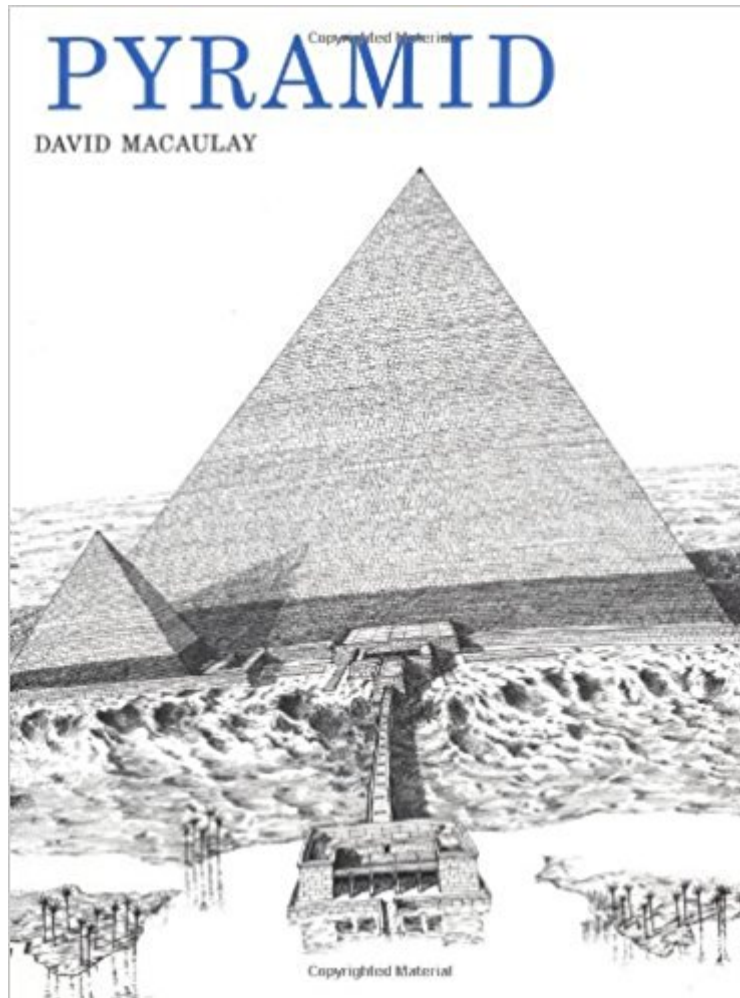




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Pyramid



Synopsis

Through concise text and richly detailed black and white illustrations we come to know the philosophy of life and death in ancient Egypt.

Book Information

Paperback: 80 pages

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers; Edition Unstated edition (April 26, 1982)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0395321212

ISBN-13: 978-0395321218

Product Dimensions: 9 x 0.2 x 12 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 46 customer reviews

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Customer Reviews

When children catch their first glimpse of a pyramid, a sea of questions inevitably tumbles forth. "Why are they shaped like that?" "How were they made?" "Who made them?" "What were they used for?" Perplexed adults can sigh with relief now that David Macaulay has found a way to thoroughly answer all those deserving questions. His exquisitely crosshatched pen-and-ink illustrations frame the engaging fictional story of an ancient pharaoh who commissions a pyramid to be built for him. With great patience and respect for minute detail (not unlike the creators of the early pyramids), Macaulay explains the sometimes backbreaking tasks of planning, hauling, chiseling, digging, and hoisting that went into the construction of this awe-inspiring monument. Just when the narrative teeters on the edge of textbook doldrums, Macaulay brings us back to the engaging human drama of death and superstition. This respectful blending of architecture, history, and mysticism will certainly satiate pyramid-passionate children as well as their obliging parents. ALA Notable Book. (Ages 9 and older) --Gail Hudson --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"David Macaulay's brilliant Pyramid shows, detail by detail, how the great pharaohs' burial places were conceived and constructed . . . His draftsmanship is unexcelled, and his book is pharaonic in

opulence and design." Time Magazine

In this book David Macaulay explains how Egyptian pyramids were constructed and although he has some fine pen and ink illustrations, they aren't as detailed or comprehensive as his other fine books like *Mill* or *Castle*. First, the story seems just a little disjointed and jumps from one section to the next without much of a bridging narrative. Second, I'm not sure that some of the explanations are really geared for grade school students (although I'm sure that many will instantly grasp what Macaulay is explaining). For instance, though the explanation how the surveyors determined true north is perfectly logical and clear, it does require a passing acquaintance with the sidereal movement of stars in the sky. There are a number of interesting facts in the book - how a newly constructed chamber would be filled with rubble and sand so workers and artist could finish the roof and ceiling and tops of columns (I wonder why they didn't bother with scaffolding). I think what actually is missing is a definite story with characters that link the sections together. In *Mill*, it was the story of the Plimptons and the planning and construction of a water powered mill; in *Castle*, it was the story of Lord Kevin LeStrange and the planning and construction of a castle in Aberwyvern, Wales and the growth of a town around it. Overall, this is not one of David Macaulay's best books but it does give pretty decent idea of how the great pyramids were constructed.

I am a longtime fan of Davin Macaulay and own most of his books. They are richly illustrated and present complex ideas in a way that is easily understood by adults and children alike. So far, my grandchildren first come across Macaulay's books in my home. Pretty soon they are asking for their own copies which I happily give them.

This book is not a story as I was expecting but it was still pretty interesting to read about how they think the pyramids were made. The illustrations are very impressive and even my 3 year old was following along with the construction. Worth adding to any study of Ancient Egypt.

A++++++

Macaulay is the master of simplifying complex topics. He's easy to follow, extremely well illustrated, and gripping -- which is a lot to be said for an historic architecture series! If you like to know how things work, buy any of his books.

Great starter for young people interested in the monumental projects of the ancient world.

Classic book that I love. Scientific understanding of artful things, with lots of detail. This and Castle are my favorite from the series.

As with most Macaulay books, the strength is in his detailed designs. Excellent for gaining and keeping the attention of young readers as well as older folks. Illustrates pyramid construction through an engaging story. Highly recommended for shared reading for families.

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