Places of Articulation

Introduction to articulation points of the Arabic letters The articulation point of a letter is the place the letter is emitted, meaning a sound that comes out of the mouth relying on a specific place of articulation or an approximate one. Using the correct articulation point of a letter is necessary to utter the letter correctly, and of course this is even more important when reciting the book of Allah, the Holy Qur’an. Almost all the articulation points in Arabic are specific places, but there are some that have a general area of articulation. There are ways for you to see what articulation point YOU are using for a letter (not necessarily the correct one), so that you can compare what you are using to the correct way of articulating a letter: 1. Pronounce the letter with a shaddah; in other words, double the letter. 2. Pronounce the letter with no vowel and put a hamzah before the letter you are checking. You can then check the position of your tongue, mouth, or feel what area of the throat you are using. There are five general areas of the throat and mouth that have within them the specific or general articulation points of the Arabic letters.

- The empty space in the mouth and throat has in it one articulation point for the three lengthened letters, which are wow with no vowel with a dhammah before it, ya’ with no vowel with a kasrah before it, and an alif with a fath before it.

- The Throat: It has three articulation points for six different letters which are pronounced from the deepest, middle, and closest part of the throat
- The Tongue: It has ten articulation points for eighteen letters
- The Two Lips: The lips have two articulation points for four letters
- The nasal passage: From the hole of nose towards the inside of the mouth, here there is one articulation point, that of the ghunnahThe following pictures shows these areas: