



Discovering Islamic Art: A Childrens' Guide With Activity Sheets

Mary Beardwood

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Since the 7th century, Islamic artists, artisans, architects and craftsmen have attempted in their work to reflect their beliefs and cultural values in the most beautiful way they can in every medium and material available to them.

A subject that spans a millennia-and-a-half and covers every walk of life in every corner of the globe is no easy thing to distil for children, but Mary Beardwood has succeeded in making it fun as well as factual, exciting as well as educational. Following her successful title, *A Children's Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Mary's new book invites her young (and old) readers into a fascinating world in a way that will inspire them to delve deeper.

Aimed at a readership age of eight years and above, *Discovering Islamic Art* simply and concisely introduces the fundamental elements of this huge subject - calligraphy, arabesques and geometric patterns. It also features painting, pottery, architecture, astrology, landscapes and cityscapes, woodwork and metalwork, arms and armor, science and inventions, manuscripts and books, and every page is generously illustrated. With each topic is included an activity sheet to encourage further engagement, to help children have fun and to remember more.

The book is designed not only to appeal to young readers, but with parents and teachers in mind. The hard cover makes for a long life, and the disguised wiro binding facilitates the photocopying of the activity sheets so that many pupils can simultaneously enjoy them. There are links to websites and further reading, a map showing the Islamic dynasties; each spread poses questions - all of which are answered by closer examination of the illustrations.

This book is not only entertaining and educational but, in this age of cultural divergence and religious misunderstandings, goes a long way to helping children understand the world of Islam and appreciate its artistic treasures.

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