

Organizing Things into Categories

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When scientists study the world, they sort things into groups called categories. A category is a group of two or more things that share something in common. For example, you could sort a pile of buttons, coins, and pencils by color, by size, or by what they are used for. There is no single right way to sort things. The way you sort depends on what you are trying to find out.

Sorting things into categories is not just something scientists do with objects. Our brains do it all the time. When you learn new information, your brain looks for ways to connect it to things you already know. Grouping ideas together helps you remember them better.

Categories can also be broken into smaller groups. Animals is a big category. Inside that category, you could make a smaller group called birds. Inside birds you could make an even smaller group called birds that can swim. Scientists use this kind of layered sorting to organize all of nature.

The most important thing to remember is this: when you sort things into a category, every item in that group shares something with the others. That shared thing is what holds the category together.

LESSON 1 Organizing Things into Categories

Activity 1

One detail below does NOT belong in a paragraph about organizing things into categories. Circle it and explain why it does not belong.

- A. A category is a group of two or more things that share something in common.
- B. Scientists sort things into categories to organize what they learn.
- C. Liquids take the shape of whatever container they are poured into.
- D. Categories can be broken into smaller groups.

Why does it not belong?

Activity 2

Because / But / So Complete each sentence three different ways.

Scientists sort things into categories because

Scientists sort things into categories but

Scientists sort things into categories so

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Activity 3

Start with the kernel sentence. Use the prompts to expand it into a more detailed sentence.

KERNEL SENTENCE Categories help scientists.

How?

Why?

Write your expanded sentence:

Activity 4

Write one of each type of sentence about categories and sorting.

Statement (Declarative):

Question (Interrogative):

Exclamation (Exclamatory):

Command (Imperative):
