

Classify This!

Summary

The teacher will demonstrate how to make a classification tree and key with a few items so the students will practice the rules used in classification.

Time Frame

1 class periods of 30 minutes each

Group Size

Individual

Materials

five things from the classroom, i.e., scissors, ruler, marker, piece of paper, pencil
overhead projector or front board
tape

Instructional Procedures

Collect 5 things that can be taped to the board. Move them around as you construct the Classification Tree and Key on the board or on the overhead projector as you go.

Explain that keys are nice because they give the same information as a tree, but don't take as much room

Once you have the tree and key, bring out a new item and use the key or tree to classify it. At the end of the key, you will probably not have a good match, so brainstorm with the students how you could improve the tree and key to include the new item. This is what happens when scientists discover new organisms or other things that do not fit into existing keys or field guides. This will show that as new organisms are found the current classification trees and keys may need to be adjusted or added to. For example last summer 2 new types of crickets were found and an entire new order had to be made.

Show a classification in an nature field guide

Assessment Plan

Scoring guide

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Spot check student work to see that they have been accurate in their key and tree. You could have the students add one more item of their own choosing to the tree and key to see if they understand the process.

Bibliography

Lesson Design by Jordan School District Teachers and Staff.

Authors

[Utah LessonPlans](#)