

Nova's Classification Challenge: The Kingdom of Life

Learning objective: To classify living things into broad groups according to observable characteristics and based on similarities and differences, including microorganisms, plants, and animals.

Nova the Owl has been observing the local woodland. She has found several living organisms but needs your help to classify them! Look at the 'Questions' section below. For each organism, decide which biological group it belongs to. Use the Word Bank to ensure you are using the correct scientific classification terms. For the second part of each question, write one specific characteristic that helped you place it in that group.

Word bank: Vertebrate · Invertebrate · Mammal · Amphibian · Reptile · Bird · Fish · Plant · Microorganism · Fungi

1. 1. A squirrel is seen jumping between oak trees. Which group does it belong to, and what is one characteristic of this group? (2 marks)

2. 2. You find a slimy, moss-like green patch on a damp log under a microscope. Which group is this likely to be, and why? (2 marks)

3. 3. A dragonfly with wings and six legs is resting on a reed. Which group does it belong to, and what is one characteristic of this group? (2 marks)

4. 4. A fern is growing in the shade of the forest floor. Which group does it belong to, and what is one characteristic of this group? (2 marks)

5. 5. A newt is spotted swimming in a shallow pond. Which group does it belong to, and what is one characteristic of this group? (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a 'Branching Diagram' (a classification key). Start with 'Living Things' at the top, then split it into three branches: 'Plants', 'Animals', and 'Microorganisms'. Add one example creature or organism under each branch.



Extension challenge: Imagine you have discovered a brand-new species! Write a short paragraph describing its features. Would it be a vertebrate or invertebrate? How would you classify it based on what you have learned today?