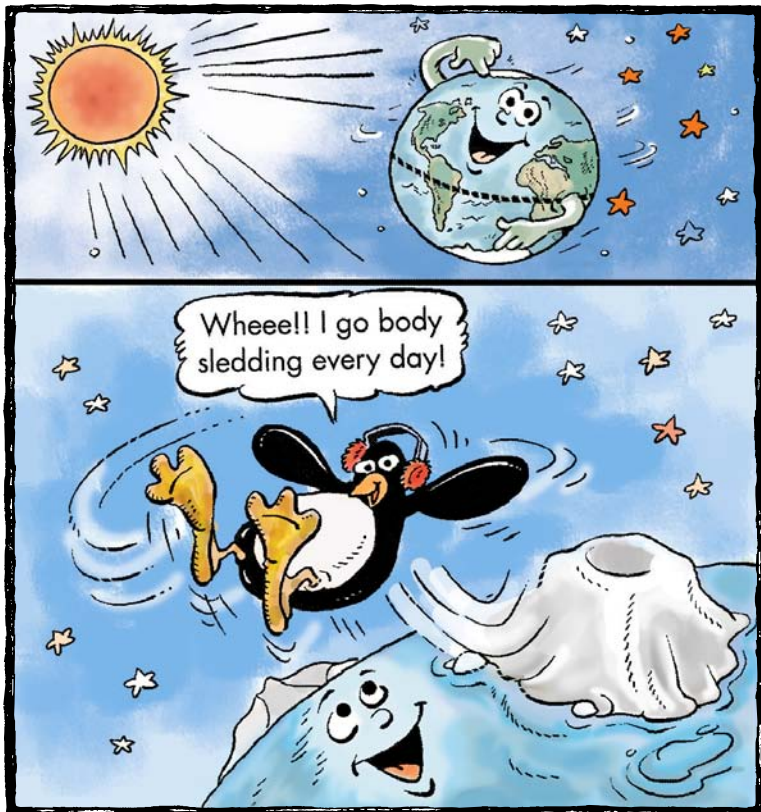


Introducing Planet Earth

Reading A-Z Level L Leveled Book
Word Count: 506

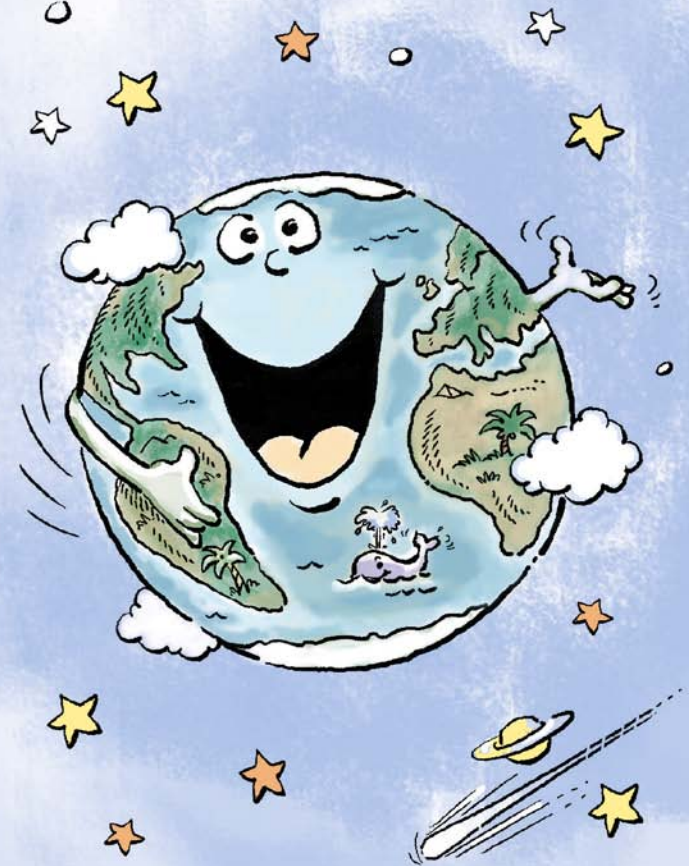


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Introducing Planet Earth



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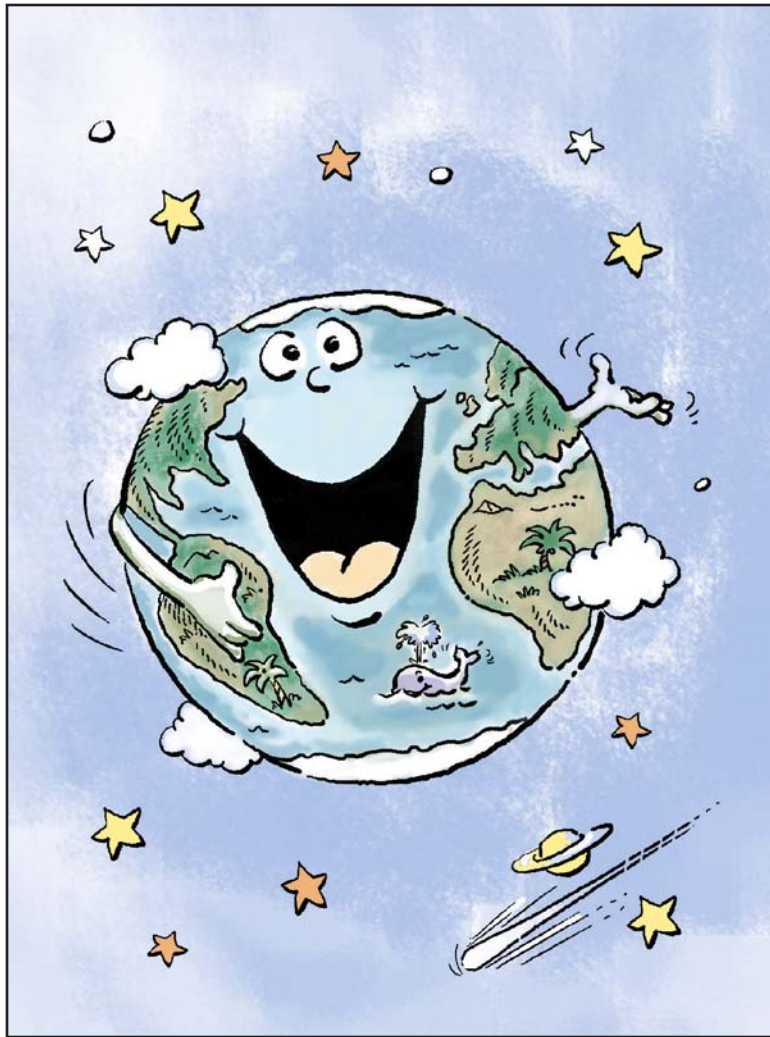
