

Flat Earth? Round Earth?

Theresa Martin

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Obvious facts are sometimes not so obvious when we have to prove them. That's what the narrator of this story finds out when his classmate refuses to believe that the earth is round.

Mrs. Markum, an elementary school teacher, hands out clay spheres and asks her class to decorate them with continents and oceans. One boy, Stan, crushes his sphere flat, insisting that the earth is shaped like a pancake. When he winds up in the principal's office, our narrator sets out to convince Stan - but mostly himself - that the earth is round. The boy's arguments range from the length of shadows at different locations to ships "sinking" on the horizon, but Stan rebuts each point and won't succumb to "common knowledge."

This finely crafted story brings to life what your mother always told you: "You were given a brain for a reason." *Flat Earth, Round Earth?* teaches children to say "wait a sec" when the square block doesn't fit in the round hole. It fosters critical thinking both in and out of science. The clear language and sharp, straightforward logic make this book an enjoyable, invigorating read. Parents can teach their kids the value of questioning received wisdom and they'll both enjoy the challenge of trying to prove a not-so-obvious fact that everybody takes for granted.



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Thelma Cobb:

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