The Cartographer’s Dilemma
Why does every map projection have some distortion?

For the complete videos with media resources, visit:
http://education.nationalgeographic.com/media/cartographers-dilemma/

Cartographers through the ages have developed maps to be used for different purposes. In the 16\textsuperscript{th} century, Mercator developed a world map mainly used for ocean navigation, and this projection is still used to this day for a number of purposes. The land masses, however, are distorted in shape and size. Cartographers have wrestled for centuries with how to represent Earth’s spherical surface as a flat map and have come up with a wide variety of projections. No projection represents Earth precisely.