world. It won the 2013 Etisalat Prize for the best novel for teenagers. The second title in this series is *Mandan*, which is also included in this selection



[Charlie and the chocolate factory] تشارلي ومصنع الشوكولاته

Roald Dahl, ill. Quentin Blake
Beirut (Lebanon): Samir, 2011
210 pp plus 20 pp; 20 x 13 cm
ISBN 978-9953-312-96-5
11 +

It is wonderful to see an Arabic translation of this great classic. Originally published in 1964, Roald Dahl's masterpiece, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, poses a lot of challenges for the translator: from its characters' whimsical names to its rhythmical, rhyming songs. Here, the names are unchanged (simply transcribed in Arabic script) while the songs have been translated in a rhyming version that retains the spirit of the original text. This brilliant translation makes a superb novel accessible to readers of Arabic.

More by the same author:

[Charlie and the great glass elevator] ISBN 978-9953-312-97-2

تشارلي والمصعد الزجاجي العظيم

[Matilda] ISBN 978-9953-314-57-0 ماتيلدا



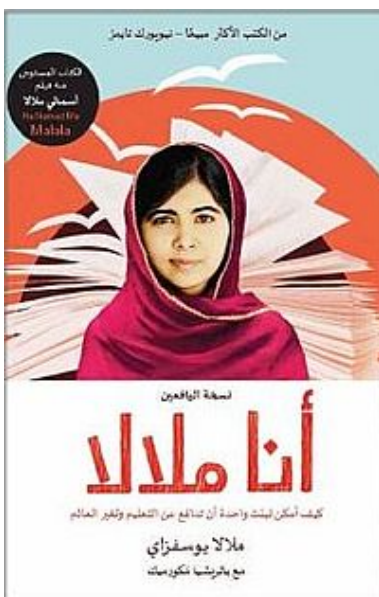
[Faten] فاتن

Fatima Sharafeddine
Sharjah (United Arab Emirates): Kalimat, 2010
163 pp; 20 x 14 cm
ISBN 978-9948-15-778-6
13 +

Faten, a fifteen-year-old girl, has to leave her native village of South Lebanon to go to Beirut and become the servant of the Zein family. No more studies, no more freedom ... But Faten dreams of becoming a nurse. She spends her free time studying in the greatest secrecy. Who would understand the need for a maid to study for the baccalaureate? The teenager has decided to take her fate in her own hands. Short, sharp sentences, a sustained rhythm, brief chapters, a stripped-down style, all contribute to make this book an example of a new development in books in Arabic for teenagers. The book was awarded the 2010 Beirut Book Fair Prize.

An English version is available:

[The servant]; trans. Fatima Sharafeddine, Groundwood Books, ISBN 9781554983070



[I am Malala: How one girl stood up for education and changed the world]

أنا ملالا. كيف أمكن لبننت واحدة أن تدافع عن التعليم وتغير العالم

Malala Yousafzai and Patricia McCormick; trans. from English by Jalal Hussein Al-Khalil
Sharjah (United Arab Emirates): Kalimat, 2015
270 pp; colour photographs; 20 x 13 cm
ISBN 978-9948-18-404-1
12 +

At last, Malala Yousafzai's famous book has been translated into Arabic. This is the story of her fight for female education and human rights. It tells how, as a fifteen-year-old, she survived an assassination attempt at the hands of the Taliban in Pakistan; of the years she spent recovering, and how she has continued to campaign, meeting world leaders and receiving multiple awards, including the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought in 2013 and the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014. This seamless translation is as welcome as it is timely in the current political climate of the Arab world, where, in some countries, human rights in general, and the rights of women in particular, are definitely losing ground.



[Looking for Ghannam the hawk] البحث عن الصقر غنّام

Lina Hawyan al-Hassan

Beirut (Lebanon): Dar Al-Adab, 2015

93 pp; 14 x 21 cm

ISBN 978-9953-894-99-7

13 +

14-year-old Sabah lives in the city but likes nothing more than visiting his gran and uncle in their desert home. He shares his fascination with us, introducing us to Ghannam, the hawk that he loves and that is his uncle's pride and joy. When Ghannam goes missing, Sabah and his uncle go to look for him. And, for seven days, Sabah lives among the desert's rich flora and fauna. Eventually, the precious bird is found and safely brought home. This is an adventure story that tells us much about desert life and the Bedouin tradition of falconry.



