

A key to animals

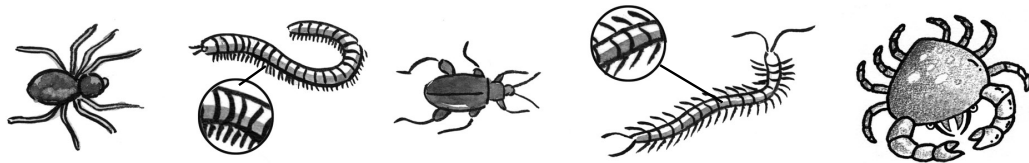


Background knowledge

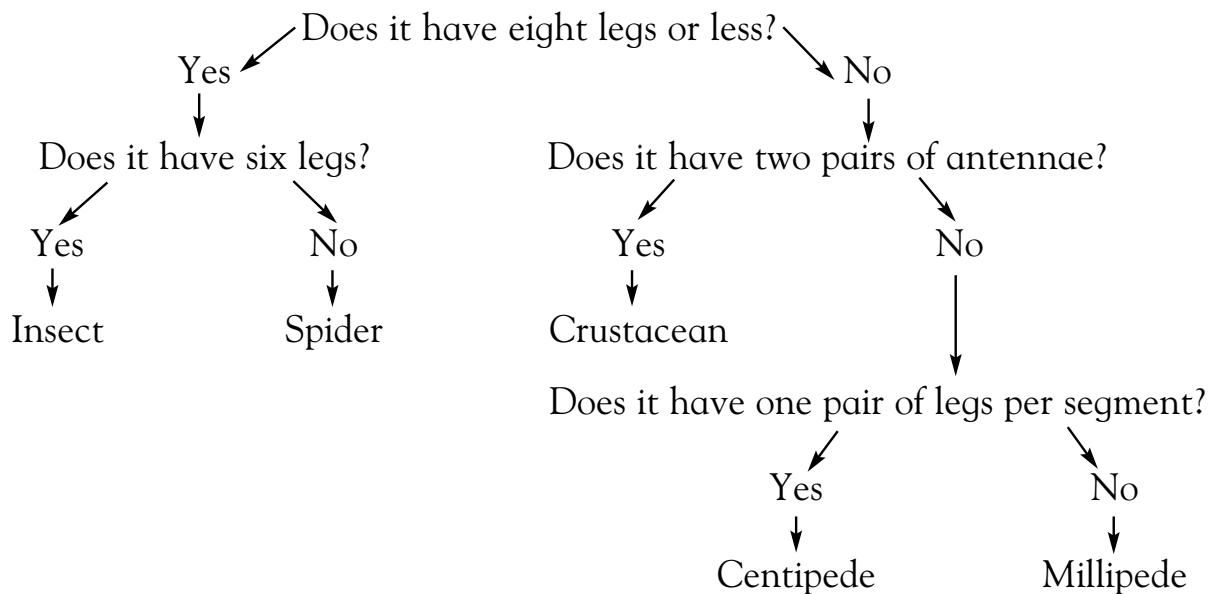
There are many different animals that make up the animal kingdom. Scientists often use keys to help identify an unknown animal. Being able to use keys is an important skill. One type of key is called a *dichotomous key*. This is a branching key in which there are two choices in each branch. The last choice in the key will identify what the scientist is trying to determine. A dichotomous key can be used to identify animals.

Science activity

Arthropods are small animals with jointed feet and other appendages to their body. The word arthropod actually means “jointed feet.”



Use the dichotomous key to identify the arthropods shown above.



Science investigation

! Take extra care - ask an adult to supervise you.

Create your own dichotomous key to identify eating utensils (knives, forks, spoons, soup spoons, salad forks, steak knives, etc.). Try this key out on your friends and/or members of your family. How well does it work? Did you have to make any changes? Explain.

A key to animals



Background knowledge

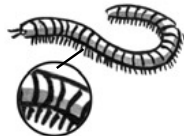
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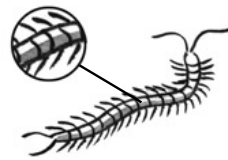
Spider



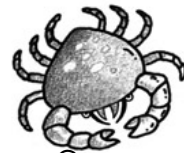
Millipede



Insect

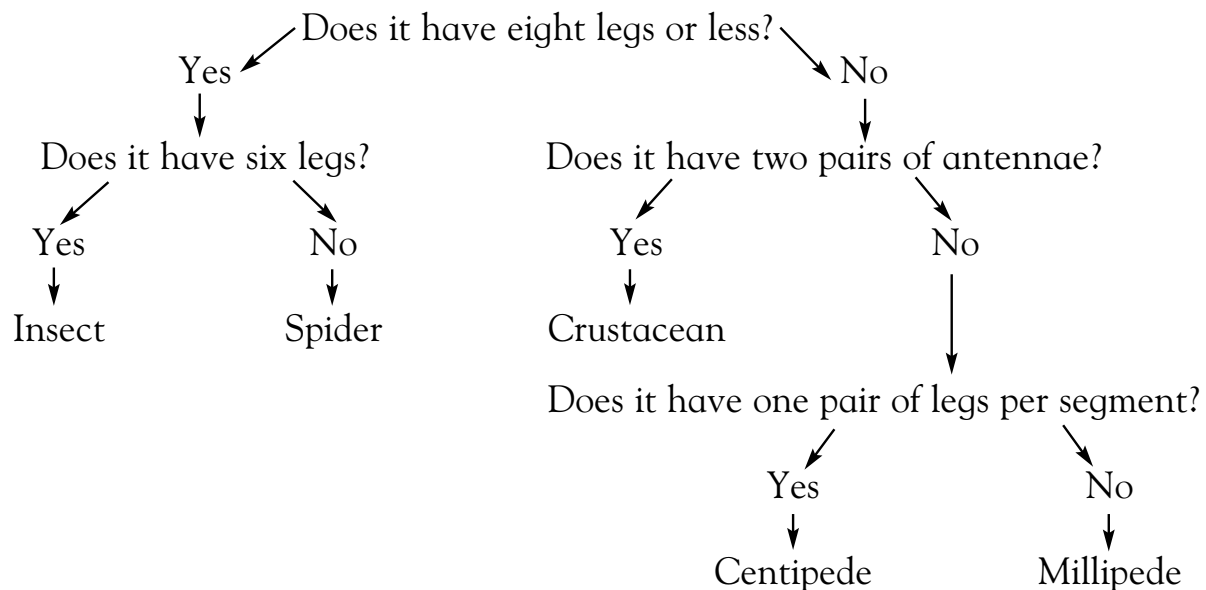


Centipede



Crustacean

Use the dichotomous key to identify the arthropods shown above.



Science investigation

❗ Answers will vary. Encourage the young investigator to try the key on friends or members of his or her family. Make sure the key is set up to ask yes and no questions.