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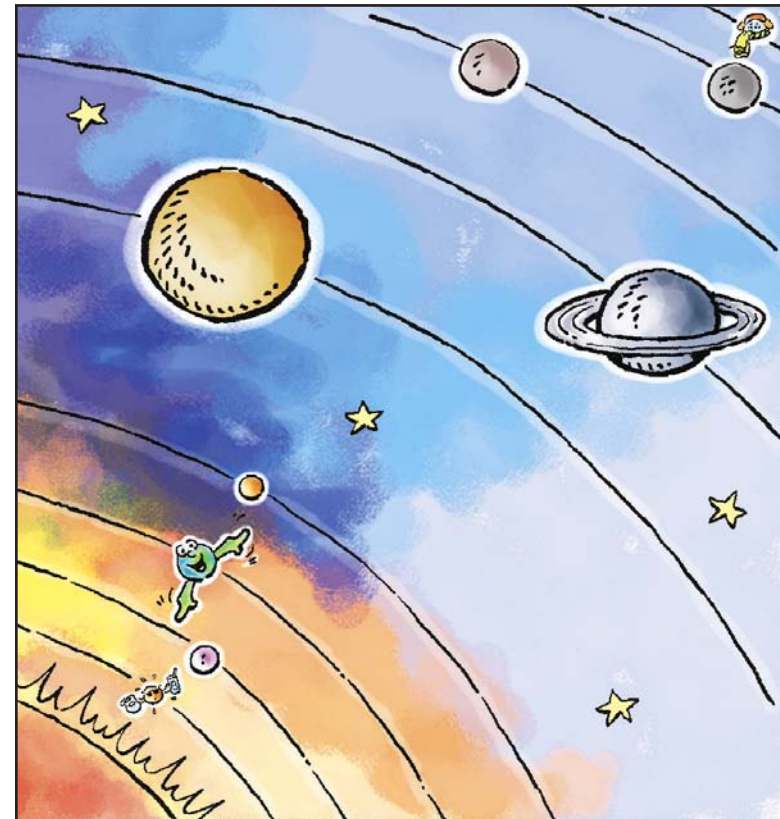
Correlation

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Reading Recovery	18
DRA	20

Let me introduce myself. I am Planet Earth. I am the luckiest planet in our solar system. I can support life!



