

## Relay and sorting games—



### Prep and general instructions

(Habitat, Animal Classes, possibly others that you design)

In all these activities, the idea is for students to recognize and sort animals or plants into various sorts of groups—classes, habitats, habitats, etc. Examples are below, and you can probably think of more. For relays, two teams will race to collect animal cards (described below) and deposit them in the appropriate containers. After checking for accuracy, the fastest team wins.

#### OR

For a non-competitive activity, it's simpler: Students will each take an animal card and sort themselves into a designated group. When students are in groups, each will call out the animal she/he represents, and all will discuss if that is a good choice for being in that group. (And it's fine for students to coach each other as they are identifying themselves and picking their group.)

There are 90 species ideas at the end of this file.

**For Animal-Class sorting**, students will pick up cards with pictures of animals and place them in appropriately labeled containers: Birds, Mammals, Reptiles, Amphibians, Arthropods (Insects & Spiders)

**For Habitat sorting**, the picture cards will be retrieved and placed in the container appropriate for where the animal lives: Desert, Forest & Woodland, Seashore, Ocean, Lake/River/Wetland

Other suggestions:

- ▶ Sort animals into 4 groups: Primarily carnivore / primarily herbivore / omnivore / scavenger
- ▶ Sort animals into 2 groups: animals that need to live near water (not counting drinking water), and animals that just visit water
- ▶ Sort animals into 2 groups: animals you might find in your neighborhood / animals that stay out in the wild
- ▶ Or groupings you determine that fit with your study unit.

Or maybe have students (in small groups) line up to create food chains or webs

**Prep:** This can be a class project that you complete over several sessions. Bring in calendars, nature magazines, travel brochures, other materials that have pictures of North American animals, plus 100 or so 3x5 blank cards. Have students cut out pictures (smaller than a 3 x 5 card), and paste each picture on a card. Aim for a collection that includes these five groups:

- 1) mammals, 2) birds, 3) reptiles, 4) amphibians, 5) insects, spiders & other creepy-crawlies (i.e., arthropods and/or gastropods). Include fish if you want. Laminate the cards for many uses (and many games).

**OR...**

Or use the animal slips I've put together (see end of this file), and glue them on cards.

**I hesitated on this because they are not my photos, but are from the internet. So use as you think appropriate.**

**For a relay game:**

1. Cut 10 small brown lunch bags (or 8 for four-category games) down to 2 to 3", so when they are open, they will stand up. Label them with appropriate groups for that particular game. E.g., for habitat names, desert / forest & woodland / seashore / lake, river, wetland / ocean. You'll want two sets for each (so each team has its own, identically labeled receptacles):
2. Label popsicle sticks with categories that match Animal Classes or Habitats (i.e., mammals; or desert, etc.). Put two identical sets in two cups, one for each team. Or instead of sticks, label slips of paper. I laminated mine so I can easily reuse them.



For times races, also have a stopwatch on hand

**To play:** Spread all animal cards out at some distance from the group, perhaps on a semi-circle of chairs or tables. Separate the students into two equal groups, each in a line. Have identical, labeled bag receptacles open and ready in front of each group, along with two matching collections of labeled popsicle sticks (or slips of paper) in cups.

**For Animal Sorting,** the first player in each line will pull a labeled stick from the cup, read it, and go fetch a card of the described animal (or resident of the habitat). On returning to the group, she/he will place the card in the appropriate labeled bag (a fox will go in “Mammals,” etc.) A player from the other team will be doing the same. When a player returns, the next student takes out a stick, reads it, and goes. First player goes to the end of the line.

You’ll time how long it takes each team to go through the line, giving each player one turn. Then you will go through the bags, showing the students each card as you do, discussing with them whether it has been placed in the appropriate bag. Any wrong selections will take 5 seconds off that team’s time. The winning team will have the shortest time.

**For Habitat sorting:** As with the other game, spread all animal cards out at some distance, separate the students into two lines, and have identical cups and open-bag receptacles at the head of each group.

