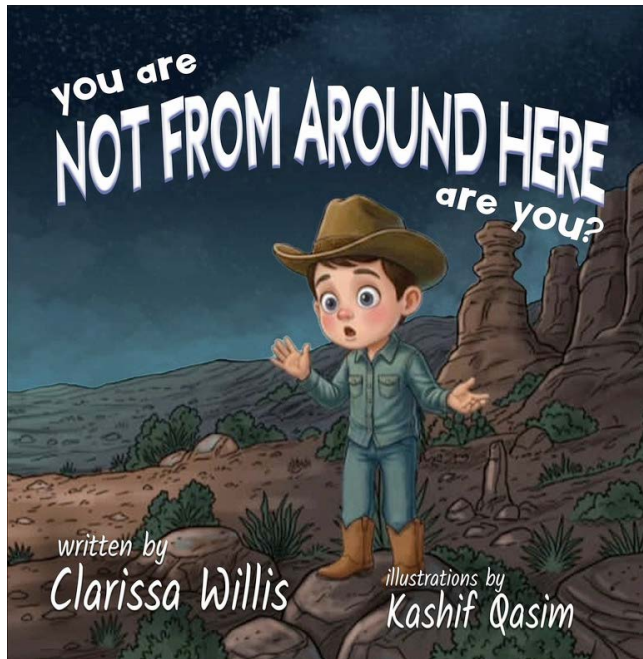


Resource Guide



Introduction - This book is a playful, wonder-filled picture book about a boy named Mack who goes camping in Sedona, Arizona—an International Dark Sky City—where the night sky is bright enough to spark imagination...and maybe even a surprising encounter.

This guide supports grades K–2 with reading comprehension, vocabulary, writing, science connections, and social-emotional learning.

Author's Credentials: Clarissa Willis, PhD, brings more than 30 years of expertise in early childhood education and has authored 19 resource books for teachers, along with seven children’s books. Connect with Clarissa:

Email: clarissa@clarissawillis.com

clarissawillis.com



SOLANDER
PRESS
SOLANDERPRESS.COM

Book at a Glance

- **Title:** *You Are Not From Around Here Are You?*
- **Author:** Clarissa Willis
- **Illustrator:** Kashif Qasim
- **Publisher:** Solander Press (2026)
- **Setting:** Sedona, Arizona (campground; night sky)
- **Main characters:** Mack, Huey (puppy), Al (mysterious glowing boy), a glowing green adult
- **Themes:** Curiosity and wonder, bravery, kindness, friendship, the night sky, respecting nature
- **Skills focus:** Story elements, inference, vocabulary, speaking & listening, narrative writing, informational text features

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Retell the story using characters, setting, problem, and solution.
- Use details from text and illustrations to make inferences.
- Identify how setting influences mood and events.
- Learn and use new vocabulary in speaking and writing.
- Explore what a “Dark Sky City” is and why it matters.

Essential Questions

Choose 1–2 to focus on:

- What can we learn when we explore a new place?
- How does the night sky inspire curiosity and imagination?
- What does it mean to be brave?
- How can we be kind to someone who is different from us?

Before Reading

1. Cover + Title Talk

Show the cover and read the title.

- What do you notice?
- Who might the story be about?
- What does the phrase “not from around here” mean?

2. Quick Background: Desert + Night Sky

Build a simple anchor chart:

- **Desert:** hot days, cool nights, rocks, plants, animals
- **Night sky:** stars, planets, moon, satellites

3. Vocabulary Preview (Kid-Friendly)

- **Envelope:** a paper cover for a letter or picture.
- **Campground:** a place where people set up tents and camp.
- **Gear:** equipment you need for an activity.
- **Flashlight:** a handheld light.
- **Glowing:** shining with light.
- **Different:** not the same.
- **Limit:** to keep something from getting too big or too much.
- **Dark Sky City:** a place that uses less outdoor light so people can see more stars.

During Reading

Stop-and-Think Prompts

- Page 1–5: What does Mack want for his birthday? How does he feel when he learns about Sedona?
- Page 10–11: What do you notice about the night sky? How does the author help you picture it?
- Page 12–17: Why does Mack go outside? What clues tell you something unusual is about to happen?
- Page 18–23: Who does Mack meet? What makes Al seem “not from around here”?
- Page 28–31: What gift does Al give Mack? What does Mack give Al? Why are those gifts meaningful?

Comprehension Checks

- **Beginning:** Who is the story about? Where are they going?
- **Middle:** What problem happens at night?
- **End:** What does Mack find in the morning? What does that tell us?

After Reading

1. Story Map (Whole Group or Independent)

- **Characters:** Mack, Huey, Al, Mom, Dad, glowing green adult
- **Setting:** Sedona campground at night
- **Problem:** Huey runs off; Mack finds something glowing and mysterious

- **Events:** (1) camping trip begins, (2) dark sky explanation, (3) nighttime encounter
- **Solution:** Mack meets Al; they exchange gifts; Mack returns safely
- **Theme/Lesson:** Curiosity can lead to discovery; kindness helps us connect

2. Text-to-Self Connection

Prompt:

- Tell about a time you were in a new place or tried something new. How did you feel?

