

Day, Night, and Earth's Rotation

READ ALOUD PASSAGE

The Earth spins on its axis once every 24 hours. This spinning is called rotation. As the Earth rotates, one side faces toward the sun and has daytime, while the other side faces away from the sun and has nighttime. The pattern of day and night that we experience every day is caused by this rotation.

The sun does not actually move across the sky. It only appears to rise in the east and set in the west because the Earth is spinning. As the Earth rotates eastward, the sun appears to move westward across our sky.

The Earth's axis is tilted at an angle of about 23.5 degrees. This tilt is part of what causes the seasons. When the northern part of the Earth is tilted toward the sun, that part gets more direct sunlight and experiences summer. When it is tilted away, it gets less direct sunlight and experiences winter.

Different places on Earth experience different lengths of day and night depending on their location and the time of year. Near the poles, summer days can have sunlight for almost 24 hours, while winter days can be almost entirely dark.

Activity 1: Word Builder

Answer each question with your own words.

1. List four nouns you might see in the day or night sky.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

2. The sun seems to move across the sky. List three better verbs for move.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Activity 2: Sentence Scramble

These words are mixed up. Put them in order to make a sentence. Start with a capital letter and end with a period.

1. rotation / is / spinning / called / this

Activity 3: Two Into One

Put the two short sentences together into one smooth sentence. If there is a word in the box, use it.

1. The Earth spins.

so

The sun seems to move.

2. One side of Earth has day.

while

The other side has night.

Activity 4: Finish with a Joining Word

Finish each sentence. The word in bold tells you what kind of idea to add.

1. The sun appears to rise in the east **because** _____.

2. Our side of Earth has night **when** _____.

3. Summer days are long near the poles **while** _____.
