

Name _____

Period _____

Sorting Chart

Describe the animals found.

1. _____	9. _____
2. _____	10. _____
3. _____	11. _____
4. _____	12. _____
5. _____	13. _____
6. _____	14. _____
7. _____	15. _____
8. _____	16. _____

Question: Does the animal have a backbone?

YES
(list animal numbers below)

Box #1

NO
(list animal numbers below)

Box #2

Question:

YES

NO

Box #3

Box #4

Question:

YES

NO

Box #5

Box #6

WILDCARD CLASSIFICATION

The NY DEC (Department of Environmental Conservation) has just hired you to conduct a wildlife survey! Your team has been assigned to explore and categorize the animal life found across the state. You will have to develop a sorting chart, or “key” to help organize the animals into categories.

As a scientist, you are also interested in what is going on with the other teams conducting surveys. One member of your team will be appointed to the Collaboration Commission, and will be traveling to a neighboring group to see how other teams’ are conducting their investigations, and to share information from their own survey. They will then be reporting back to share any information with their team.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Describe/name the animals at your table, and record this in the spaces provided in the large box at the top of the sorting chart. Each animal should have a unique description. You will be using these numbers when you record information in the other boxes.
2. Under the large box at the top of the sorting chart there is a question “Does the animal have a backbone?” Separate the animals into either Box #1 or Box #2 depending on the answer to this question.
3. Record the animal’s number in the appropriate box.
4. Now focus on the animals placed in Box #1. Create a question that would separate them into Box #3 or Box #4, and record the question on the sorting chart.
5. Sort the animals into Boxes 3 and 4, and record the numbers in the appropriate box.
6. Repeat steps 4 & 5 for the animals in Box #2.

QUESTIONS

1. What is it called when scientists group organisms based on their similarities?
2. Which box contains animals that have the most in common, Box #2 or Box #3?
3. Choose a Box from the bottom row of your sorting chart (#3-#6) and look at the animals in it. What question could you ask to divide the animals in this box even further?
4. When organizing animals, are there questions you could ask that have more than a yes or no answer? Give an example.
5. How were the other teams’ sorting charts different from yours? How were they similar?
6. After months of research, you discover a new species of animal in NY. Describe it and tell which category it belongs in according to your chart.