



Classifying Animals

Grade Level

Grade 4

Objective

This activity is designed to help your at-home student(s) see themselves as scientists and begin to think critically about problem-solving. The goal is to share concepts through discovery and to encourage using scientific thought processes. As with all lessons provided, feel free to adapt them to your students' abilities. Certain scientific vocabulary may or may not be appropriate for your students' level of understanding. Take these ideas, make them your own, and your child will have a greater chance at success.

Procedures

1. Have your student collect an assortment of small household objects (i.e. toys, utensils, office supplies, etc.) – 10-20 different pieces will be needed. There should be items of different shapes, sizes, colors, etc. that can be grouped together in different ways. They should not include identical pieces.
2. Ask your student to divide their items into two even groups with 5-10 items per group.
 - a. Group 1 will represent living animal species that have just been discovered. Suggestions for items that can be in Group 1 include: shoe, winter hat, hoodie, glove, crayon, marker, colored pencil, teaspoon, dinner fork, cup.
 - b. Group 2 will represent new animal fossils that have just been discovered. Suggestions for items that can be in group 2 include: sock, t-shirt, mitten, ball cap, paintbrush, pen, pencil, tablespoon, salad fork, bowl.
3. Provide your student with the attached worksheet and ask them to complete it for this activity.
4. When your student has completed the worksheet, review their findings with them. As part of the conversation, make sure they explain the similarities and differences they see between the items they classify.

Standards

Ohio Academic Content Standards
Grade 4 Life Science Topic: Earth's Living History Fossils can be compared to one another and to present-day organisms according to their similarities and differences.



Classifying Animals Worksheet

On a recent scientific expedition, new types of animals were found and it is your job to classify them. (Classify means to group or sort based on shared characteristics.) Follow steps 1 -3 to classify your new animals.

1. List the 5-10 items in Group 1 (new living species of animals just discovered):

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2. Are any of the items in Group 1 similar to each other? If so, how are they similar? Consider their shape, what they're made of, how they're used, etc.

3. In the list above, place a STAR next to the two items in Group 1 that are the most similar. Record your reasoning in the space provided below.

In addition to the new animals that were found, new fossils were also found in the same area. It is now your job to classify the fossils. Follow steps 4-5 to classify your new fossils.

4. List the 5-10 items in Group 2 (new animal fossils just discovered):

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5. Are any of the items in Group 2 similar to each other? If so, how are they similar? Consider their shape, what they're made of, how they're used, etc.

Comparing the similarities and differences of fossils to living organisms show us that modern day animals have extinct ancestors. Follow steps 6-8 to see if any of these new fossils could have been ancestors to your newly found animals.

6. Are any of the items in Group 2 similar to the items in Group 1? If so, how are they similar? Consider their shape, what they're made of, how they're used, etc.

7. Choose one item from Group 1 and one item from Group 2 that are the most similar. CIRCLE them in the lists above. Record your reasoning in the space provided below.

8. Based on your findings from Group 2, are the items you placed a STAR next to in Group 1 still the most similar, or would you place stars next to different items? Record your reasoning in the space provided below.
