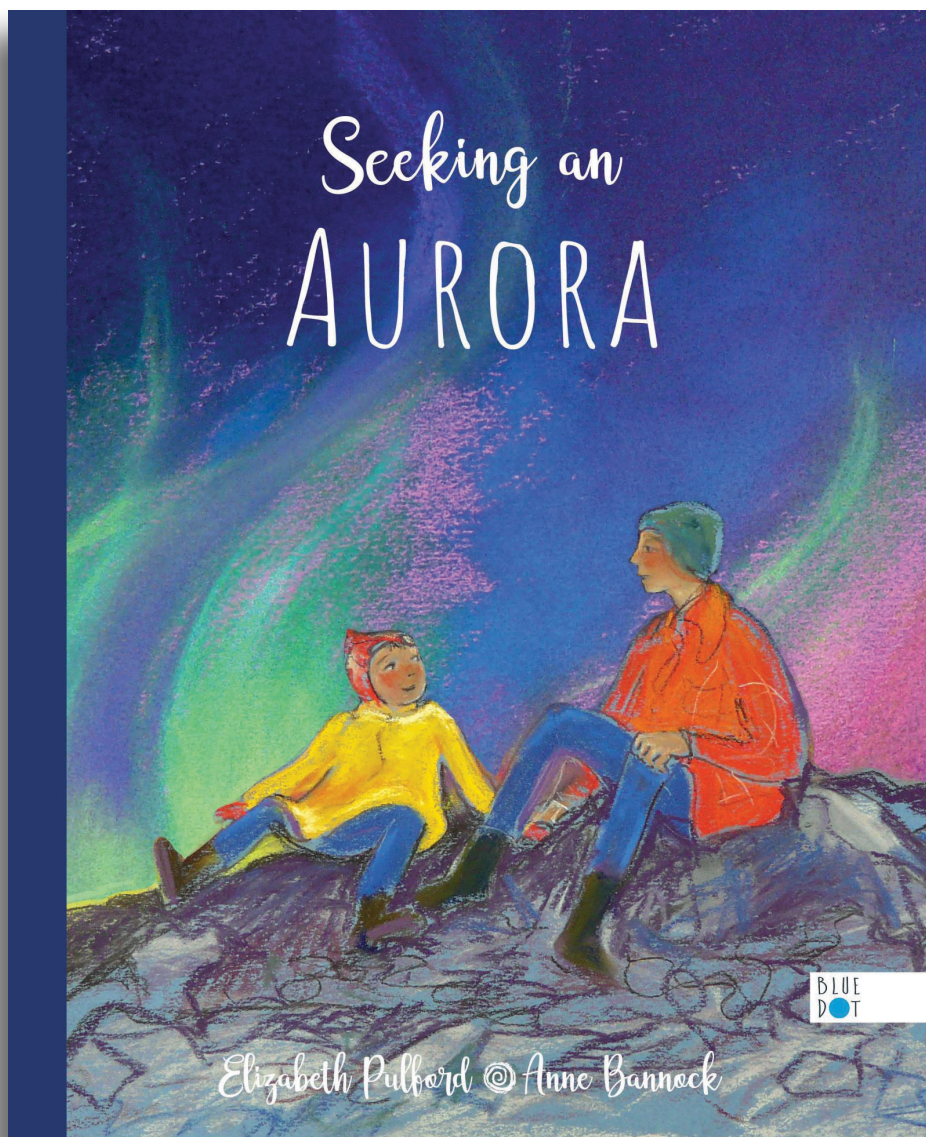


Grades 1–4



# Your Teacher's Guide

from Blue Dot Kids Press



“A memorable picture book that captures  
an unforgettable experience.”

— Carolyn Phelan, *Booklist*, STARRED REVIEW

*Seeking an Aurora*, by Elizabeth Pulford & illustrated by Anne Bannock  
Published January 2021 | ISBN 9781733121279 | Ages 4–8





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## Before Reading

Establish background knowledge.

- What is an *aurora*?
- Why is it important to study auroras?
- Where are auroras found? When is the best time to see an aurora?
- What causes an aurora to occur?
- Why does the earth have a magnetic field?
- What do auroras look like? What causes the colors of an aurora?
- Discuss the title and cover illustrations of *Seeking an Aurora*. Predict what the story will be about.

## During Reading

As you read, think about the elements of the story.

- Setting: Where and when is the story taking place?
- Point of view: Who is telling the story?
- Cause-and-effect relationships: What is happening and why?
- Characters: Who are they? How are they related? What are their traits, motivations, and feelings?
- Pause occasionally and wonder, *What will happen next?*
- How do character actions contribute to the sequence of events?
- Consider the meaning of words and phrases as they are used by the author, Elizabeth Pulford. Distinguish literal from nonliteral language.
- How does the author create imagery through language?
- How does the language and lyrical text affect the story?
- What is your point of view? Would seeing an aurora be an adventure for you? Exciting? Spectacular?
- How do specific aspects of the illustrations, by Anne Bannock, contribute to what is conveyed by the words in the story?
- How do the illustrations create mood, emphasize aspects of a character, and show the setting?
- What are the themes of the book? How are the themes developed?
- What is the author's purpose for writing this book?
- What new information are you learning as you read?



## After Reading

### *Discussion*

#### **Check for understanding.**

- Who are the two main characters in the story, and how are they related?
- From whose point of view is the story told?
- Why does Father wake his child up in the middle of the night?
- How does the child feel about this?
- Why are Dad and child sneaking out of the house?
- How does the child learn about the aurora?
- Why do you think Dad wanted to first show his child rather than talk about the aurora?
- Explain the child's reaction to what was witnessed.
- How did the story change from the beginning to the end of the book?
- What kind of relationship do you think the child and father have?

