

# Y4 Classification Keys

KS2 Y4 Science · Follows the national curriculum

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. Worked example

**Use the key: a minibeast has no legs and has a shell.**

Step 1 · Q1: Does it have legs?

No → go to Q7

Step 2 · Q7: Does it have a shell?

Yes

Step 3 · Read the name at the end of the branch

Snail

**Answer: It is a snail.**

Check: Follow one branch at a time and only answer the question you are on.

## 2. Now try one with the steps

**Make a key to tell apart: duck, cat, goldfish, eagle.**

Step 1 · Find a question that splits them into two groups

\_\_\_\_\_

Step 2 · Split the 'yes' group

\_\_\_\_\_

Step 3 · Split the 'no' group

\_\_\_\_\_

**Answer:**

\_\_\_\_\_

## 3. Practice

Have a go at each one. There is space underneath to work it out.

**1.** What is a classification key used for?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**2.** What kind of answers do the questions in a branching key have?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**3.** A key says: 'Is it furry with yellow and black stripes? Yes → bumblebee. No → ladybird.' The minibeast is shiny and red with black spots. What is it?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. A key says: 'Does it have exactly 8 legs? Yes → spider. No → go to the next question.' The minibeast has 8 legs. What is it?
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5. A key says: 'Is its body made of rings? Yes → earthworm. No → slug.' The animal has a smooth body with no rings. What is it?
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6. A key says: 'Does it have a shell? Yes → snail. No → go to question 8.' The animal has no shell. What should you do next?
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7. Why is 'Is it beautiful?' a bad question for a key?
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8. Make 'Is it big?' into a better key question.
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9. Write ONE question that would separate a robin from a fox.
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10. Write ONE question that would separate a snail from a slug.
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11. A key has 6 living things at the ends. What is the smallest number of yes/no questions it needs?
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12. Hana's key starts 'Does it have legs?'. Which TWO of these would go on the 'no' branch: worm, beetle, slug, mouse?
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13. Why is leaf colour not always a good feature to use in a key for trees?
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14. Make a key with 2 questions to identify: frog, trout, owl.

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#### 4. Before you hand it in

**Using opinion questions such as 'Is it cute?'**

Use features anyone can check: legs, wings, shell, fur, size in cm.

**Skipping ahead and answering a question from a different branch.**

Follow the arrow from your answer to the next question only.

**Asking a question that doesn't split the group, like 'Is it alive?' for a set of animals.**

Choose a question where some answer yes and some answer no.

**Stopping before every living thing has its own ending.**

Keep adding questions until each living thing is on its own.