

A key to animals



Background knowledge

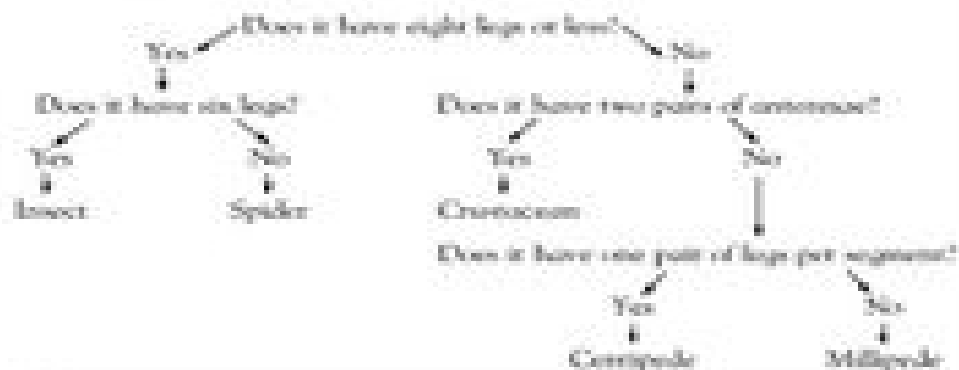
There are many different animals that make up the animal kingdom. Scientists often use keys to help identify an unknown animal. Being able to use keys is an important skill. One type of key is called a dichotomous key. This is a branching key in which there are two choices in each branch. The first choice in the key will identify what the scientist is trying to determine. A dichotomous key can be used to identify animals.

Science activity

Arthropods are small animals with jointed feet and other appendages to their body. The word arthropod actually means "jointed feet."



Use the dichotomous key to identify the arthropods shown above.



Science investigation

⚠ Take extra care - ask an adult to supervise you.

Class! Use your dichotomous key to identify various animals: flies, ticks, spiders, soap scum, silverfish, small lizards, etc. Use the key on one your friends and/or members of your family. How well does it work? Did you have to make any changes? Explain.