

Dichotomous Key Examples

Examples of a dichotomous key in written and graphical form for a specific list of items are given below.

Activity

Create a dichotomous key using the following list of specimens: pine tree, clam, rock, robin, tin can, deer, oak tree, mouse, dandelion, Paramecium, bicycle, ant

Here's an example in written form using these items:

1. a. Organism is living.....go to 4.
1. b. Organism is nonliving.....go to 2.

2. a. Object is metallic.....go to 3.
2. b. Object is nonmetallic.....ROCK.

3. a. Object has wheels.....BICYCLE.
3. b. Object does not have wheels.....TIN CAN.

4. a. Organism is microscopic.....PARAMECIUM.
4. b. Organism is macroscopic.....go to 5.

5. a. Organism is a plant.....go to 6.
5. b. Organism is an animal.....go to 8.

6. a. Plant has a woody stem.....go to 7.
6. b. Plant has a herbaceous stem.....DANDELION.

7. a. Tree has needle like leaves.....PINE TREE.
7. b. Tree has broad leaves.....OAK TREE.

8. a. Organism lives on land.....go to 9.
8. b. Organism lives in water.....CLAM.

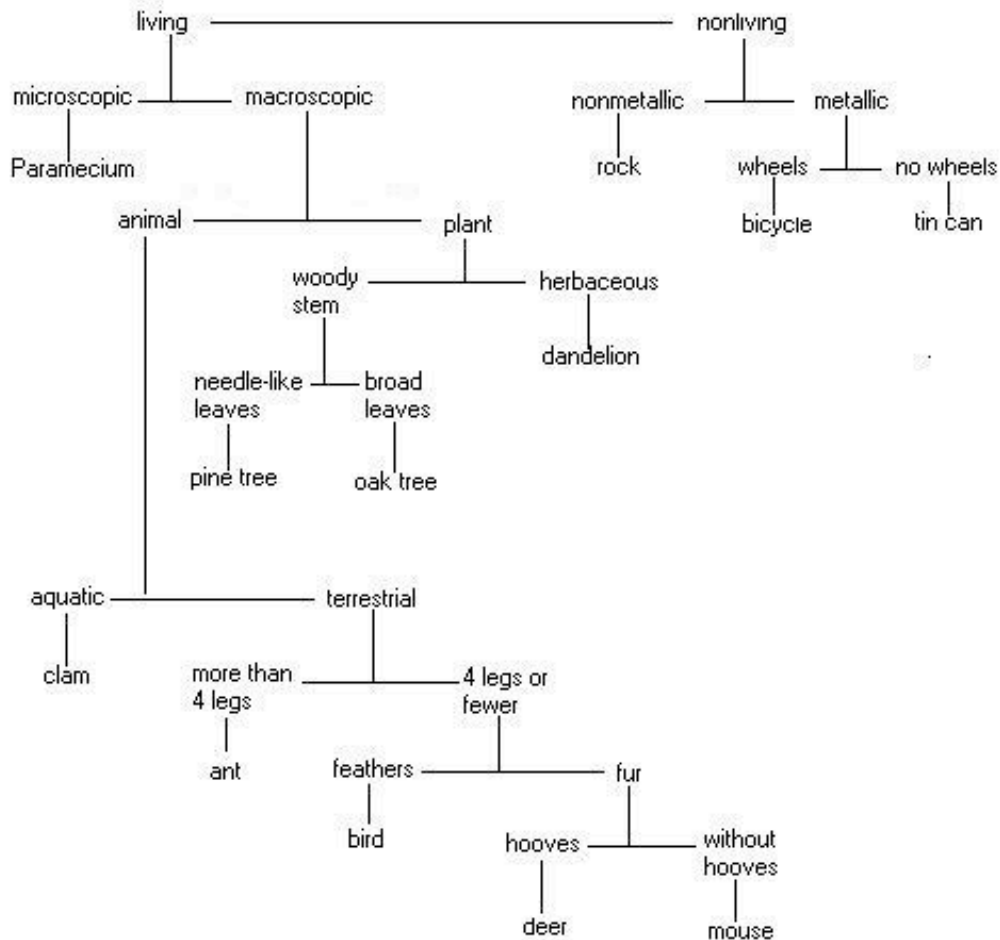
9. a. Organism has 4 legs or fewer.....go to 10.
9. b. Organism has more than 4 legs.....ANT.

- 10 a. Organism has fur.....go to 11.
- 10 b. Organism has feathers.....ROBIN.

- 11 a. Organism has hooves.....DEER.
- 11 b. Organism has no hooves.....MOUSE.

What is Life? – Scavenger Hunt

Here's an example using the same items in graphical form:



You can find an online dichotomous key to some trees of the Pacific Northwest at <http://oregonstate.edu/trees/>.