[The Lord of Nightmares] سيد الكوابيس وخيمة الأحلام

Asma' Abou Marahil, ill. Kalima Basyouni

Sharjah (United Arab Emirates): Kalimat, 2015 (Rewayat)

121 pp; colour; 19 x 13 cm

ISBN 978-9948-1841-1-9

10 +

Mimo's life takes a turn for the better when he is sold to the Lord of Nightmares, a strange man who roams the land to sell dreams to rich and poor alike. No more a street urchin, Mimo earns easy money, and has plenty of food, fancy clothes, and exciting travel... all because of magic. People come from everywhere just to share in this dream world for a moment. Mimo can't wait until he too has earned enough money to make his dreams come true. The story reads well, with short chapters that pile on the pace. The menacing illustrations contrast starkly with the text's description of a magical wonderland and create a dark sense of foreboding.



[Mandan. The second part of Ajwan (Science-fiction)]

ماندان. الجزء الثاني من رواية "أجوان" (خيال علمي)

Noura Ahmad al-Noman

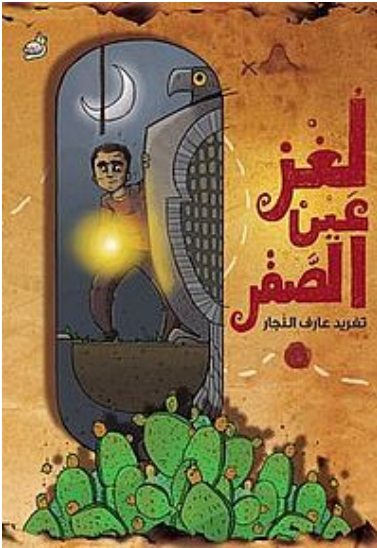
Cairo (Egypt): Nahdet Misr, 2014 (2nd edition)

479 pp; 19 x 13 cm

ISBN 978-977-144-712-2

13 +

We had left Ajwan at the end of Volume 1 of this series in the ranks of the Interplanetary Federation's special forces. On planet Splendor, a member of the Federation, events develop further. A dictatorship is insidiously set up, and Ajwan's son is placed by his captors near the sultan's heir, for a purpose still obscure... The author knows how to create suspense, the plot goes at a breathless pace, the writing is fluid, all the elements are there to captivate the reader, even the beginnings of a love story ... Noura Ahmad al-Noman confirms her talent as an author of science-fiction, a genre little represented in the youth literature of the Arab world.



[The mystery of the falcon's eye] لغز عين الصقر

Taghrid al-Najjar, ill. Amar Khattab
Amman (Jordan): Al-Salwa, 2014
174 pp; 21 x 15 cm
ISBN 978-9957-040-79-6
11 +

Ziad has to leave school to help his family. His father is in prison, his younger brother is sick and, on the West Bank, jobs are scarce, especially for a 17-year-old. Life is tough... His paternal grandmother always tells stories about life in Lifta before they were driven out of their village in the Arab-Israeli conflict in 1948, about the gold that the grandfather hid before they left. What if the story of the hidden gold was true, against all odds? This is an easy-to-read, suspenseful adventure story, marrying the hope of discovering buried treasure with a dream of a better life, all anchored in a difficult Palestinian present without ever becoming gloomy.

COMIC BOOKS



[I think we will be calm during the next war] اعتقد اننا سنكون هادنين في الحرب المقبلة

Lena Merhej
Beirut (Lebanon): Dar Onboz, 2006
36 pp; black and white; 22 x 30 cm
ISBN 978-9953-465-05-0
13 +

Lena Merhej tells her story of the last episode of the Lebanon war in the summer of 2006: anxiety when Israeli planes bomb bridges or destroy houses, the daily presence of death, problems related to the shortage of water, power cuts, the arrival of refugees, the way everyone manages their anguish... There is humour to relieve the pressure. The author lives, observes, and testifies in her own way, with her minimalist line, using black, grey, white...

