

Nova's Classification Challenge: Sorting the Natural World

Learning objective: To use and create classification keys to group, identify, and name a variety of living things in the local and wider environment.

Nova the Owl needs your help to sort some local wildlife! Use the questions below to design a classification key. Think about the physical features of the animals, such as what they eat, where they live, or what body parts they have. Use the word bank to help you describe the animals you choose to classify.

Word bank: vertebrate · invertebrate · mammal · amphibian · reptile · habitat · characteristic · nocturnal · classification · feature

1. Choose four different animals to classify. List their names here and identify one key feature for each one. (4 marks)

2. Write your first 'Yes or No' question to split your group of four animals into two smaller groups. Why did you choose this feature? (3 marks)

3. Now, create a second question to split your first group of two animals so that each animal is identified individually. (3 marks)

4. Finally, create a third question to split your second group of two animals so that each animal is identified individually. (3 marks)

5. If you were asked to classify a brand new animal that nobody has seen before, which three features would you look at first to decide where it belongs? (2 marks)

Extension challenge: Can you draw your finished classification key as a flow diagram? Use boxes for the questions and arrows to show the path towards the final animal name!