The first player in each line will pull a stick with one of the habitats written on it. They will then go get a card for an animal that lives in that habitat, and bring it back, placing the card in the appropriately labeled bag (some can live in several habitats). A player from the other team will be doing the same. When a player returns, the next student goes.

You’ll time how long it takes each team to go through the line, giving each player one turn. Then you will go through the bags, showing the students as you do, discussing with them whether each card has been placed in a reasonable bag—and there are several ways to be right, such as all the habitats in which a coyote might live. Any wrong selections (such as salamanders in the desert) will take 5 seconds off that team’s time. The winning team will have the shortest time.

Below are pictures and labels you may want to paste on cards to use for the games.



COYOTE



BARN OWL



BOBCAT



MULE DEER



COUGAR  
(mountain lion)



RACCOON



Red-Tailed HAWK



GOOSE



Desert TORTOISE



SKUNK



Gopher SNAKE



SCRUB JAY



OPOSSUM



RABBIT



HUMAN



CATERPILLAR



CROW



Western TOAD



MOLE



SALAMANDER



ANT



Great Horned OWL



MOUSE



Ground SQUIRREL



GRAY FOX



RED FOX



Acorn WOODPECKER



BEE



NEWT



TREE FROG



QUAIL



GARTER SNAKE



GOLDEN EAGLE



GOPHER



BLACK WIDOW



MOSQUITO



RATTLESNAKE



POND TURTLE



HUMMINGBIRD



ROBIN



KINGSNAKE



PELICAN



BAT



GRASSHOPPER



GOLDFINCH



WASP



TARANTULA



BEETLE



LIZARD



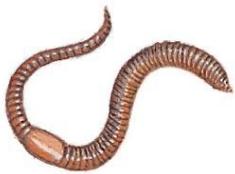
SPARROW



KESTREL



DOLPHIN



EARTHWORM



CENTIPEDE



FOX SQUIRREL



SPIDER



SCORPION



SNAIL



MALLARD



SEA LION



WALRUS



Harbor SEAL



Black BEAR



WHALE



ROADRUNNER



HARE



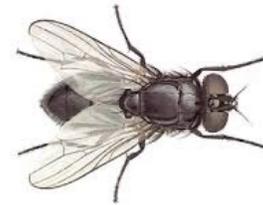
ARMADILLO



BUTTERFLY



Peregrine FALCON



FLY



PORCUPINE



PENGUIN



MILLIPEDE



DRAGONFLY



SANDPIPER



PILLBUG



TURKEY VULTURE



SEA OTTER



MOOSE



ALLIGATOR



BADGER



PRAIRIE DOG(S)



SEA TURTLE



PRONGHORN



TADPOLE



CARDINAL



GILA MONSTER



**BULLFROG**



**SLUG**



**HORNED LIZARD**

Above are 90 images, all of North American animals (except the penguin): 31 MAMMALS, 22 BIRDS, 6 AMPHIBIANS, 11 REPTILES, 9 INSECTS, 3 SPIDERS, 4 OTHER ARTHROPODS (scorpion: centipede, millipede; pillbug:), and WORM (phylum annelid), SNAIL, SLUG (class gastropoda)

Starter printouts for popsicle-stick labels:

MAMMAL	BIRD	AMPHIBIAN	REPTILE	ARTHROPOD	INSECT
MAMMAL	BIRD	AMPHIBIAN	REPTILE	ARTHROPOD	INSECT
MAMMAL	BIRD	AMPHIBIAN	REPTILE	ARTHROPOD	INSECT

MAMMAL	BIRD	AMPHIBIAN	REPTILE	ARTHROPOD	INSECT
DESERT	OCEAN	LAKE/RIVER	FOREST/WOODLAND		SHORELINE
DESERT	OCEAN	LAKE/RIVER	FOREST/WOODLAND		SHORELINE
DESERT	OCEAN	LAKE/RIVER	FOREST/WOODLAND		SHORELINE
DESERT	OCEAN	LAKE/RIVER	FOREST/WOODLAND		SHORELINE