Our Earth

rocky	rotation	an imaginary	toward	resulting
temperatures	variation	solar system	matter	containing
ecliptic	our home	squashed	roughly	atmosphere

Earth, ..., is the third planet from the sun. It's the only planet known to have an atmosphere .....free oxygen, oceans of water on its surface and, of course, life. Earth is the fifth largest of the planets in the..... It's smaller than the four gas giants — Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune — but larger than the three other .....planets, Mercury, Mars and Venus.

Earth has a diameter of roughly 13,000 km and is round because gravity pulls .....into a ball. But, it's not perfectly round. Earth is really an "oblate spheroid," because its spin causes it to be .....at its poles and swollen at the equator.

Water covers .....71 percent of Earth's surface, and most of that is in the oceans. About a fifth of Earth's .....consists of oxygen, produced by plants. While scientists have been studying our planet for centuries, much has been learned in recent decades by studying pictures of Earth from space.

While Earth orbits the sun, the planet is simultaneously spinning on .....line called an axis that runs from the North Pole to the South Pole. It takes Earth 23.934 hours to complete a .....on its axis and 365.26 days to complete an orbit around the sun.

Earth's axis of rotation is tilted in relation to the .....plane, an imaginary surface through the planet's orbit around the sun. This means the Northern and Southern hemispheres will sometimes point .....or away from the sun depending on the time of year, and this changes the amount of light the hemispheres receive, ...in the seasons.

Earth's orbit is not a perfect circle, but rather an .....ellipse, similar to the orbits of all the other planets. Our planet is a bit closer to the sun in early January and farther away in July, although this .....has a much smaller effect than the heating and cooling caused by the tilt of Earth's axis. Earth happens to lie within the so-called "Goldilocks zone" around the sun, where .....are just right to maintain liquid water on our planet's surface.