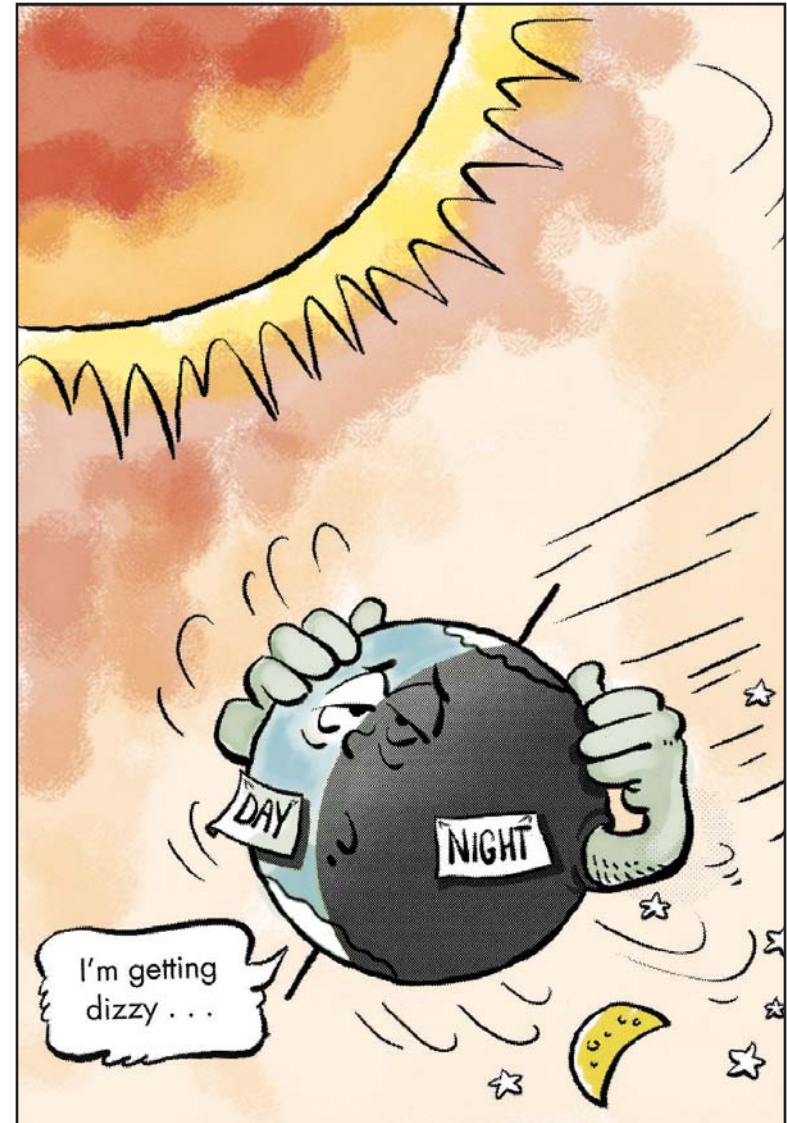
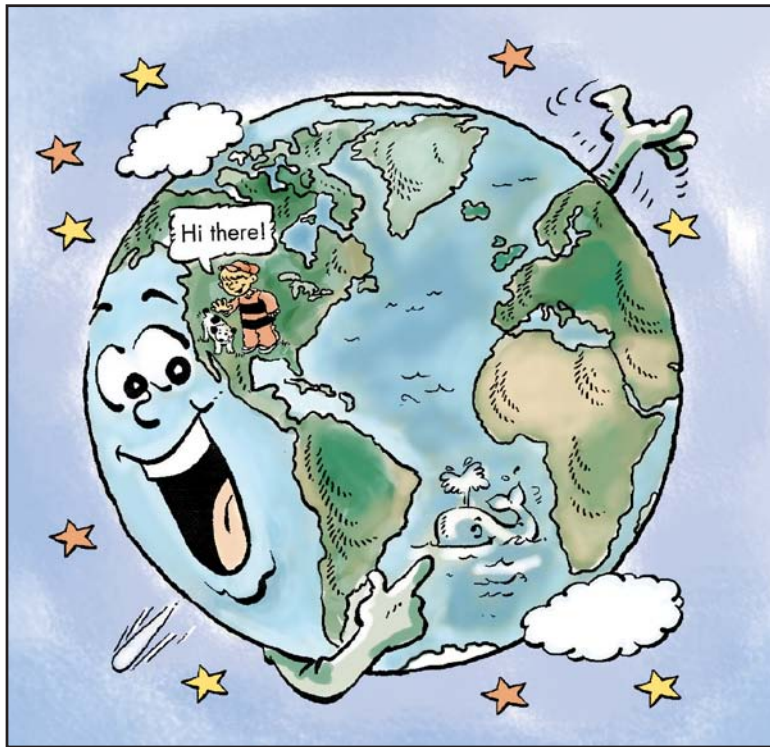
Look at Mercury so close to the Sun. Hot, hot, hot. Even one of my desert rats could not live in that heat!



