Classifying Living Things: The Nature Journal

Learning objective: To describe how living things are classified into broad groups according to observable characteristics and based on similarities and differences.

Use this writing frame to document your findings on local wildlife. Think like Nova the owl and use scientific observation to categorise the species you see in your garden or local park.

As I walked through the woodland, I observed a variety of living organisms, each possessing unique features that help them survive in their natural habitat.

Word bank: micro-organisms · vertebrates · invertebrates · characteristics · classification · differentiate · specifically · furthermore · in contrast · taxonomical

1. Introduction: Identify the specific living thing you are observing today. Start by writing: 'The organism I have chosen to study is...' and describe its primary habitat. (2 marks)

2. Physical Features: Describe the observable characteristics of your chosen living thing. Use the starter: 'This creature can be classified as a [vertebrate/invertebrate] because...' and explain its physical traits. (3 marks)

3. Comparison: How is this organism different from others in its group? Start with: 'In contrast to other members of its species, this organism possesses...' and detail one unique feature. (2 marks)

4. Life Cycle: Does this organism undergo metamorphosis or a specific life cycle? Use the starter: 'During its life cycle, this organism will...' to explain the stages of its development. (3 marks)

5. Scientific Conclusion: Why is it important to classify living things? Complete the sentence: 'Classifying living things is essential for scientists because it allows them to...' and link this to the study of biodiversity. (2 marks)

Extension challenge: Research a lesser-known organism, such as a tardigrade or a specific species of fungi. Write a short paragraph explaining why it is difficult to classify and which kingdom it belongs to.