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Classification of Animals Worksheet

- Did you know that there are more than 1.5 million identified animal species currently living on Earth, and that approximately 10,000 new species are discovered every year? That's a lot of animals to keep track of! How do scientists organize and classify these animals into smaller, more manageable groups? Let's take a closer look at the classification of the animal kingdom.
- 2. All living things are classified into different taxonomy levels: kingdom, phylum, class, order, family, genus, and species. As you move down the levels, the groups get smaller and the members become increasingly similar. One way to remember these taxonomy levels is this acronym: King Phillip Came Over For Great Sandwiches. The animal kingdom is just one group of living things on Earth. Can you name one of the other kingdoms?
- 3. The animal kingdom is divided into two groups: vertebrates and invertebrates. Vertebrates are animals with internal backbones; invertebrates are animals without them. Sort these animals into two groups based on the presence or absence of a backbone. Take a photo of the entire scene. Compare the two groups of animals. What is an advantage of having an internal backbone?

4. There are five groups of vertebrates: mammals, fish, reptiles, amphibians, and birds. Open the Model Gallery in your Backpack and add models of other vertebrates. Take a photo of the entire scene. Can you name some common characteristics of the members within one of these groups?

- 5. There are many different groups of invertebrates, including worms, molluscs, echinoderms, cnidarians, and arthropods (arachnids, crustaceans, insects, and myriapods). Some of the invertebrate groups are shown here. Of all the animals on Earth, 98% are invertebrates and only 2% are vertebrates. Why do you think there are more invertebrates living on Earth?
- 6. When scientists discover a new species, how do they determine what kind of animal it is? They ask themselves increasingly specific questions starting from the top taxonomy level and moving to the bottom. For example, here is one animal. First, does the animal have a backbone? Yes. Since this animal does have a backbone, answer the following questions: Is it warm-blooded or cold-blooded? Does it have hair, feathers, or scales? Does it live on land, in water, or both? Does it give birth to live young or lay eggs? Based on your answers, how would you classify this animal?

7. Here is another animal. First, does this animal have a backbone? No. Since it does not have a backbone, answer the following questions: Does it have jointed legs or no legs? Does it have three pairs of legs or more than three pairs? Does it have antennae, tentacles, or neither? Does it have worm-like body? Based on your answers, how would you classify this animal?