Cold dwarf planet Pluto sits so far from the Sun. Brrrr. How would you like to be a frozen Popsicle Planet? Not me.

I have all the things life needs—
land, water, air, and energy from
the Sun.

I have four oceans and seven huge
pieces of land called **continents**. On
land, I even have lakes and rivers
filled with fresh water that plants
and animals need.



I spin like a top so that all living
things have day and night. People
call this *rotating*.

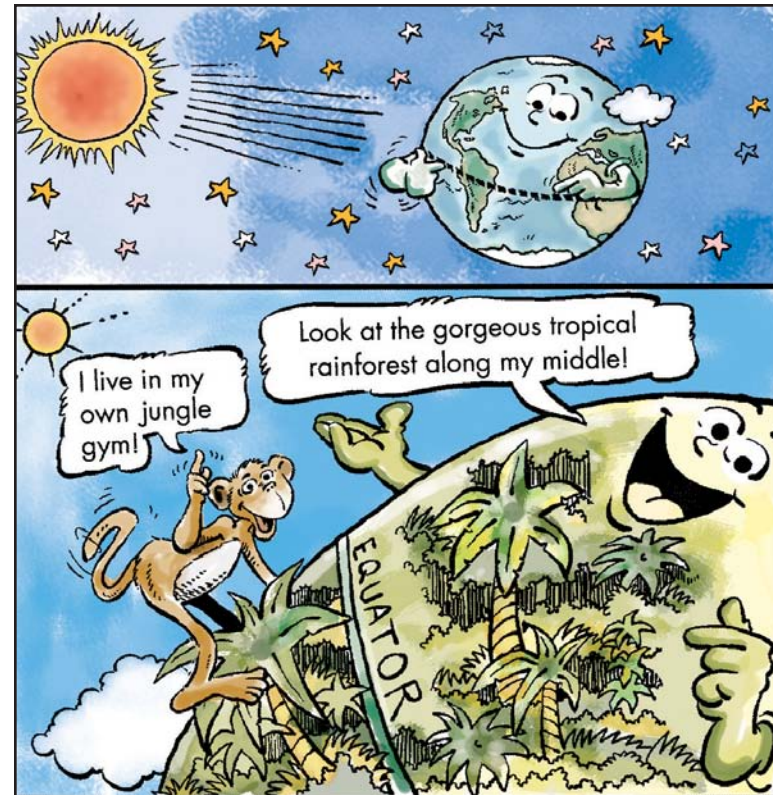
Try This!

Want to see what makes day and night? Get a flashlight and a friend to be the Sun. You be Earth. Earth spins around slowly. It's daytime on the side of your body facing the Sun! It's nighttime on the side turned away from the Sun.

