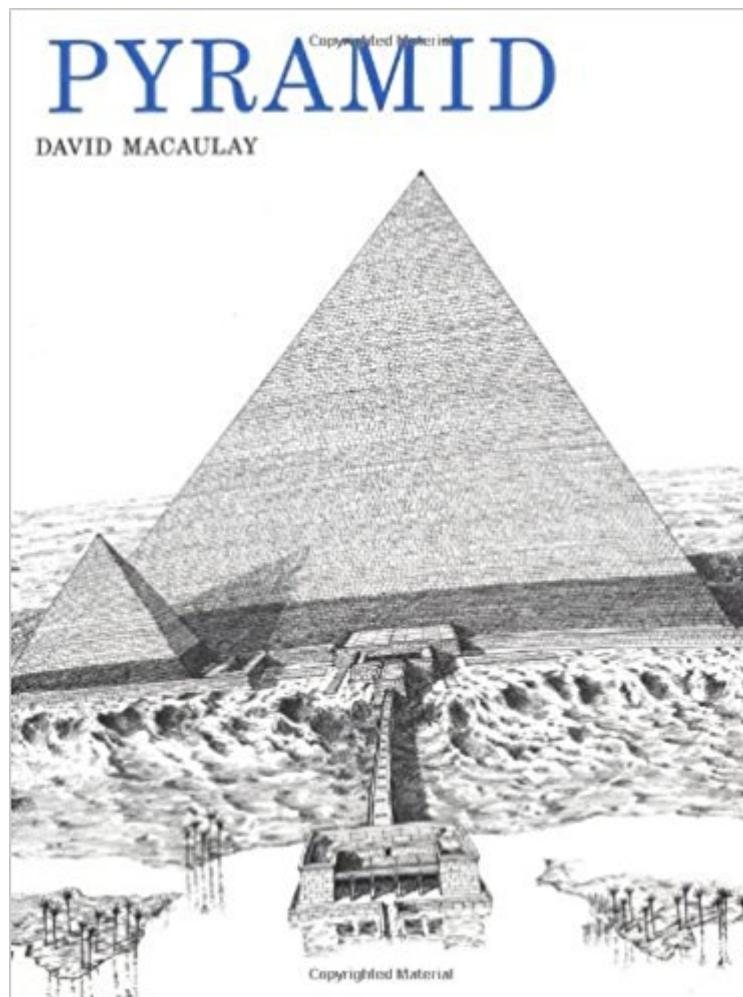


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# Pyramid



## **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)

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Shipping Weight: 13.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 starsÂ  See all reviewsÂ  (42 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #108,135 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #2 inÂ  Books > Teens > Art, Music & Photography > Architecture #4 inÂ  Books > Teens > Education & Reference > History > Ancient #4 inÂ  Books > Teens > Education & Reference > Social Science > Anthropology

## **Customer Reviews**

With exquisitely detailed black-line drawings, this book shows how the pyramids in Egypt may have been constructed. A two-page introduction gives some background of life in Egypt, including an overview of Egyptian spiritual beliefs and practices, especially those related to death and dying. The introduction makes clear that this book is based on an imaginary pharaoh and an imaginary pyramid and that there are differences of opinion about the construction process the Egyptians used. After the brief introduction, the illustrations dominate, comprising as much as 80% of the pages. Almost like time-lapse photography, readers can see the pyramid grow in vast landscapes, giving children a good sense of the scale of the pyramids, where people are just specks dotting the sides of the massive structure. In addition to these landscapes, Macaulay includes background on the people who designed and built their pyramids and their techniques with illustrations of the different workers and their tools, as well as architectural floor plans and cutaway diagrams. The text is difficult and presents challenges with its vocabulary and syntax as well as its concepts. A one-page glossary of Egyptian and architectural terms provides some assistance. However, the account of how the priest uses the stars to locate true north is a difficult concept to comprehend; the textual and pictorial explanations may not be sufficient for any but advanced readers. Though the text and many of the concepts are demanding, young readers will be carried along by the drawings that truly offer a

step-by-step guide to how the pyramids were built. The distant and perhaps "quaint"-seeming aspects of Egyptian beliefs and practices are nicely contrasted with their highly advanced, ingenious construction techniques.

I hate to say anything negative about a book and author who are so well esteemed. Indeed, Macaulay is an amazing artist and engineer, and the quality of the book is very high. But, this was my first exposure to his work, and it just wasn't what I expected after seeing his books come up in every homeschooling catalog I have. I just couldn't get my younger kids (8, 7, 6, 4) into it. We bought the book as a staple for our unit on Ancient Egypt, and my boys in particular were really excited to learn about the pyramids. But this book didn't make it into our favorites. The book suffers from a couple main problems: one, it is black and white. For an adult, the detailed black and white ink is fabulous and easy to appreciate. Not so much for a kid. Page after page of black and white of the same subject matter only fascinated the most scientific of my kids. Secondly, the length of the book makes it more appealing to upper elementary rather than lower elementary. My kindergartner really wanted me to sit down with him and this book when he first saw it. But I'd lost him by about ten pages in. Similarly, the text is hard to get into. It's dry. On some pages, there are only a sentence or two which the kids could handle while they were looking carefully at the drawings. But on others, there are larger and more complex paragraphs which even my third grader struggled with, in addition to the schematics. In conclusion, this is a fabulous work on the subject but much more appealing to an adult. I know that many educators don't think resources should be dumbed down, but there is an art to making something age-appropriate and grooming younger ages to become more curious. I don't think this book extends far enough in this direction.

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