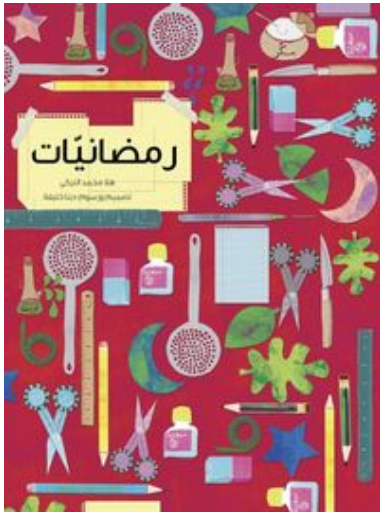


[It happened in...] هذه القصة تجري

Mazen Kerbaj
Beirut (Lebanon): Dar al-Adab, 2010
78 pp; black and white; 32 x 24 cm
ISBN 978-9953-89-193-4
13 +

Here are five parallel stories of contemporary Lebanese life, told in black and white comic strip, each with four panels to a page, with the text in Lebanese Arabic. Here are Phoenicians talking politics, posh ladies chatting in a fancy café, a graphic novelist "classical yet modern" looking for inspiration, and a taxi driver who only ever drives the same route, people from Beirut, Tel Aviv, Gaza, New York, a Palestinian refugee camp in the Lebanon... And what connects all these stories? - the opening sentence 'It happened in' and Mazen Kerbaj's caustic humour. Kerbaj takes no prisoners as he observes with witty sharpness his country's political life and society and the world we live in today.

NON-FICTION BOOKS



[Activities for Ramadan] رمضانيات

Hala Mohammad al-Tourki, ill. Dina Khalifa
Sharjah (United Arab Emirates): Kalimat, 2011
31 pp; colour; 28 x 21 cm
ISBN 978-9948-16-150-9

5 +

This activity book, designed to keep children busy for the month of Ramadan, is organised in three sections. In the first part, young readers learn how to make lanterns, paper chains and other decorations with clear step-by-step instructions and photos. In part two, they are given help with festive cooking, with recipes for lentil soup, fried potatoes and sweet potatoes, pastries and cookies. Finally, young readers will find templates for the projects to cut out. The book also comes with a calendar with a flap to lift on every day of the month to discover a new idea for an activity.



[Fly bird fly collection] سلسلة طير يا طير

Nadine Touma and Hiba Farran, ill. Hiba Farran
Beirut (Lebanon): Dar Onboz, 2016
12 pp; colour; 42 x 29.5 cm

7 +

Seven big-format activity booklets make up this collection, each dedicated to a specific craft. Young readers are invited to mix and match the split pages to create their own bird, to make shadow puppets, origami birds, stencil patterns or simply do some colouring. A fun and informative way to develop creativity while learning more about the birds of the Lebanon. The whole collection benefits from quality design, high production values, striking illustration and fun games. The entire text (guidelines and captions) is in vocalised Arabic, English and French.

Volume 1 **Flipping the bird** ISBN 978-9953-465-41-8 **تقليب الطير**

Volume 2 **Colouring-in the bird** ISBN 978-9953-465-42-5 **تلوين الطير**

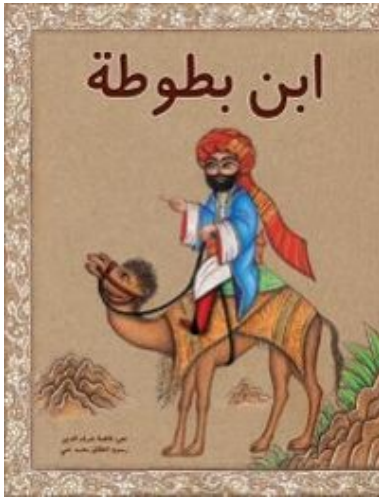
Volume 3 **Birds of the Lebanon** ISBN forthcoming **طيور لبنان**

Volume 4 **Bird shadows** ISBN 978-9953-465-44-9 **خيال ظل الطير**

Volume 5 **Bird origami** ISBN 978-9953-465-45-6 **أوريغامي الطير**

Volume 6 **Bird stencilling** ISBN 978-9953-465-46-3 **سنتسل الطير**

Volume 7 **It's up to you!** ISBN 978-9953-465-47-0 **الحل بيدك**

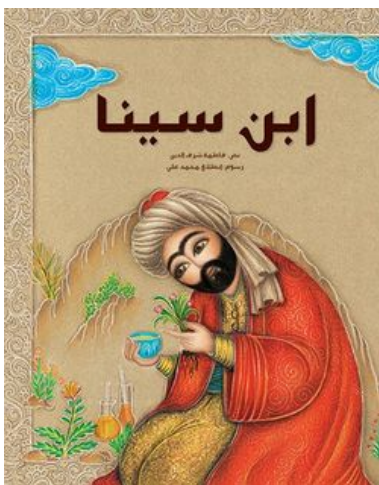


[Ibn Battouta] ابن بطوطة

Fatima Sharafeddine, ill. Intilaq Mohammad Ali
Sharjah (United Arab Emirates): Kalimat 2010
28 pp; colour; 30 x 24 cm
ISBN 978-9948-15-538-6