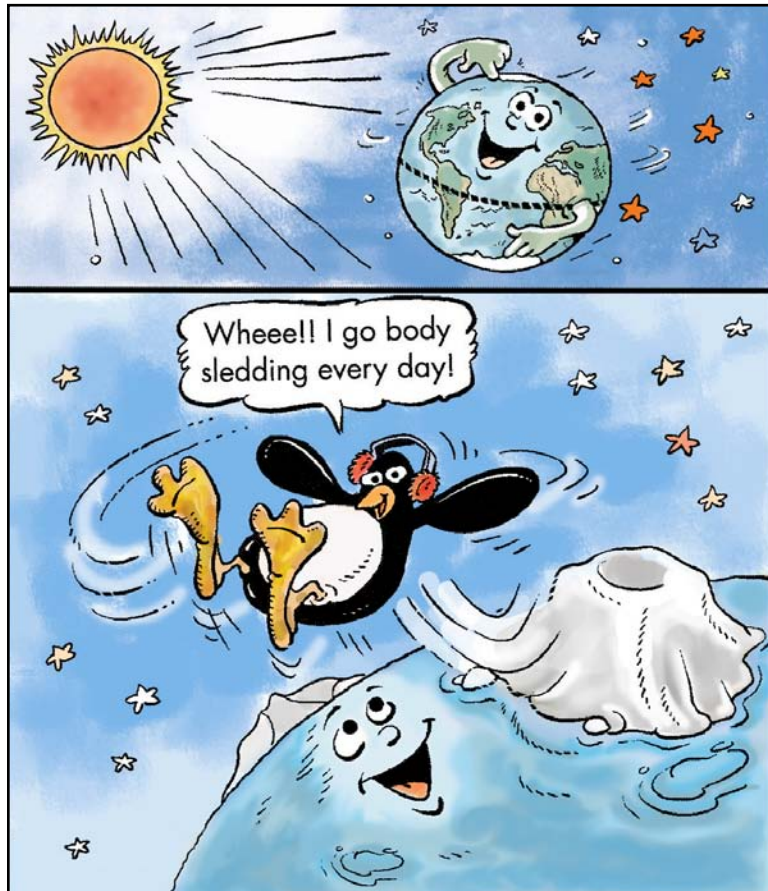


Because I am round like a ball, sunlight hits me unevenly. This makes parts of me hot and parts of me cold.

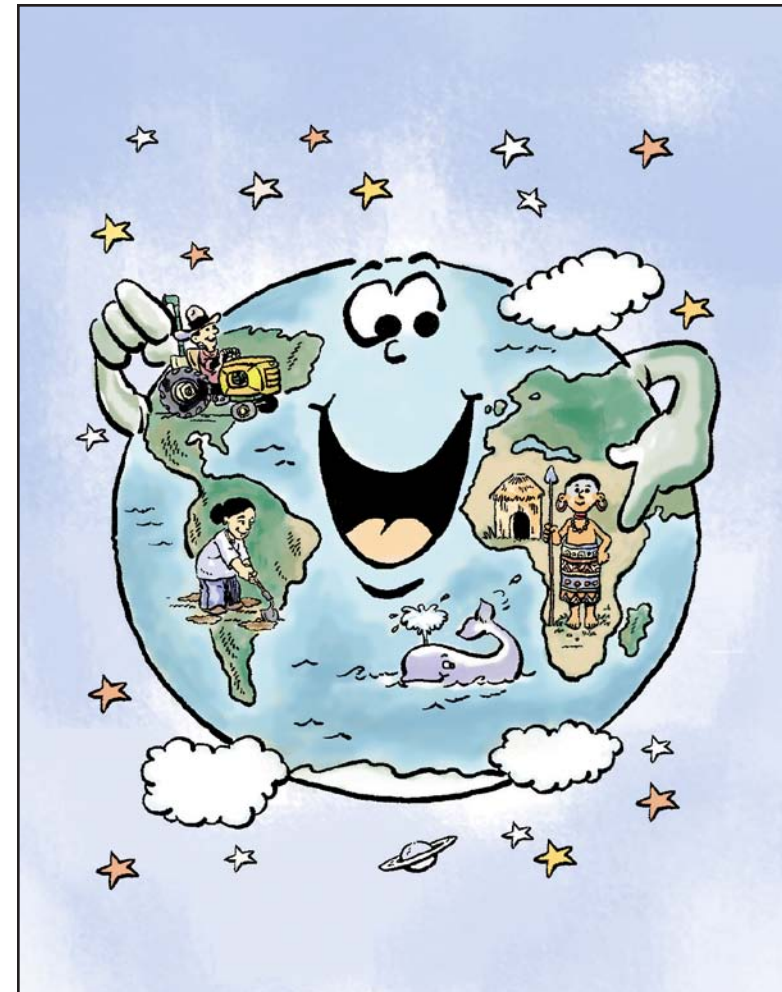
My fat belly gets the most direct sunlight, so it is hottest along my belt. This area is called the **equator**.



