Animal Classification Activity

Grade level: 1st-3rd

Learning objective: This activity will help students understand how scientists classify animals.

Materials required: Multi-colored poms of varying sizes, or any group of objects that have characteristics that are both the same and different.

Animals come in all shapes, sizes and colors. Scientists classify them, or place them into groups, based on the characteristics they share. Sorting animals into groups makes it easier to learn about the many types of animals!

Directions

1. Pretend you are classifying new species of animals! Spread out the poms or items in front of you.

2. Do you see any animals that are the same? How are they different?
   - Are they the same color, shape or size?

3. Sort animals into groups that share the same characteristic. For example, all of the green animals could be in a group together, and all of the yellow animals in a different group.
   - You can name your new animal groups!
   - How many different groups can you make?
   - Do some animals fit into more than one group?
   - Are there any animals that make up a group all by themselves?

4. Scientists don't always agree about what group an animal belongs to.
   - Ask a family member to do this activity and see if they group the animals differently than you did.

5. How would you classify the different animals you already know about?
   - What about your favorite animals?
   - Do they have many characteristics in common with each other?
   - How would you group them?

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