

My Passport



# Viajamos a las Américas

“Reading is a *passport* to  
countless *adventures*.”

Mary Pope Osborne

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES** | This resource incorporates activities aligned to the following [Common Core Standards](#):

## 1. Reading Standards for Informational Text

- **Key Ideas and Details:** (1) Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text; (2) Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details: summarize the text; (3) Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.
- **Craft and Structure:** (4) Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade level topic or subject area.
- **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:** (7) Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g. in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.
- **Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity:** (10) Read and comprehend informational texts, including history / social studies, science, and technical texts, in and above grade level text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Before you learn about the different seasons in the Americas, use the links below to define the words and concepts that you'll need to understand for this activity:

Space Place Nasa. <https://spaceplace.nasa.gov/seasons/en/>

National Geographic: <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/season/>



Figure 1 Calendar.com

- **Season:**
- **Axis:**
- **Orbital plane:**
- **Tropic:**
- **Equator:**
- **Hemisphere:**

## Seasons of the Americas

**Instructions:** The next pages have readings and links to videos that discuss seasons and climate zones in the Americas. Remember to take notes in your notebook of what you learn as you read and watch.

National Geographic describes the seasons as a period of the year that is distinguished by special climate conditions. The four seasons (spring, summer, fall, and winter) follow one another regularly. Each season has its own light, temperature, and weather patterns that repeat yearly. Seasons occur because Earth is tilted on its axis relative to the orbital plane, the invisible, flat disc where most objects in the solar system orbit the sun. Earth's axis is an invisible line that runs through its center, from pole to pole. Earth rotates around its axis. But can you imagine the Americas with two seasons and an Equatorial tropic?

Before diving in, ask your parents these three questions and take notes on their responses and your ideas on these questions:

- a. What causes the changing of seasons?
- b. How is it possible to have two different seasons at the same time?
- c. What is the difference between the tropic and the rest of the Americas?

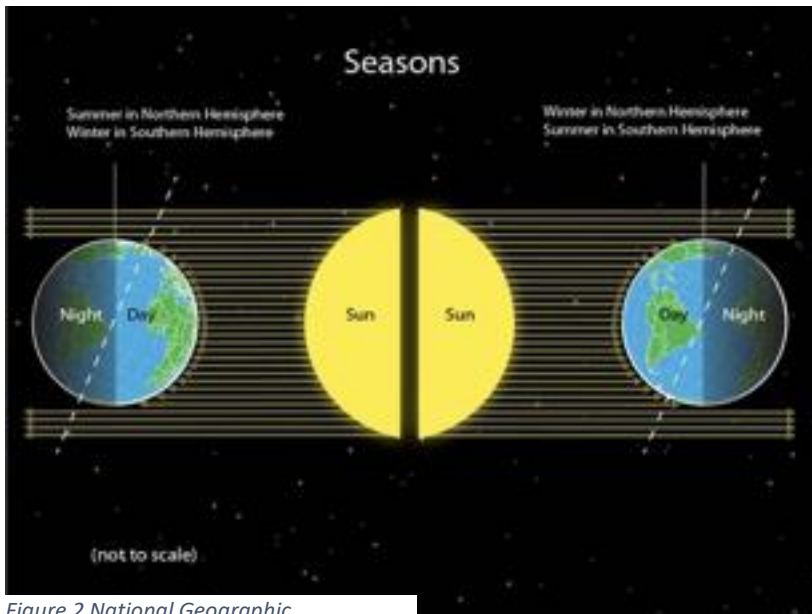


Figure 2 National Geographic

**After talking with your parents, watch the following videos that will explain the answers for these questions. Add to your notes as you watch the videos, and identify the main ideas and supporting details for each video.**

### **Earth's Tilt 1: The Reason for the Seasons**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pgg0LThW7QA>

### **Geography Seasons**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=taHTA7S\\_JGk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=taHTA7S_JGk)

As Earth orbits the sun, its tilted **axis** always points in the same direction. So, throughout the year, different parts of Earth get the sun's direct rays. Sometimes it is the North Pole tilting toward the sun (around June) and sometimes it is the South Pole tilting toward the sun (around December).

It is summer in June in the Northern **Hemisphere** because the sun's rays hit that part of Earth more directly than at any other time of the year. It is winter in December in the Northern **Hemisphere**, because that is when it is the South Pole's turn to be tilted toward the sun. <sup>1</sup>

So, the position and the rotation of Earth lets the Americas have two different **seasons**, but that is not all... We also have the Equatorial Tropics. National Geographic explains that the **tropics** are regions of the Earth that lie roughly in the middle of the globe. The **tropics** between the latitude lines of the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn. The **tropics** include the **Equator** and parts of North America, South America, Africa, Asia, and Australia. The **tropics** account for 36 percent of the Earth's landmass and are home to about a third of the world's people.

The tropics are warm all year, averaging 25 to 28 degrees Celsius (77 to 82 degrees Fahrenheit). This is because the **tropics** get more exposure to the sun. Because of all that sun, the tropics don't experience the kind of **seasons** the rest of the Earth does. The tropical **seasons** are broken up into just two: the wet season and the dry season.

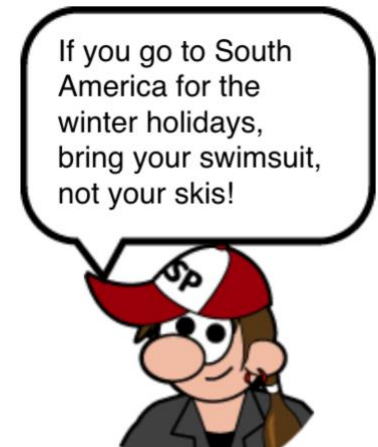


Figure 3 Nasa. Space Place

<sup>1</sup> <https://spaceplace.nasa.gov/seasons/en/>

Figure 4 Peekaboo Kidz



The amount of rain can vary greatly from one area of the **tropics** to another. Some areas, like parts of the Amazon in South America, get almost 3 meters (9 feet) of rain per year! Other areas in the **tropics** have a much drier climate. The Sahara Desert in Northern Africa only gets 2-10 centimeters (.8- 3.9 inches) of rain per year, which is a lot less!

**Do you still have questions about the tropics?** Let's watch the following video to learn more about them. **Remember to take notes as you watch the video and identify the main idea and evidence to support it!**

**Climate Zones of the Earth - The Dr. Binocs Show | Best Learning Videos For kids | Dr Binocs**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5tC8OOxOFEk>

Now that you have learned about the climate zones, color code the Americas map on the next page. Each color that you use must show the difference between seasons in the north, south and central part of the continent **during June to August.**

For example:

- Orange for the countries with a tropical weather season.
- Blue for the countries in winter and fall seasons.
- Green for the countries with summer and spring.

**Also, label the following on the map:**

- Oceans: the Atlantic and Pacific
- The Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico
- Use a dotted line to label the equator

**Wrap-up:** Using the map you created, answer these final questions to reflect on what you learned in this activity.

How do the tropical countries compare to the other countries in the continent?

In which part of the Americas do you think it would be easier to farm during these months? Explain why. What kinds of food would you expect to find in tropical countries?

What are two new vocab terms that you learned today?



Color Code System for Seasons in June - August	
Countries that experience <b>fall or winter</b>	[ ]
Countries that experience <b>spring or summer</b>	[ ]
Countries with a <b>tropical climate</b>	[ ]

Figure 5 Pinterest, Mapamundosfree