My **North and South Poles** get the least direct sunlight. The Sun's rays are weaker here than at my equator. These areas are my coldest.

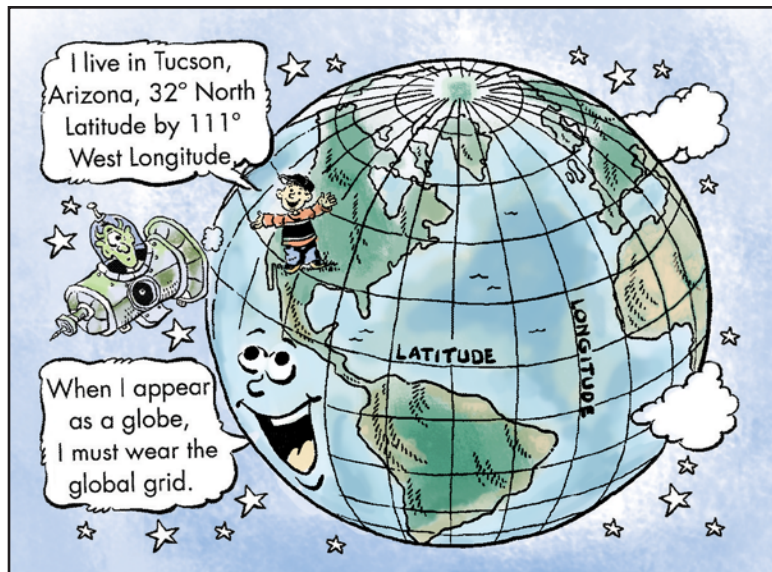


Whether it's hot, cold, or in between, creatures live all over me.



People live on all my continents; a few even live around the South Pole in **Antarctica**. Most people live in my milder parts where they can build homes and grow crops.

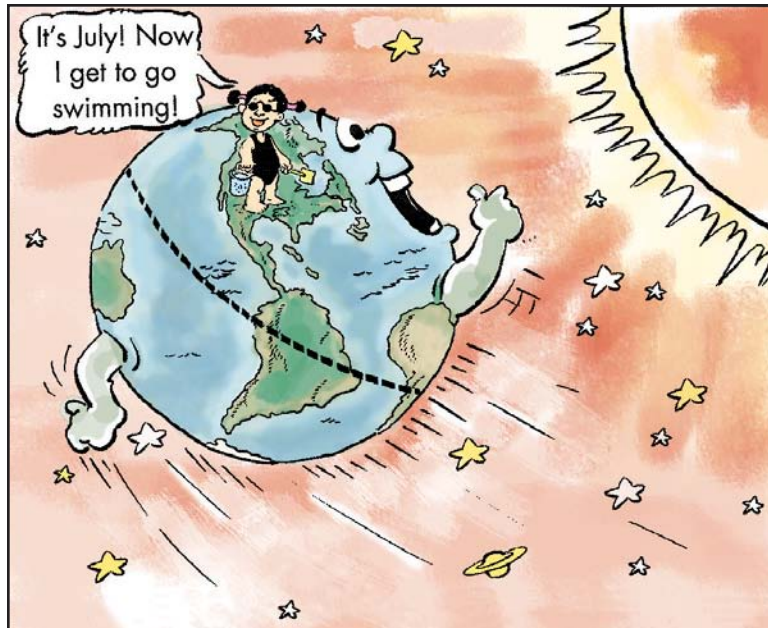
People travel all over my planet. Long ago, people got lost when sailing across my oceans. They needed a way to identify locations. So they invented a global grid, or lines that cross each other to form points anywhere on Earth. The lines that run north and south are **longitude** lines. The lines running east and west are **latitude** lines. This grid tells people where they are.



Oh, I almost forgot. I am **tilted**, too. As I travel around the Sun during my yearlong trip, I stay in my tilt. Sometimes I tilt toward the Sun, and sometimes away from it.

My tilt creates **seasons**. In January, my top half, or northern half, is tilted away from the Sun. That's winter when children in the northern half go sledding. At the same time, the southern half is pointed toward the Sun. It's summer there.





