



# Animal Categories

**\*LESSON\***

## LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT OUTCOME

Participants will make connections between items by listing and categorizing them in different ways.

## MATERIALS

Poster paper, markers, Categorizations worksheet, writing utensils

## AGE ADJUSTMENTS

For an older audience, facilitators can instruct participants to analyze and guess how other pairs decided to categorize their animals.

## Lesson Plan

### Introducing the Lesson

- Explain that this lesson will explore the many ways to categorize information, using animals as an example.
- Ask participants to silently and independently brainstorm a list of animals and write them on a piece of paper.
- Then, go around and have each participant share one animal they thought of.
  - Record responses on the poster paper using the markers.
  - If the animal a participant was going to say is already on the list, have them pick a different animal.
  - Continue until 20-30 animals are on the list.

### Experiencing the Lesson

- Ask participants to distinguish between objective information and subjective information.
  - **Objective:** factual, not influenced by personal feelings or opinions.
  - **Subjective:** based on or influenced by personal feelings, tastes, or opinions.
- Ask participants to distinguish between ranking information and grouping information.
  - **Ranking:** listing items in an order where one comes after another.
  - **Grouping:** arranging items together based on shared or similar characteristics.
- Brainstorm different ways to categorize the animals on the list by objective ranking, subjective ranking, objective grouping, and subjective grouping
  - See **Resources** for examples.
- Have each participant find a partner and give each pair a Categorizations worksheet and a writing utensil.



What if we struggle with categorizing?

"Use the examples in the Resources section. Give participants one of the examples and ask them to share what they think it means."



- Have each pair pick two different ways to categorize the animals on the list, and categorize them accordingly on their worksheet.

### Closing the Lesson

- Have each pair find another pair to get together with.
- In these new groups of four, have each pair share which methods of categorization they chose and how they categorized the animals on the list.
- End by having each group of four discuss what was easy or hard about the different methods of categorization they chose.

### After the Lesson

- Encourage participants to think about how they categorize information in their everyday life:
  - When do they consider objective factors?
  - When do they consider subjective factors?
  - When do they rank information?
  - When do they group information?



When asking participants to choose two ways to categorize the animals, consider challenging them to pick one objective way and one subjective way, or one ranking and one grouping.

## Further Exploration



- Have participants research the scientific classification of animals (kingdom, phylum, class, order, family, genus, and species).
- Have participants work together to research each animal on the list and group them all by a certain classification (such as phylum or class).

## Get Creative

- Have the group pick one way to categorize the animals on the list.
- Give the group a poster paper and markers.
- Have participants draw the animals on the poster paper according to the ranking or grouping that they chose.

## Online

- To facilitate this lesson online, use a shared document to record the list of animals and ways to categorize them.
- Put pairs in breakout rooms to work on their worksheets (either on a shared document with a page for each pair or on paper that one participant in the pair can write on).
- Combine breakout rooms for groups of four to share.

## Resources

### Objective ranking:

- Weight (heaviest to lightest)
- Height
- Subjective ranking:
  - Cutest
  - Biggest eyes
- Objective grouping:
  - Classes (mammals, amphibians, reptiles, etc.)
  - Continents they are native to
- Subjective grouping:
  - Whether or not they would make a good pet
  - Time period they make you think of (prehistoric, present day, future, etc.)



# Categorizations

**This categorization is:** *(circle one)*  
objective or subjective                      ranking or grouping

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objective or subjective                      ranking or grouping

*Worksheet for: Animal Categories*