

Learning Objectives

- 1) Understand the characteristics of our world, Earth.
 - a) Earth is made up of land and water. The large bodies of land are called continents. There are seven continents: North America, South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia, and Antarctica. These continents contain areas of land with different shapes called landforms. Examples of landforms include mountains, hills, valleys, and plains.
 - b) On each continent, there are bodies of fresh water, including rivers and lakes (the fresh water on Antarctica is frozen). These freshwater bodies provide much needed water for people, animals, and plants to use. There are larger bodies of salt-water called oceans; the four oceans are the Pacific, the Atlantic, the Indian, and the Arctic.
 - c) The Earth is like a very large spinning ball. It is the Earth's spin that is responsible for night and day periods. Since the sun is stationary, only one side of the Earth can be exposed to the light. However, because the Earth spins, each side of the Earth experiences a period of darkness and a period of sunlight exposure.
 - d) The Earth has two poles. The North Pole is the northernmost point on the Earth, and the South Pole is the southernmost point on the Earth.
- 2) Observe that the Earth's continents are divided into areas of land where people live together and follow the same rules; these areas are called countries. The United States, for example, is a large country that stretches across the continent of North America from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean. The United States is divided into smaller areas called states; there are 50 states in the country.

- 3) Realize that maps and globes are made to help us understand the characteristics of Earth.
 - a) Maps are flat pictures of the Earth; they may show only parts of the Earth or the entire Earth.
 - b) Globes are true models of the Earth, meaning they are exactly like the Earth, however, they are much smaller. Looking at a globe, one can see lines (including the equator) running across it. Using these lines one can determine the location of places on the Earth (note these lines do not actually appear on the Earth).

Suggested Activities

- 1) **Model of the Earth:** Make a paper mâché model of the Earth. Have students paint their Earth with the appropriate oceans and continents, and label their country, state and city.
- 2) **Interview Project:** Have students take home a piece of paper with an interview question on it. Have them ask a member of their family the question, and have that family member write down their answer. Then the child should draw a picture to illustrate the answer. Possible questions: What state did you grow up in? What landforms are in your home state? What is your favorite state to visit? Students who write well should be allowed to write down the interview answers.
- 3) **Song:**

This is our World
 Our home in space
 And Earth is the name
 We call this place

The Earth is like
 A spinning ball
 And it is home
 For one and all

There are continents, And oceans too
 Spreading East and West, North and South too!

Lands and Countries People too
 So diff - er - ent, yet so like you!

This is our world
 Our home in space
 And Earth is the name
 We call this place

The Earth is like
 A spinning ball
 And it is home
 For one and all!

Vocabulary

Freshwater — Water that does not contain salt

Hill — A raised area of land that is not as high as a mountain

Lake — A body of standing water located inland (it will appear as a blue spot on a map)

Model — A miniature representation of a large object

Mountain — A landform with steep sides and a high elevation

Plain — An area of land that is flat for many miles

Valley — A low area of land between mountains or hills

