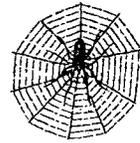




# The Diversity of Living Things Classification



Information Card #3

## THE SCIENTIFIC CLASSIFICATION OF PLANTS AND ANIMALS

### KINGDOM

Today, scientists classify plants and animals by beginning with the largest grouping and then working downward to smaller groups. The largest group is called a kingdom. Every living thing fits into one of five kingdoms. The five kingdoms are protists, monerans, fungi, plants, and animals.

### PHYLUM

The five kingdoms are divided into large groups called phyla. Animals have been divided into twenty-five phyla. The animals in one phylum may live in different parts of the world and be of different sizes, shapes and colours. The way they live and move may be different but they are similar in basic structure. For example, the elephant, the fish and the polar bear may be in the same phylum Chordata because they all have a backbone.

### CLASS

A phylum is broken down into the next smaller divisions called classes. Class members have more characteristics in common than the members of a phylum. For example, the phylum Chordata, animals with backbones, is broken down into classes of reptiles, birds, fish, mammals and amphibians. All the animals in a class share the same characteristics but are separated by the others by the way they live. For example, birds and amphibians are both members of the class Chordata but amphibians spend most of their time in water while most birds don't.

### ORDER

The next lower classification after class is order. An order consists of groups that are more alike than those in a class. In the class Mammalia, for instance, all the animals produce milk for their young. Dogs and cats are mammals, but they also eat meat and so they are grouped together in the order Carnivora.

### FAMILY

A family is made up of groups that are even more alike than those in the order. For example, wolves and tigers are both of the order Carnivora, but wolves are in the family Canidae. All members of the Canidae family have long snouts and bushy tails.

### GENUS

Genus is made up of groups that are very similar, but the groups cannot breed together. Coyotes and wolves are both of the genus Canis but do not usually breed with one another.

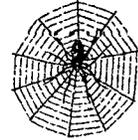
### SPECIES

Species is the smallest group. Members of species have many common characteristics, but they differ from all other forms of life in one or more ways. A species is not an individual animal, it is a population of animals. They can breed with one another and the young grow up to look like the parents.



# The Diversity of Living Things

## Classification



### The Scientific Classification of Plants and Animals

Read information Card #3 and then fill in the blanks beside each group of organisms. Could each group most accurately be described as members of the same **kingdom**, **phylum**, **class**, **order**, **family**, **genus**, or **species**. Refer to the information card for clues. Give reasons for each choice. Read and think carefully!

1. insects, birds, mammals \_\_\_\_\_

Reason: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. wolf, cat, lion \_\_\_\_\_

Reason: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. crayfish, centipede, insect \_\_\_\_\_

Reason: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. spaniel, poodle, collie \_\_\_\_\_

Reason: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. grey wolf, timber wolf, coyote \_\_\_\_\_

Reason: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_