

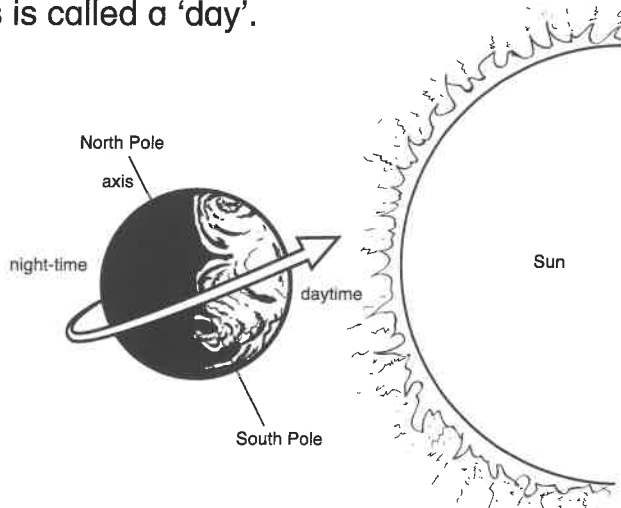
Why do we have days, nights, years and seasons? – I

Read the text.

From outer space, the Earth looks like a gigantic ball. You would see some white clouds surrounding it, lots of blue sections which are the oceans and brown parts which are the continents.

The Earth does not stay still. It is continuously spinning round and round on its axis. We call this 'rotating'. The Earth's axis is an imaginary line drawn through the centre of the Earth from the North Pole to the South Pole. It takes 24 hours to spin the whole way round or make one rotation. The time it takes to do this is called a 'day'.

We can see the sun from Earth. The sun is an enormous ball of hot, burning gases. It looks small to us because it is so far away. If you drove to the sun at 100 km/h, without stopping, it would take over 170 years to get there! The sun gives us our heat and light so living things can grow and survive. Without the sun, Earth as we know it would not exist. It would be a dark, frozen place without any life. However, if the sun was much closer, it would be too hot for most people, animals and plants to live.



We can see the sun and feel its heat for about half of each day. As the Earth rotates, one side of it faces the sun, making it daytime. When that side faces away from the sun, it is night-time.

As the Earth is rotating and we have day and night, it is also moving around the sun. It takes one year—365 days—to move or revolve around the sun. We call this 'orbiting'.

A diagram illustrating the seasons. The Earth is shown tilted on its axis, which is labeled 'axis'. The Sun is on the left. The top part of the Earth is tilted towards the Sun, labeled 'Summer', with a drawing of palm trees and a beach. The bottom part is tilted away from the Sun, labeled 'Winter', with a drawing of snow-covered trees. The text explains that the Earth's tilt causes different parts to receive more or less heat from the Sun throughout the year.

Most places on Earth have four seasons—spring, summer, autumn and winter. As was explained above, the Earth revolves around the sun. It does this tilted on its axis. This means that at different times of the year, one part of the Earth is leaning more towards the sun than other parts. Because of this, it gets more heat. It is summer. At the same time, the opposite part of the Earth is leaning away from the sun and gets less heat. It is winter. So when children in a place like Australia could be at the beach in their summer, children in a place like Britain could be throwing snowballs at each other in their winter!