Classification Key Creator: The Garden Explorer

Learning objective: To create a branching classification key to identify living things based on specific observable characteristics.

Join Bea the honeybee on an adventure in the garden! Use this template to design a classification key. First, choose four different living things (e.g., a ladybird, a dandelion, an earthworm, and a woodlouse). Then, write 'Yes' or 'No' questions that help someone identify each creature or plant step-by-step.

Word bank: vertebrate · invertebrate · flowering · non-flowering · characteristics · branching · classification · organism · habitat

1. Step 1: Choose four living things and list them here. Write one 'Yes' or 'No' question that splits your group into two smaller groups. (2 marks)

2. Step 2: Take your first group of two or more items and write a new question to separate them. Explain why you chose this specific characteristic. (3 marks)

3. Step 3: Take your final remaining group and write a final question that distinguishes the last two living things. (2 marks)

4. Step 4: Sketch your branching diagram below. Use lines to show how your questions lead to the final identification of each living thing. (4 marks)

5. Step 5: Why is it important for scientists to use classification keys when they find a new or unknown living thing? (2 marks)

Extension challenge: Challenge: Add a fifth living thing to your key. Do you need to add an extra branch to your diagram, or can you fit it into an existing question?