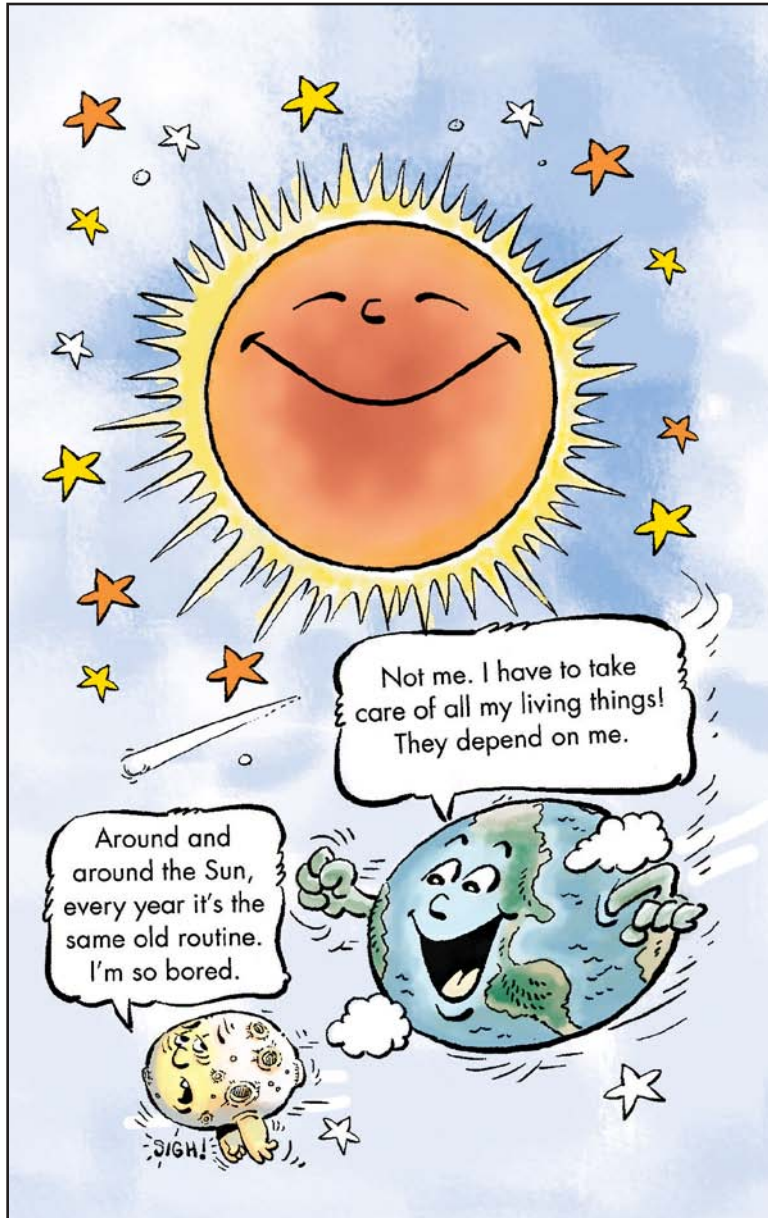
When I get halfway around the Sun and it's July, I'm still tilted. But this time, my northern half is tilted toward the Sun, and it's summer. My southern half is pointed away from the Sun, and it's winter there.

I am a fair planet. I give each of my halves seasons and equal amounts of sunlight. They just get it at different times of year.



To all my creatures on Earth, I make you a promise. I will rotate every 24 hours to give you daytime and nighttime. I will continue to tilt to give you seasons. I will travel around the Sun once each year. And I will do all these things for billions of years to come.

I am a planet you can trust.



Glossary

- Antarctica** (*n.*) an ice-covered continent near the South Pole (p. 10)
- continents** (*n.*) the great divisions of land on Earth, including Africa, South America, Asia, Europe, North America, Australia, and Antarctica (p. 5)
- equator** (*n.*) an imaginary line that circles the Earth halfway between the North and South Poles (p. 8)
- latitude** (*n.*) distance in degrees north or south of the equator (p. 11)
- longitude** (*n.*) distance in degrees east or west of an imaginary line running north and south through Greenwich, England (p. 11)
- North and South Poles** (*n.*) the points farthest north and south on the Earth along its axis (p. 9)
- seasons** (*n.*) the four periods that a year is typically divided into (p. 12)
- tilted** (*adj.*) slanted, not straight (p. 12)