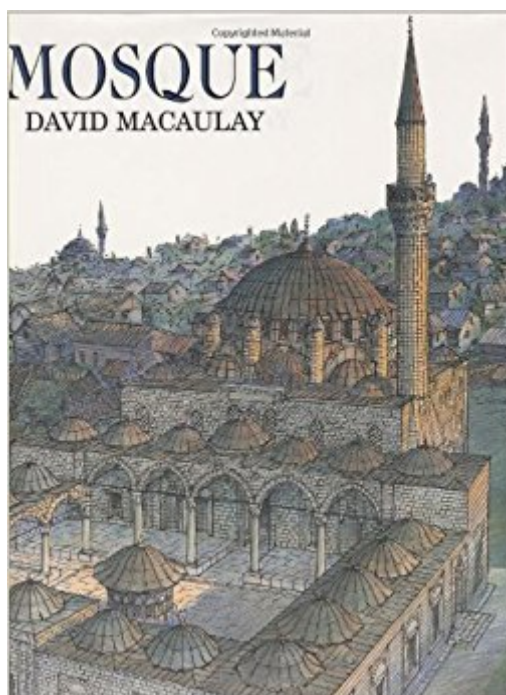


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# Mosque



## Synopsis

An author and artist who has continually stripped away the mystique of architectural structures that have long fascinated modern people, David Macaulay here reveals the methods and materials used to design and construct a mosque in late-sixteenth-century Turkey. Through the fictional story and Macaulay's distinctive full-color illustrations, readers will learn not only how such monumental structures were built but also how they functioned in relation to the society they served. As always, Macaulay has given a great deal of attention to the relationship between pictures and text, creating another brilliant celebration of an architectural wonder.

## Book Information

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Grade Level: 5 - 7

## Customer Reviews

Grade 5 Up-Macaulay's books on architecture are by now an institution in themselves, and this latest addition to the series maintains the high quality of its predecessors. Using, as always, a fictional framework to hold his nonfictional material, the author introduces readers to Admiral Suha Mehmet Pasa, a wealthy aristocrat living in Istanbul, who decides in his declining years to fund the building of a mosque and its associated buildings-religious school, soup kitchen, public baths, public fountain, and tomb. Detailing the activities of the architect and workers, Macaulay creates a from-the-ground-up look not only at the actual construction, but also at the uses of the various buildings, most of which will be unfamiliar to Westerners. In his preface, the artist states that he has

based his invented mosque on the existing structures of a famous Ottoman architect, Sinan, who worked during the mid to late 16th century. While there are many books that introduce Islam and its major beliefs and practices to non-Muslim readers, this title provides both a less didactic and arguably more effective look at the religion by placing it within a social context, even one as relatively "cold" as architecture. In this way, the admiral, his architect, and their workers are seen as more than followers of a faith; they are also seen as flesh-and-blood people who require toilets and baths and who recognize their own mortality. Coop Renner, Fairmeadows Elementary, Duncanville, TX Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

*\*Starred Review\** Gr. 6-up. Once again Macaulay uses clear words and exemplary drawings to explore a majestic structure's design and construction. This time the story takes place in sixteenth-century Istanbul, where a wealthy patron has hired an architect to create a mosque and its support buildings. The spreads follow the complex through its planning and building, using Macaulay's familiar combination of labeled architectural drawings, sketches showing artisans at work, and thorough descriptions that are, perhaps, more technical than in some of his previous titles. In his foreword, Macaulay explains that he has based his story on a composite of actual historical people and mosques, and his images and words are filled with accurate details that reveal the history and culture of the time. This isn't an introduction to Islam; readers will want some basic knowledge of the religion. But in his respectful, straightforward explanation of the mosque's design, Macaulay offers an unusual, inspiring perspective into Islamic society that's removed from the charged headlines, and, as in all his work, he conveys a contagious awe and wonder at the design and engineering feats that societies have accomplished. Those fascinated by the technical story may want to refer also to Macaulay's *Building Big* (2001), which includes an excellent section about the Hagia Sophia Mosque. Gillian Engberg Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

The first book by David Macaulay that I ever read was *Cathedral*, so that's the benchmark by which I measure his other books. *Mosque* is based on the same premise as that book (i.e. the construction of a great structure for religious worship), but adds the new element of color for the first time and is obviously not set in Medieval Europe. And while I did enjoy the color prints, and the book is well done, overall I felt like it fell a bit short of *Cathedral* because the drawings lacked the detail found in that book. *Mosque* seems to present a bigger picture rather than focusing on the intricate details that made *Cathedral* so interesting to me. You'll notice that I still gave *Mosque* four stars, so I'm not

unhappy with it at all. But I didn't think it quite lived up to the high standards set by Cathedral, which is the only reason I shorted it one star. I would add that my four-and-a-half-year-old son, who absolutely loves all things related to construction, really enjoyed this book because of its illustrations and the interesting subject matter, but also because I summarized the narrative rather than reading it word for word. I did that because it is written at a higher reading level than Cathedral. That may or may not suit your needs depending on your situation, but for younger kids this would be a long slog if you read every word to them.

Purchased the kindle edition and downloaded to my Kindle for PC. The pages of just text looked great but the pages that had photos and text together were unreadable, even on my laptop. David Macaulay books are great but not for the kindle

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.

I work in a Technical College with Arab students who are quite familiar with Mosques, since they pray in them up to five times a day. This book allows the Engineering students to see just how a mosque is actually constructed. They found it to be fascinating, and it brought about many interesting conversations during class time. After using the book, we had a trip to one of the large mosques so students could study the architecture and relate it to the book. One of the guys even carried the book along as a reference. This generated still more discussion between the students and the older men who happened to be at the mosque. What came from it were some interesting stories linking the past to the present. A good book for Arab students wishing to know more about their heritage.

I bought the Kindle version for myself and a hard copy version for my parents. It's a quick but very informative read.

His books are always excellent with carefully detailed drawings. A gift to my granddaughter who is studying Arabic. Anyone interested in architecture would enjoy this book.

I used this for a paper to compare the story to actual mosque existing in Istanbul. I've read David

Macaulay's other works and they were pretty good.

Macaulay has a excellent ability to visually tell a story that can draw you in to the frame. He also goes into great detail to explain the reasoning behind the construction and tools used to achieve completion. Anyone interested in the how and why of architecture evolution this is an excellent book in a series.

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