*Consider language.*

*Figurative language* is a word or phrase that does not have its normal, everyday, literal meaning. It is used by the writer to make comparisons or create a dramatic effect. Authors use figurative language to make their stories more interesting and to create tone.

Go back to the book and find examples of how the author uses figurative language in the story.

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE	LITERAL MEANING

Elizabeth Pulford uses many *adjectives* in the story to describe the characters, setting, and plot. Read the following adjectives and share what the word is describing.

ADJECTIVE	WHAT IT IS DESCRIBING IN THE STORY
Shivering	
Buttery	
Silvery	
New	
Stony	
Dark	
Prehistoric	

*Now find some more adjectives on your own!*

Word choice affects meaning on many levels. What do the following phrases and sentences from the story mean? What tone and mood is the author trying to set?

- “Dad and I said nothing at all.”
- “Even the dogs were quiet, and the cows looked like prehistoric creatures, their noses streaming smoke.”
- “Back at the warm, buttery light spilling from the kitchen window and our footprints in the silvery frost.”
- “...my breath huffed little ghosts...”
- “...the moon glinting between the trees like a curved splinter of glass.”
- “My eyes popped as wide wings of light flew over the sky.”
- “...cozy in the sleepy silence.”

“My eyes popped as wide wings of light flew over the sky.”



Make Text-to-World and Text-to-Self connections.

- What words and phrases does the narrator use to describe an aurora?
- What words or phrases might you use to describe how the lights move or “dance” in the sky?
- Is Earth the only planet to experience auroras? Explain.
- Identify the word origin of *aurora borealis* and *aurora australis*.
- Reread the back matter of the book. Write all the facts that you learned.

## Research

1. Why do auroras “move like curtains”?
2. Compare and contrast the northern and southern lights.

## Art Project

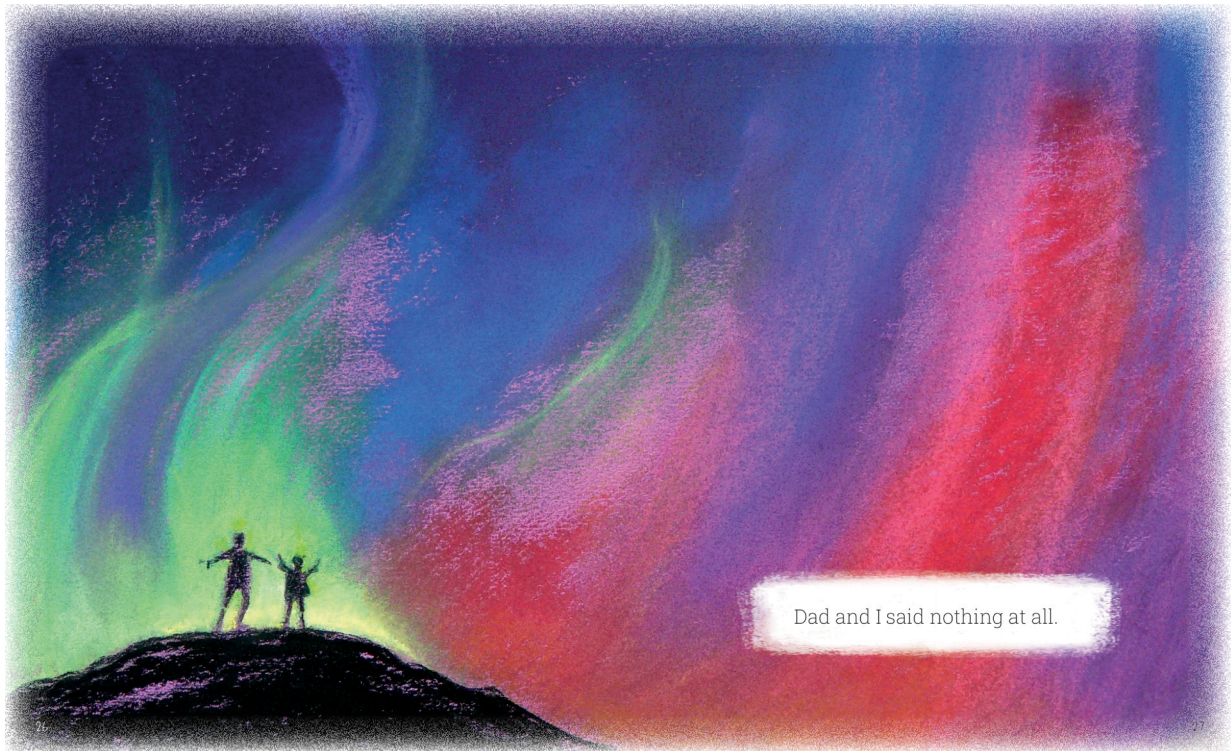
*Create a crayon resist picture of an aurora against the night sky!*

### What you need:

- white construction paper
- light-color crayons
- black watercolor paint

### What to do:

1. On white construction paper, use light-color crayons to draw the shimmering bands of the aurora, stars, and landscape, including mountains and trees.
2. Cover drawing with black watercolor paint.





## Connecting with Poetry

Write an acrostic poem about auroras. (An acrostic poem is a poem where certain letters in each line spell out a word or phrase.)

A

U

R

O

R

A



**Blue Dot Kids Press** inspires curiosity with beautifully crafted stories that connect us to each other and the planet we share. Written and illustrated by impassioned **storytellers and artists from around the world**, our books engage young readers' innate sense of **wonder and empathy**, connecting them to our global community and **the pale blue dot we call home**.

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