

## Spin Me Right 'Round, Baby

**Reading Passage:** You may not notice it, but you're spinning through space right now at about 1,000 miles per hour. That's because Earth is constantly rotating on its axis—a line that runs from the North Pole to the South Pole. This rotation is what gives us day and night. As Earth spins, different parts of the planet face the Sun and then turn away from it. That's why we wake up to daylight and fall asleep under the stars.



But that's only part of Earth's cosmic dance. Our planet also takes a huge trip around the Sun every year. This is called **revolution**. One full revolution takes about 365.25 days. That extra 0.25 day is why we add an extra day to our calendar every four years—leap year!

Now, Earth doesn't just orbit the Sun like a flat pancake on a plate. It's tilted at about 23.5 degrees. This tilt is a big deal. It means different parts of Earth get more sunlight at different times of the year. When the Northern Hemisphere tilts toward the Sun, it's summer there. Six months later, it tilts away, and winter arrives. The Southern Hemisphere gets the opposite seasons. So, while you're building snowmen, someone in Australia might be surfing.

### Comprehension Questions:

1. What two main motions does Earth make in space?
2. What is Earth's axis?
3. Why do we have leap years?
4. How does Earth's tilt affect the seasons?
5. Explain why it might be summer in one hemisphere and winter in another.
6. According to the passage, what causes day and night?
7. Infer: If Earth were not tilted, what would likely happen to the seasons?