Vocabulary: Seasons: Why do we have them?

Vocabulary

Gizmos

- <u>Direct sunlight</u> sunlight that strikes Earth's surface at close to a 90° angle.
- <u>Earth's axis</u> an imaginary line through the center of Earth that connects the North Pole to the South Pole.
 - Earth rotates about its axis once every 24 hours.
 - Earth's axis is tilted at an angle of 23.5 degrees.
- Equator an imaginary horizontal line around the middle of Earth.
- <u>Northern hemisphere</u> the half of Earth north of the equator.
- North Pole the northernmost point on Earth.
- Indirect sunlight sunlight that strikes Earth's surface at an acute angle (less than 90°).
- <u>Season</u> one of the major divisions of the year, usually based on regular weather changes.
 - In most places, the year is divided into four seasons: winter, spring, summer, and autumn (fall). Each season is three months long.
 - In tropical regions, average temperatures do not change much during the year. In these regions, it is common to refer to the "rainy season" and the "dry season."
- <u>Solstice</u> one of two days during the year on which the direct rays of the Sun reach the farthest from the equator.
- <u>Southern hemisphere</u> the half of Earth south of the equator.
- <u>South Pole</u> the southernmost point on Earth.
- <u>Summer solstice</u> the first day of summer.
 - The summer solstice is the longest day of the year. North and south of the tropics, it is also the day when the noon Sun is highest in the sky.
 - o In the northern hemisphere the summer solstice occurs on or near June 21.
 - o In the southern hemisphere the summer solstice occurs on or near December 21.
- <u>Winter solstice</u> the first day of winter.
 - The winter solstice is the shortest day of the year. It is also the day when the noon Sun is lowest in the sky.
 - o In the northern hemisphere the winter solstice occurs on or near December 21.
 - o In the southern hemisphere the winter solstice occurs on or near June 21.