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Classification: Organizing and Describing Diversity

Fun with Classification: That's Classified!

Key Question

How can we **practice** the classification of organisms?

Objectives

- Students will **classify** organisms into groups based on adaptations and traits
- Students will **compare, contrast, and discuss** the traits of different organisms

Grade: 2-5 Time: 15-45 minutes Location: Classroom

Materials

- ☐ EOL Species Cards (http://education.eol.org/cards/)
- ☐ Online References (optional)

Directions

This activity is inspired by the classic game, "Go Fish." Students will sit in circles of 3-4 with a deck* of EOL Species Cards. One student will deal 5 cards to each player. The object of this game is to get sets of THREE organisms that fit in a group. The groups will be as follows:

- Mammals
- Birds
- Reptiles
- Amphibians
- Fishes
- Invertebrates
- Plants
- Fungi + Lichen

*NOTE: In the standard "Biodiversity" deck there are three of each taxon generally. There are six total invertebrates: 4 arthropods, 1 worm, and 1 gastropod (mollusk). Students can make 2 sets of invertebrates.

If you use another card deck, be sure the deck has enough cards to make sets of each of these groups. If not, you can either remove certain groups (for example, if there are only two fungi in the deck) or create sets of cards that have a certain number of sets in it.

In his or her first hand, each student will organize cards by grouping and put down any sets of three (three birds, three plants, etc). Then, one student will start the game by asking another student for any cards from a particular group.

For example, Player 1 might ask Player 2, “Do you have any amphibians?”

- If Player 2 has any amphibians, she must give them all to Player 1, and Player 1 can ask another person for cards.
- If Player 2 does not, she will say, “That’s classified!” and Player 1 will draw a card from the pile.
    - If Player 1 does draws an amphibian, he goes again.
    - If Player 1 does not draw an amphibian, he keeps the card and moves to the next person.

The game ends when a player runs out of cards OR there are no more cards in the pile, depending on time and teacher’s goals.

If keeping score: Each set of cards is worth 1 point. The winner has the most sets of organisms, even if some are repeated (i.e. 2 sets of invertebrates or arthropods).

Next Generation Science Standards

2-PS1-1. Plan and conduct an investigation to describe and classify different kinds of materials by their observable properties.
2-LS4-1. Make observations of plants and animals to compare the diversity of life in different habitats.
3-LS3-1. Analyze and interpret data to provide evidence that plants and animals have traits inherited from parents and that variation of these traits exists in a group of similar organisms.
4-LS1-1. Construct an argument that plants and animals have internal and external structures that function to support survival, growth, behavior, and reproduction.

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