# THE NORTHERN LIGHTS

Have you ever seen the sky come alive? Not with clouds or storms... but with silent, dancing ribbons of color that feel both ancient and eternal? This isn't magic—though it feels like it. This is one of our planet's greatest wonders: the Aurora Borealis.

But what are these lights? Where do they come from? And why do they captivate everyone from scientists to poets, and even… dogs?

Let's pull back the curtain. The story of the Northern Lights begins 93 million miles away… on our Sun.

The sun constantly blows a wind of charged particles toward Earth. When this solar wind gets supercharged by sunspots, it sends a storm racing our way. When these particles finally reach us, they're guided by Earth's magnetic field toward the North and South Poles.

And here's the moment of magic: at the poles, these solar particles collide with the gases in our upper atmosphere—like oxygen and nitrogen.

Think of it like a cosmic pinball machine on a colossal scale. Millions of these tiny collisions create vast, shimmering clouds of light. The specific color? That's a secret code telling us what gas was hit, and how high up.

This celestial ballet happens in a ring around the magnetic poles, called the Auroral Oval.
This is why the best places to witness the lights are under this oval: think Iceland, Norway, Northern Canada, and Alaska. But during a massive solar storm, the oval expands… and the lights can be seen far to the south, turning a night anywhere into something legendary.

The human fascination is timeless. The name we use today, Aurora Borealis, was coined in the 1600s by the astronomer Galileo Galilei, combining the Roman goddess of dawn, "Aurora," with the Greek god of the north wind, "Boreas." (His southern counterpart, by the way, is the Aurora Australis).

But no name or photo truly captures the feeling. It's the gentle movement that hypnotizes. The way they swirl and pulse, as if the sky itself is breathing.

For photographers, capturing this dance is a holy grail. For travelers, it's a bucket-list pilgrimage. And for anyone lucky enough to stand under them… it's a moment of pure connection. A reminder that we live on a small, beautiful planet, dancing in a vast and active solar system.

So, I have to ask: Have you ever seen the Northern Lights? Was it everything you dreamed it would be?
And if you haven't… let this be your sign. This is your reminder to look up, to chase that wonder, and to witness one of Earth's most incredible shows at least once in your lifetime ... because some things… you just have to see for yourself.

# Questions

1. What is another name for the Northern Lights?

2. Where does the story of the Northern Lights begin?

3. What guides the solar particles toward the North and South Poles?

4. What creates the light of the aurora?

5. What does the color of the lights tell us?

6. Name two countries where you can often see the Northern Lights.

7. Who gave the lights the name "Aurora Borealis"?

8. What is the southern counterpart of the Aurora Borealis called?

# Questions

1. What is another name for the Northern Lights?

Aurora Borealis

2. Where does the story of the Northern Lights begin?

93 million miles away - on our sun

3. What guides the solar particles toward the North and South Poles?

solar winds

4. What creates the light of the aurora?

Solar particles colliding with gases in the upper atmosphere

5. What does the color of the lights tell us?

What gas was hit by particles and how high up it was

6. Name two countries where you can often see the Northern Lights.

Canada, Iceland, Norway,

7. Who gave the lights the name "Aurora Borealis"?

Galileo Galilei

8. What is the southern counterpart of the Aurora Borealis called?

Aurora Australis