

Dichotomous Key

Field Biology

Using the bubble diagram that you and your partner have created, each of you will now create your own dichotomous plant key. A dichotomous key uses a series of questions to successively divide a group of plants (or other organisms) into two sub-groups until a particular species is identified. **You may use your completed dichotomous key on the plant test!**

Your next step is to turn your bubble diagram into a dichotomous key. **You have to create your own dichotomous key.** When creating the dichotomous key, include the following:

1. Number all of the questions on your bubble diagram, from left to right, top to bottom.
2. You will have to create an opposite question for each question from your bubble diagram (for example: "1a. The species is extinct....." and "1b. The species is not extinct.....")
3. List the questions on your bubble diagram in order
4. The answer to each question should direct you to either another question or the name of a plant
5. Once you get to the individual species in your dichotomous key, include both the common and scientific name
6. Scientific names are always written in italics, with the first word upper case and the second word lower case (for example: *Elymus glaucus*)
7. Each question should be identified by a number and a letter
8. Your key should be neatly typed

Here are some examples of dichotomous keys:

http://cbe.wisc.edu/assets/docs/pdf/biolearn/Classification/WhatIsLife/dichotomous_key.pdf

<http://www.hort.uconn.edu/plants/keys/trees/treekey01.html>

<http://www.botany.hawaii.edu/reefalgae/Redskey201.htm>

1a. The species is extinct.....go to 2

1b. The species is not extinct.....go to 4

2a. The species can fly.....*Flying dino*

2b. The species can not fly.....go to 3

3a. The species is all brown.....*Brown dino*

3b. The species is not all brown.....*Green-brown dino*

4a. The species has gills.....go to 5

4b. The species does not have gills.....go to 6

5a. The species has both eyes on one side of its head.....*Flounder fish*

5b. The species does not have both eyes on one side of its head.....*Perch fish*