8 +

Ibn Battouta was born in Tangiers on 24 February 1304 and died in Marrakesh in 1369. An astounding explorer, he was contemporary with Marco Polo, and he travelled almost 120,000 km over a period of 29 years. His journeys took him from Biani (the Ivory Coast) in the South, to Bulghar (Russia, on the Volga) in the North; from Tangiers in the west to Hangzou in the north of China, via Tanzania, Sumatra and Sri Lanka; as well as journeys to Andalusia and through central Asia. The accounts of his journeys were brought together by the scholar Ibn Juzavv in a book called 'Journey' رحلة. His expeditions are described in a lively and colourful way and the exquisite illustrations, inspired by Indian and Persian miniatures, add to the delights of this beautiful book.



[Ibn Sina] ابن سينا

Fatima Sharafeddine, ill. Intilaq Mohammad Ali
Sharjah (United Arab Emirates): Kalimat, 2013
28 pp; colour; 30 x 24cm
ISBN 978-9948-8516-1-5

8 +

This book introduces us to the life and work of Avicenne or Ibn Sina. Born in the tenth century in a province of the Persian empire, this young man began very early to study all the subjects familiar to the scholars of the time: religion, literature, science, philosophy, astronomy. Today he is recognised as much for his philosophical writing as for his contributions to medical knowledge. At the same time he was also a pioneer in education and scientific analysis, especially in the study of light. Outstandingly colourful and bright illustrations, reminiscent of Persian miniatures, bring the story to life.

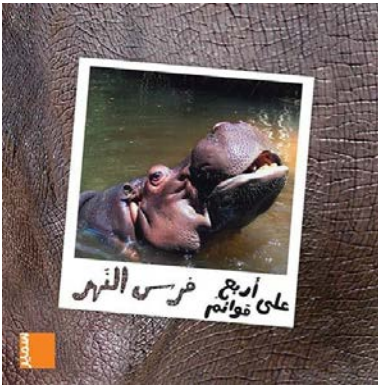


[The lights of the Zever café] أضواء مقهى الزبير: لوحة شفيق عبود

Rim Sayegh Najjar and Bassam Kahwaji
Beirut (Lebanon): Alarm, Naufal, 2012
32 pp; colour illus. and photographs; 23 x 27cm
ISBN 978-614-438-254-7

6 +

This book invites readers to interact with form and colour and to learn about the work of the Lebanese painter Chafiq Abboud through the discovery of 'The Zeyer', a café in Paris where the artist used to spend his time. The creative challenge is to find all the different nooks and crannies of the Zeyer in his paintings, decide which one you prefer and then re-draw it in Chafiq Abboud's style. Readers will learn about contemporary art by looking at different styles and become an artist themselves by painting in the book itself.



[On all fours series] سلسلة على أربع قوائم

Beirut (Lebanon): Samir

26 pp; colour illus. and photographs; 22 x 22 cm

6 +

On All fours is a collection produced by Lebanese company Samir. Each title presents the behaviour and habitats of a range of animals. Colour photos are complemented by informative captions. This fills a gap in Arabic information books for this age group. Samir also publishes a French version of the collection under the name *Peau, Poils et Pattes*.

Some titles of note in the series:

The Camel ISBN 978-9953-31-430-3 **الجمل**

The Cat ISBN 978-9953-31-295-8 **الهر**

The Chimp ISBN 978-9953-312-14-9 **الشامبانزي**

The Dog ISBN 978-9953-31-429-7 **الكلب**

The Hippo ISBN 978-9953-312-15-6 **فرس النهر**

The Horse ISBN 978-9953-31-322-1 **الحصان**



[Onboz magazine: Flight] مجلة قنبز. الطيران

Beirut (Lebanon): Dar Onboz, 2015

ISBN 978-9953-465-40-1

10 +

A page-turner of a magazine about flight in all its aspects from a variety of angles: history, maths, traditional tales, mythology, poetry, geography, arts and crafts, calligraphy and more. The *Onboz* magazine offers a wealth of information and a range of arts and crafts projects using a variety of techniques and media. It's handsomely produced with a varied and appealing design. Some of the text, partially vocalised, is in Lebanese Arabic, but most is written in Modern Standard Arabic and adapted for children.



