Through Lands and Oceans

Our planet has the shape of a sphere, although our ancestors believed it was flat for many hundreds of years. Earth orbits around the Sun and rotates around its own axis, called the Earth's axis. It is a line that passes through its center and connects two points on its surface - the North Pole and the South Pole. Due to the rotation of the Earth, it becomes flattened at the poles. There are depressions and elevations on its surface, but these distortions are small compared to the size of the Earth, so it is considered a sphere. The spherical model of the Earth is a globe. Oceans prevail on our planet, between which continents stretch.

On the surface of the globe, two types of intersecting lines are placed. These are meridians and parallels.

**Meridians** are lines running from north to south and connecting the North Pole with the South Pole. All meridians are of the same length.

**Parallels** are lines intersecting meridians at right angles. They are of different lengths and run from east to west. The longest parallel is the equator, which runs halfway between the poles. As you move away from the equator, the length of the parallels decreases. In addition to the equator, four more parallels have their names. These are the Tropic of Cancer, the Tropic of Capricorn, the Arctic Circle, and the Antarctic Circle.

Meridians and parallels form a geographic grid on the globe, which on a map is called a cartographic grid.