3. “Dream or Real?” Evidence Discussion

Ask students to use evidence:

- What makes Mack think it might be a dream?
- What evidence suggests it really happened?

Discussion Questions (Print-and-Go)

1. What does Mack want for his birthday at first? What does he get instead?
2. Why are the stars brighter in Sedona?
3. Why does Huey run out of the tent? How does Mack respond?
4. What details show that Al is different from Mack?
5. How does Mack treat Al? How does Al treat Mack and Huey?
6. Why do you think Al gives Mack a glowing rock?
7. What does Mack give Al? What might that gift mean to Al?
8. What is the most important lesson in the story? What makes you think that?

Writing Activities

1. Narrative: “My Night Sky Adventure”

Prompt: Imagine you are camping under a dark sky. What do you see? What do you hear? Who do you meet?

2. Opinion Writing: Best Birthday Gift

Prompt: Was the camping trip the best birthday gift? Use **because** and give 2 reasons.

3. Friendly Letter to Al

Students write a letter:

- Introduce yourself
- Ask 2 questions (Where are you from? What is your planet like?)
- Invite Al to visit your town

4. Alternate Ending

Prompt: What happens next after the “comet trail” page? Write one more scene.

STEM + Informational Text Connection

Dark Sky Cities Mini-Lesson

Use the book’s back matter (Dark Sky Cities page) to introduce informational text.

- What is the purpose of this page?
- What facts did you learn?
- Why is protecting dark skies important for people and wildlife?

Quick Science Extension

- Make a T-chart: **Natural light** (sun, stars, moon, fireflies) vs. **Artificial light** (streetlights, porch lights, car headlights).
- Discuss: How can too much artificial light change what we see at night?

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

Feelings + Choices

Create a chart with 3 columns:

- **Moment in the story**
- **How Mack feels**
- **What Mack does**

Discuss:

- What does bravery look like in this story?
- How can we be kind to someone who seems different?

Art + Creativity

- **Glow Art:** Use black paper and neon crayons/paint to create a “glowing” character or rock.
- **Night Sky Collage:** Students create a Sedona night sky with stars, planets, and a “mystery” object.

Math Connection

- **Class Graph:** “What would you rather get?” (cowboy boots/hat, camping trip, telescope, puppy toy, etc.)
- Create a bar graph and write 2 observations.

Centers & Small-Group Activities

- **Sequencing:** Put 6 story events in order.
- **Vocabulary Match:** word ↔ definition ↔ picture.
- **Inference Detectives:** “I think ___ because ___.” Use illustration clues.
- **Reader’s Theater:** Act out the tent scene and meeting Al (teacher narrates).

Family Connection (Take-Home)

Ask families to:

- Go outside together and look at the night sky for 5 minutes.
- Talk about: “What do you notice? What do you wonder?”
- Optional: Draw what you saw and bring it to share.

Standards Alignment (Editable)

- **ELA:** Key details, retell, theme, inference, vocabulary, writing (narrative/opinion), speaking & listening.
- **Science:** Observing the sky; human impact on the environment (light pollution).
- **SEL:** Self-management, relationship skills, empathy.

About the Author

Award-winning author **Clarissa Willis** writes children’s books that make childhood joyful through stories and wonder. She has authored nine picture books and one chapter book, and she finds inspiration in the American West—including the red rocks of Sedona, Arizona.

About the Illustrator

Kashif Qasim is a professional artist with 20+ years of experience in children’s book illustration, portraits, landscape art, and sculpture. He works internationally and is known for his free-hand digital style.

Optional Extension: Learn More

To learn more about International Dark Sky Cities, visit: <https://darksky.org>

1-Page Student Worksheet Pack (Print-and-Go)

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

A) Story Elements (Fill In)

- **Characters:** _____
- **Setting:** _____
- **Problem:** _____
- **Solution:** _____

B) Put These Events in Order (1–4)

Write 1, 2, 3, 4 next to each event.

- ____ Mack goes camping in Sedona.
- ____ Mack meets a glowing boy named Al.
- ____ Huey runs out of the tent at night.
- ____ Mack finds a glowing rock in the morning.

C) Vocabulary Match

Draw a line to match.

Word	Meaning
Glowing	a place where people sleep in a tent
Campground	shining with light
Gear	equipment you need
Limit	to keep something from being too much

D) Opinion (Circle + Write)

Which would you rather get for your birthday?

Circle one: **Cowboy boots/hat** OR **Camping trip**

I would rather get _____ because _____.

E) Draw + Label

Draw the night sky in Sedona. Label **3** things you might see.