[Poem. A sculpture by Salwa Rawda Choucair] قصيدة. منحوتة سلوى روضة شقير

Rim Sayegh Najjar and Bassam Kahwaji

Beirut (Lebanon): Alarm, Naufal, 2012 (Ala darb-il-fan)

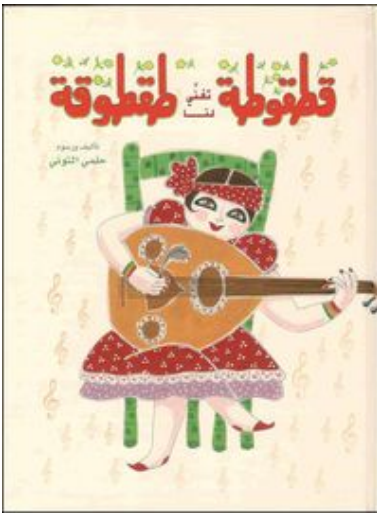
32 pp; colour illus. and photographs; 23 x 27 cm

ISBN 978-9953-265-34-6

6 +

This book introduces young readers to the work of Lebanese abstract painter and sculptor Salwa Rawda Choucair. It begins with a shape that appears in many of her works, and which she transformed through a range of techniques and media. Her work is pictured here, as well as new creations by the authors based on the same original shape: a rug, a necklace, and a painting. There is a short biography of the artist at the end of the book.

This unique book encourages its readers to discover the artist's work 'from within' and takes them on a tour of public places featuring her work as well as her own studio, enabling them to get up close and personal with some rather complex works.



[Qatquta sings the Taqtuqa] طقوطة تغني لنا طقوطة

Hilmi al-Touni

Cairo (Egypt): Dar al-Shorouq, 2010

15 pp; colour; 29 x 21 cm

ISBN 978-977-0928-20-0

10 +

This book is about the Taqtuqa, a popular musical genre sung in colloquial Arabic. There are three sections: the musical structure of the Taqtuqa (al-qawâlib), the typical instruments in its orchestra (al-takht al-sharqiy) and its different variants. Each element is presented through a series of definitions and the overall effect is that of a simplified dictionary of music. Partially vocalised and beautifully illustrated by Egyptian artist Helmi al-Touni, this is one of the very few children's books in Arabic on the topic.



[Stories of calligraphists] حواديث الخطاطين

Mohieddine Ellabbad

Cairo (Egypt): Dar al-Shorouq 2013

71 pp; colour; 29 x 20 cm

ISBN 978-977-09-3270-4

11 +

This posthumous publication by Mohieddine Ellabbad is part of an educational series, begun by this eminent Egyptian writer and illustrator, who was a pioneering editor of books for contemporary young Arab readers. He combines very accessible and detailed texts with a wonderfully varied visual style, mixing photography, drawings, caricatures, paintings and an overall page design that is both adventurous and highly original. This book enthusiastically explores the nature of Arab calligraphy, its range of techniques, history and aesthetic styles. It even includes how calligraphy has been redesigned for a digital world. Along the way Ellabbad also includes the story of how the written Arabic language has developed.



[Truly scrumptious. 100 easy recipes for cooking with children and helping them with a balanced diet]

لذيذ جداً! أكثر من 100 وصفة سهلة جداً للطبخ مع الأطفال ولتعليم الأكل بشكل متوازن

Fanny Letournel; trans. from French by Rania al-Senioura

Sharjah (United Arab Emirates): Kalimat 2011

121 pp; colour; 23 x 31cm

ISBN 978-9948-16-089-2

5 +

This is a nicely designed ring-bound recipe book on an easel, which means that any selected page stays open and upright. Laminated pages allow any cooking stains to be wiped away. The recipes are simple, balanced, well-written and easy to make. This is a French cookery book in translation (originally published by Auzou), which means that there are French dishes that will be less familiar in the Emirates, such as a cheese-topped potato gratin, shepherd's pie or the very particular Three King's Cake. But the appearance of a book with recipes for children in Arabic is really worth a mention.

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