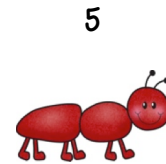
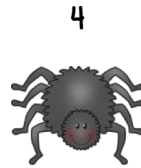
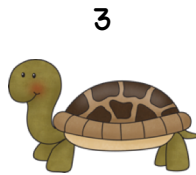
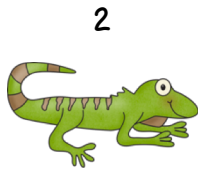


How to Make a Dichotomous Key



DIRECTIONS

- Carefully observe the traits of each animal.
- Make a list of the traits you can use to sort the animals into groups.
- For the animals above your list might look like this.

Number of legs

Body covering (scales or hair)

Exoskeleton

Backbone

Classification (reptile, mammal, etc.)

Shell

Tail

Antenna

Wings

- Pick one of the traits from the list to divide the animals into two groups.
- For example, you could start with body covering.

Step 1 a. Scales go to 2
 b. No scales

- Now look at all the animals with scales and choose another trait from the list to further separate them. Your next choice might be legs. In this step the first animal is named.

Step 2 a. Legs go to 3
 b. No legs snake

- Continue these steps until all animals from the first group (scales) have been named.
- Repeat these steps with the second group of animals until each animal is identified.
- Here's what a completed key might look like.

Step 1 a. Scales go to 2
 b. No scales go to 4

Step 2 a. Legs go to 3
 b. No legs snake

Step 3 a. Shell tortoise
 b. No shell lizard

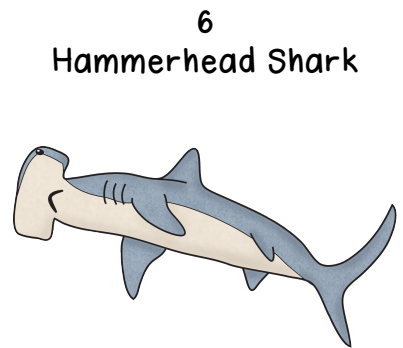
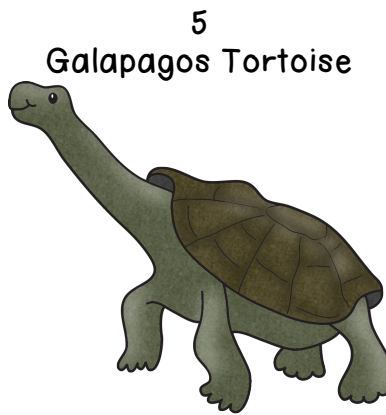
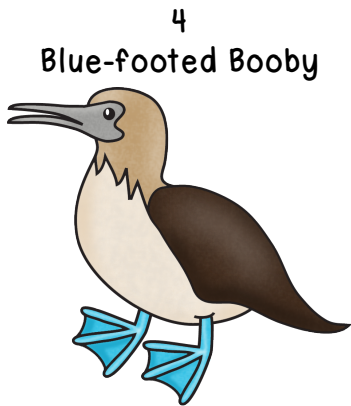
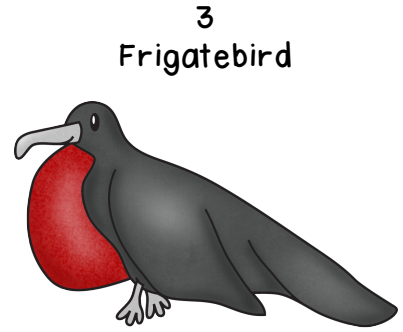
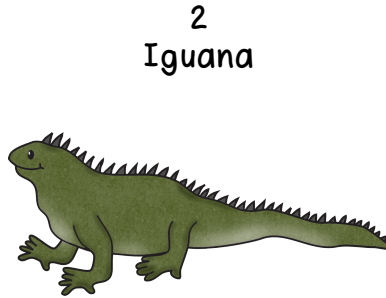
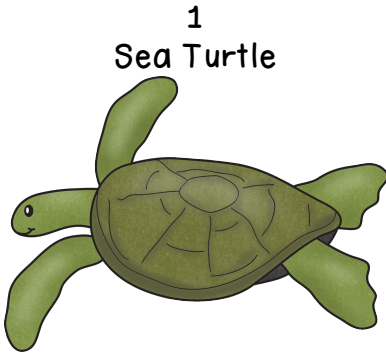
Step 4 a. Backbone bat
 b. No backbone go to 5

Step 5 a. 8 legs spider
 b. 6 legs ant

- Since there are many traits to use to group these animals, there is more than one way to make a key. This means that there is more than one correct answer!

Make Your Own Dichotomous Key

Create a dichotomous key for the animals pictured below.



Step 1 a. _____

b. _____

Step 2 a. _____

b. _____

Step 3 a. _____

b. _____

Step 4 a. _____

b. _____

Step 5 a. _____

b. _____

Step 6 a. _____

b. _____