Subject Specific Vocabulary

Sticky Knowledge

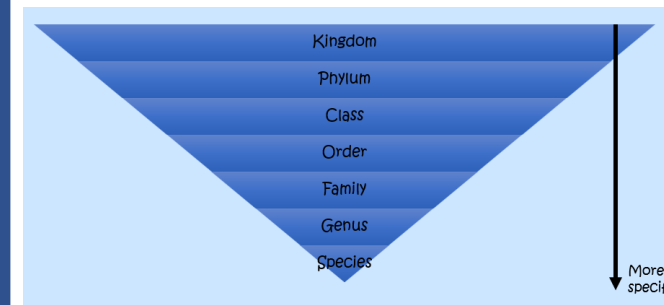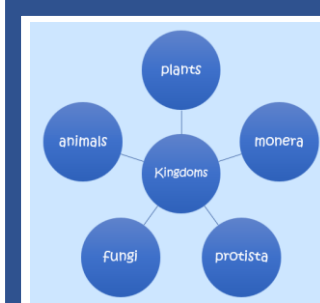| Key Vocabulary	Definition
species	A group of animals that can reproduce to produce fertile offspring.
microorganism	An organism that can only be seen using a microscope, e.g. bacteria, mould and yeast.
taxonomist	A scientist who classifies different living things into categories
classification key	A classification key is a series of questions about the characteristics of living things. A key is used to identify a living thing or decide which group it belongs to by answering 'yes' or 'no' questions.
characteristics	Special qualities or appearances that make an individual or group of things different to others

Scientists, called *Taxonomists*, sort and group living things according to their similarities and differences.

In 1735, Swedish Scientist Carl Linnaeus first published a system for classifying all living things. An adapted version of this system is still used today: The Linnaeus System.
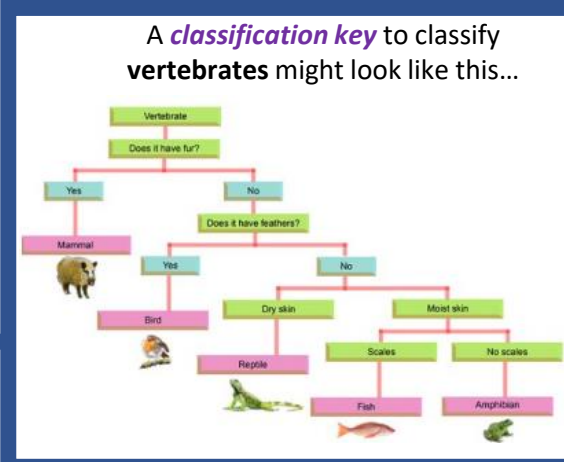

Living things can be classified by these seven levels. The number of living things in each level gets smaller until the one animal is left in its *species* level.

Each group allows scientists to observe and understand the *characteristics* of living things more clearly. They group similar things together then split the groups again and again based on their differences

There are five **kingdoms** of life.

Plants and animals are two main groups, but there are other livings things that do not fit into these groups e.g. *microorganisms*, yeast and mushrooms.
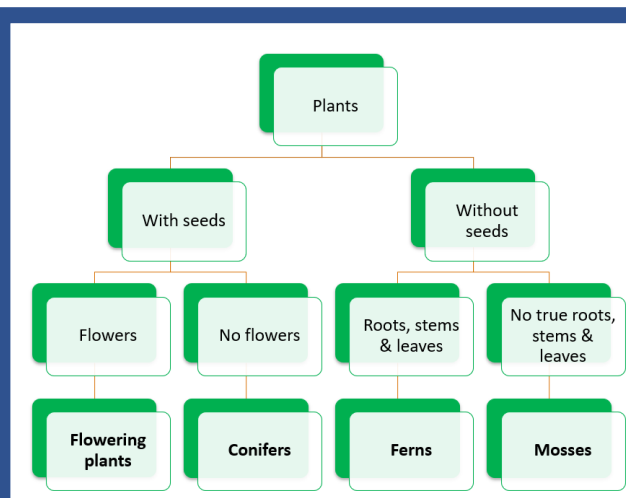
A *classification key* to classify **vertebrates** might look like this...

The **kingdom** of animals can be divided into two main groups: those that have backbones (**vertebrates**) and those that do not (**invertebrates**).

Vertebrates can be divided into five small groups: fish; amphibians; reptiles; birds; and mammals. Each group has common *characteristics*.

Invertebrates can be divided into a number of groups, including insects, spiders, snails and worms.

The kingdom of plants can be divided broadly into two main groups: **flowering plants**; and **non-flowering plants**.

However, they can be further divided according to more specific *characteristics*.

Plants can make their own food whereas animals cannot.