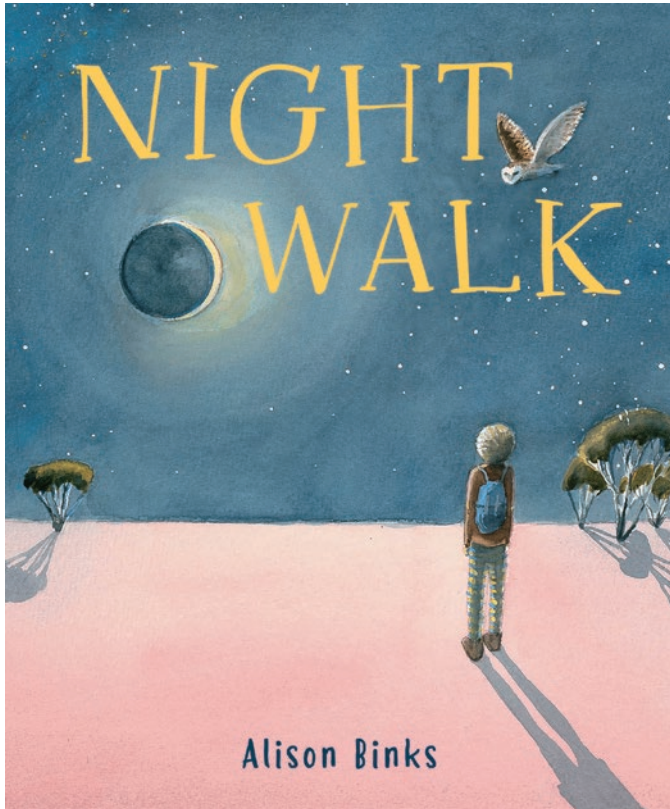


# Teachers' notes for Night Walk



<b>Title:</b>	Night Walk
<b>Author/ Illustrator:</b>	Alison Binks
<b>ISBN:</b>	9780994384171

## AUTHOR MOTIVATION

Much of my work – painting as well as storytelling – is about the landscape, and seeks to bring remote parts of our world into the lives of us city people, in gentle and subtle ways. If we start to know the earth and especially parts of it where we haven't trampled our heavy human boots all over it, it becomes easier to treasure it, perhaps to understand how best to look after it.

This story is also about friendship. It was inspired by the real friendship between my son Caspar and a girl called Levi who formed a bond in kindergarten and whose thoughts kept returning to the other, even as they were leading their own adventures. Such a connection is a gift to be treasured, but the children also offer us all a challenge: to think and feel beyond ourselves. This thinking is also what our world needs.

## ABOUT THE BOOK

### SYNOPSIS

Deep in the bush, on soft red sandy ground... *Night Walk* takes us into a remote part of Australia where a boy and his family are camping, and where few of us have been. Caspar has an adventurous spirit. We learn he's been venturing out alone, at night, stealthily easing open the zip of the tent door and exploring the bush, encountering the animals who lead busy lives while most people are sleeping.

We meet Caspar on the last night of his holiday. The bush creatures have become accustomed to his night wanderings and he has developed a deep fondness for this place and its night world.

We meet also Caspar's friend Levi who has gone overseas for her holiday. She might be in a different world with the change of colour palette. There are vibrant greens in Levi's jungle and the sand where she too walks at night is not red. But these different places are part of the one world, ours. And friendship is stronger than any distance.

### THEMES

- Different environments, flora and fauna, particularly the Australian bush
- Friendship and connections between people
- The connections between people and place
- Exploration, inquisitiveness, bravery
- The earth as a place to be treasured and as a part of a great universe
- The changes to the earth over time

### AUTHOR / ILLUSTRATOR

Alison Binks is an artist, designer and illustrator. She runs a studio at the bottom of her family's Sandringham garden, full of paintings of desert and sea, architectural drawings, stones and odds and ends collected from travels to the bush and often two large brown dogs curled together on the blanket she bought in Tibet.

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## FOR THE CLASSROOM

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Have you spent time in the bush? Have you been where there are no signs of other people? How far away would the closest other people have been and what does this feel like?
- What animals do you find in different parts of Australia? Look at a map and discuss the arid, semi-arid, semi-tropical, etc areas and what different types of life are in each.
- What do you know about the evolution of the earth – how the continental plates shifted, seas retreated, mountain ranges emerged and deserts formed?
- Do you know that the stars are distant suns from other galaxies? And the moon revolves around our earth as we rotate around the sun. Other planets have moons of their own. What do you know about other planets?
- How do you think we could look after the earth and its animals?
- Do you notice what similarities there are between Caspar and Levi? How does the story show that they are thinking about each other? Do you have a friend who you think about when you're apart, wonder what they're up to, or have you had the experience of coming across something that you really wish you could share with your friend?
- When we think about other people, and care about what they're up to, it brings us a kind of happiness. When we think about ourselves all the time we can get bogged down, can become selfish and want things only for ourselves. Can you imagine how the world might change if everyone cared about others just a little bit more each day, even people who are far away from us?

