

## Lessons 11–12 Arabic homes: the Majlis

- Do you have a Majlis in your home?
- How is it decorated?
- Do you think that the use of a Majlis has changed over the years?

### Reading

- 1** Read a short introduction to the Majlis. Do you agree with the description? What other information would you add?

The Majlis is the traditional centre of life in GCC countries. The literal translation of the word is 'a place for sitting'. In the Majlis, the head of the family hosts guests and family members to converse on religious topics and day-to-day life, and to share memories.

- 2** Read a short explanation of trends in Majlis design. What do you understand the job of an interior designer to be?

The Majlis was and always will be the most important space in the Arabic home. Fresh styles, perspectives and interpretations are being introduced by creative interior designers, while respecting the basic layout of the traditional Majlis. Themes vary and include Islamic, modern, classic, business and luxury. Clients express their tastes by carefully choosing designs, décor and lighting that will be admired by visiting guests and family.

### Speaking

- 3** Look at the images above and in your groups compare their design.
- 1 What different styles can you see?
  - 2 Are the designs similar?
  - 3 What countries do you think these are in? Why?





## Lessons 13–14 **The mosque**

- What does the mosque you attend look like?
- What size is it? What kind of minaret does it have? What colour is it?

### Reading

**1** In pairs, look at the images of the two famous Arabic mosques in Oman and Abu Dhabi. Match the descriptions to the pictures of the mosques.

- 1 There are four narrow, pencil-shaped minarets. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 This mosque is made of white and brown sandstone. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 This mosque is made of white marble. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 There is one major prominent, tall minaret and two smaller minarets. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 There are three balconies on each minaret. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 This mosque has a central balloon-shaped, golden dome. \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 This mosque has bright, yellow display lights. \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 This mosque has many white, spherical domes. \_\_\_\_\_

### Did you know?

The Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque dome is made of white marble.

Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque is a prime example of contemporary Islamic architecture and was inaugurated in May 2001 by the Sultan of Oman.

Abu Dhabi



Oman





## Language Focus

- 2 Think about the following questions.
- 1 What do you notice about the descriptions in the activity?
  - 2 Are they long or short?
  - 3 Why do we use longer phrases?
  - 4 In what sort of texts would you expect to find such descriptions?

### Use of English

A *noun phrase* is a group of words with a noun or pronoun as its head noun. The head noun is what the noun phrase will be describing. The words around the head noun describe it.

Noun phrases are commonly found in written, descriptive texts:

*The minaret* → *The tall, narrow minaret.*

**Minaret** in this example is the head noun and the other words complete the phrase.

Noun phrases can be long (complex) or short. You can add more descriptive words to give more detail. The words describing the head noun usually come before it:

*the doors ...*

*the solid doors ...*

*the large, solid doors ...*

*the beautiful, large, solid doors ...*

*the new, beautiful, large, solid arched doors ...*

## Speaking 21st

- 3 Sit opposite a partner and describe the picture of the mosque your teacher gave you. The listener should follow the description and draw a picture of the mosque. When you have finished, see if your partner's drawing is accurate. Then change places. Who has the most accurate drawings?

## Language Focus

- 4 One of the key features of a mosque is the minaret. Look at the photograph. How would you describe the minaret?
- Work with your partner and think of different words you could put in the gaps to complete the phrase below – with minaret/s as the head noun.

The \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ minaret.

