

Name: _____ Date Completed: _____
 Class: _____ Lab Minutes: _____ Teacher: _____

**Using a Dichotomous Classification Key to Identify
 Common Freshwater Fish of New York State**

Special Thanks to Rick Marshall, Massena High School, Massena NY for his contributions to the re-creation of this lab experience.

Background: A dichotomous key is a tool that allows the user to determine the identity of items in the natural world, such as trees, wildflowers, mammals, reptiles, rocks, and fish. Keys consist of a series of "either or" choices that lead the user to the correct name of a given item. "Dichotomous" means "divided into two parts". Therefore, dichotomous keys always give two choices in each step.

Dichotomous keys are extremely important tools in science and even in fields like auto repair and crime investigation. This lab uses the identification of some common types of North American fish as an example of how to use a dichotomous key.

Purpose: The purpose of this laboratory experience is:

- to correctly use a dichotomous key for identifying common freshwater fish found in New York State.
- to understand how scientists in a variety of fields use classification keys to identify specimens.
- to further understand the necessity of the Linnaean classification system
- to correctly identify unknown specimens

Materials: The following materials are needed to complete this laboratory experience:

- Lab papers
- Pen and pencil
- Specimen cards and diagrams

Procedure: The following procedure is utilized to perform this experience:

Study the terms listed below. All of these refer to structures of a fish.

Barbel – a fleshy projection from the lip or head.

FINS

Adipose- a small fin on the top mid-line of the body near the tail fin.

Anal- a fin along the lower mid-line of the body near the tail fin.

Caudal- tail fin.

Dorsal – the fin or fins along the top mid-line of the body.

Pectoral- the paired fins nearest the head, corresponding to front legs or arms.

Pelvic- the paired fins nearest the tail, corresponding to hind legs.

Scales- overlapping outgrowths of the skin.

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NY Fish Dichotomous Key - hamilton-local.k12.oh.us

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Using a Dichotomous Classification Key to Identify Common ...

To correctly identify fish and classify newly discovered species, fisheries scientists use a dichotomous key based on distinguishing characteristics. A dichotomous key is a classification tool used to sort, organize and identify a collection of objects or living organisms.

What's that fish? The (dichotomous) key to fish ...

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Using a Dichotomous Classification Key to Identify Common ...

Dichotomous keys can be created for saltwater or freshwater fish or more specifically for a single type of fish such as sharks or tuna. For example, there are about 28 families of fish in the Great Lakes that number about 160 species. Minnows alone have some 62 species.

Fish Dichotomous Key | Biology Dictionary

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- correctly use a dichotomous key for identifying common freshwater fish found in New York State - to understand how scientists in a variety of fields use classification keys to identify specimens - further understand the necessity of the Linnaean classification system - correctly identify unknown specimens

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Fish fact: New York State is home to three sturgeon species: lake (threatened), Atlantic (federally endangered), and shortnose (endangered). Fishing for any sturgeon species is strictly prohibited. Bowfin 18-24 in./ grow to 34 in. Weedy, clear lakes and rivers Crayfish and small fish May-June in shallow, weedy areas, where nests are built by clearing vegetation away to form a depression LE, LO ...

O S E I N FISHES OF NEW YORK - New York State Department ...

FRESHWATER FISH OF NEW YORK STATE. Background: A dichotomous key is a tool that allows the user to determine the identity of items in the natural world, such as trees, wildflowers, mammals, reptiles, rocks, and fish. Keys consist of a series of "either or" choices that lead the user to the correct name of a given item. "Dichotomous" means "divided into two parts". Therefore ...

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A dichotomous key is a way of identifying specimens based on contrasting statements, usually about physical characteristics. By drawing a series of contrasts, you are able to narrow down the specimen until you can correctly identify it. Dichotomous keys are often used in the sciences, such as biology and geology. To make your own dichotomous ...

How to Make a Dichotomous Key: 10 Steps (with Pictures ...

BiologyCorner.com. Dichotomous Key on Norms. Biology Corner.com. Taxonomy, Classification, and Dichotomous Keys. Department of Natural Resources, State of Wisconsin. Water Critter Key. (This is a completely on-line investigation) 3. Download the attached document is a dichotomous key activity involving drawings of fish.

Name That Fish: Science Lab Activity With Dichotomous Keys ...

The fish in this key are those caught most often during Clearwater's programs from New York Harbor to Albany. However, more than 200 species have been found in the Hudson and its tributaries - some in salt water, some in fresh, some in both. If you catch a fish not included here, you might need an additional field guide to identify it.

Clearwater's Key to Common Hudson River Fishes

Dichotomous keys are very useful for identifying an organism as a member of a single, closely-related group of organisms. In many environments this is sufficient to fully

identify the species. However, complications may arise if multiple closely-related species, which may have very similar characteristics, live in the same geographic area.

Dichotomous Key: Definition, Uses, Examples | Biology ...

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With millions of species on our planet, scientists rely on a type of identification key, called a dichotomous key, to identify items in the natural world. From reptiles to rocks, flowers to fish, the format of dichotomous key is always the same. The word dichotomous originates from Greek.

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