# CHAPTER 1

# CALCULATING EXPRESSIONS

Imagine the Earth as a very large ball. If we were to circle the equator with a string 10 meters longer than the circumference of the Earth at the equator, how much space would there be between the Earth and the string? Could a mouse pass through this space? The radius of the Earth is 6,378,137 m, but it is much easier to solve this problem by using a letter to represent the radius of the Earth.

In this chapter we will learn to calculate expressions involving letters. Let's see if we can solve the problem above in the course of the chapter.