Tamyiz
(Accusative of Specification)

The Arabic word ﻣَﺰْﻤَ ﺷ (pronounced tamyiz) is the verbal noun of the Form II verb ﺳ ﺷ "to single out, distinguish," and this is exactly what this use of the accusative case is designed to do.

To make a tamyiz construction, you take an indefinite substantive (generally a noun) and put it into the accusative case. When put in a sentence, this substantive is usually placed after a verb or adjective (sometimes even a noun). It thus singles out, or specifies more precisely the application, function, or degree of the quality represented by the verb, adjective or noun. The placement of the tamyiz word is variable, and depends on stylistic considerations. It is usually, however, placed somewhere after the word it qualifies.

The best default meaning to give to this use of the accusative case when you have to translate it into English is probably as or as to.

Examples:

...ًا إﳕﺎﻨﻮَ آﻣَ اﻟﺬﻳﻦُدادﺰَﻳَ...و
"...and that those who believe may increase as to belief..."
(Quran 74:31)

ٖاَّﻮُﻠُ ﻋِﻼنُﺟﱠ اﻟﺮُ٧ٍﺋﳌ
The two men differ as to height.

LowerCase:٣َّ ﻣُﻞَﻤْ أﺟُﺘﺎبِﻫﺬا اﻟﻜ
This book is more beautiful than that book as to style and meaning.

In general this process of specification can be expressed in a number of ways in Arabic (some alternate ways you may have already seen, for example, would be with prepositional phrases using ﻓﻲ or ﻣَ ﻣَ or with an adjective idafa). In other words, it is optional.

In two situations, however, using the accusative case for specification is required:

1) When you want to make a comparative/superlative construction using an adjective that is an active or passive participle of a derived form (II-X) verb.

For example, if you want to say "He was more prepared for
for the exam than I was, " you would want to use the adjective ُشْمِعَتْا (which is derived from the Form X verb ُشْمِعَتْ, to be prepared). You cannot apply the elative pattern directly to a Form X verb (or any substantive derived from it), so you get around the problem by using the accusative of specification. In other words, you will literally say: " He was more as to preparation than me..."

ٌﺤﺎن.ِﺘْﻣِﻼِﻲ ﻟّﻨِ ﻣًﺪاداْﻌِﺘْ اﺳَﺮَﺜْ أﻛَﻛﺎن
He was more prepared than me for the exam.

2) In order to express the comparative/superlative with color adjectives (and other adjectives based on the ٌﻞَﻌْأﻓ pattern, which is identical with the elative). For example, the adjective white in Arabic is ُﺾَﻴْأﺑ (based on the root ب-ي-ض, being white). So, in Arabic

means simply: " The house is white. " To say, on the other hand, the equivalent of "This house is whiter than that house," you have to use the accusative of specification (tamyiz), with either the elative adjective أَثْرَأَك (more) or, even better, the elative adjective ٌﺪَأﺷ (more intense, stronger). This is because ُﺾَﻴْأﺑ, because it is already based on the pattern أَثْرَأَك, cannot be converted into a separate elative form. Thus you will literally say in Arabic:

ذلكَ الْبَيْتَ أَثْرَاكَ بُيِّضًا مِنْ هِذَا الْبَيْتَ.
That house is more intense as to whiteness than this house.

**Tamyiz and Measurement**

Tamyiz constructions are frequently used with numbers and other "measurement" words to specify more precisely what the measurement applies to. This is why the noun that follows a number (the counted noun) for the numbers 11-99 is in the accusative case (the use of genitive case for the other numbers is regarded as an exception to the regular rules of tamyiz).

Just as with many other instances of tamyiz, you could express these kinds of constructions in other ways. For example, you can say " I bought a kilogram of meat " by saying:

اِشْتُرِتَ كِيلَوَةٌ مِنَ اللَّحْمِ
or you can say:
Both mean "I bought a kilo of meat." The first example uses a prepositional phrase with من to express "of meat," the second uses the accusative of specification (tamyiz). The only difference is stylistic (the version with tamyiz might be considered "less wordy" and more elegant).

Some additional examples of tamyiz.

1. هو أكثر من ذلك مالاً.
2. قضى عشرين يوماً في القاهرة قبل زوجته أمي.
3. كم ساعة درست في هذا الأسبوع؟
4. مالي غبيك صديقاً.
5. هو الوحيد الذي مارس الصحافة أدبياً وقتنا وناجاً.
6. ولعل قصة خلف آدم أكثر هذه القصص انتشاراً في الأديان المختلفة.
7. هذا هو أقل أطرفه أهميته وأكثرها ظهوراً.
8. لتنكر دائما أننا أمام مشكلة من أشد مشكلاتها تعبئة.
9. وقد أراد النبي أن يزيد الموتيف تأثيراً.
10. إن الشعور المهجري أدى رسالته للشرق كاملاً.