



Dear Family,

Your child has begun the process of learning how scientists classify living things. In the science chapter *Classification*, our class will learn about the great variety of organisms that live in the Earth's biosphere. We will also learn that scientists sort organisms into groups to identify and study them by completing a taxonomy project. Students will discover that the six largest kingdoms groups of living things are called kingdoms and that the smallest groups of living things are called species.

In addition to learning how organisms are classified, students will also learn many new vocabulary terms. Help your child

make these words a part of his or her own vocabulary by using them when you talk together about classifying organisms. You may also find these terms in your child's science notebook or in their textbook.

*Vocabulary Terms:*

*biosphere*

*adaptation*

*species*

*classification*

*bacteria*

*fungus*

*vascular plant*

*nonvascular plant*

The following pages include activities that you and your child can do together to help your child learn not only the vocabulary, but also how to apply these terms. By participating in your child's education, you will help bring the learning home. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me.

Thank you,

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## Family Science Activity: Classify Items in Your Home



Scientists are not the only people who use classification systems!

### Steps:

1. Take a tour of your kitchen and see how many different cooking, eating and food items are classified and organized.
2. Find something in your home that could use some sorting and organizing, maybe a "junk drawer" or closet that is in disarray. (Parents: you might have a few ideas for things that your child can organize in his or her room!)
3. Remove every item that is to be organized and lay them out.
4. Sort and group similar items into separate piles.
5. Place the newly classified items back in a nice, organized fashion.

### Talk About It:

Ask your child about their classification system:

- How did you decide what your main groups were going to be?
- Did you need to divide any groups into smaller groups? How did you decide which items would belong to those smaller groups?
- Were there any items that seemed to fit in two or more different groups? How did you decide where to put them in the end?



## Vocabulary Practice

Fill in the missing letters to create each of the vocabulary words from the Classification chapter. Once you have found the word, write a sentence of your own that uses the word correctly.

1. \_\_\_ I O S \_\_\_

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2. N \_\_\_ N \_\_\_ C U \_\_\_ R P \_\_\_

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3. \_\_\_ I A

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4. \_\_\_ D \_\_\_ P \_\_\_ I \_\_\_ N

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5. \_\_\_ U \_\_\_ U \_\_\_

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6. V \_\_\_ L A \_\_\_ N T

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7. \_\_\_ S S \_\_\_ I O N

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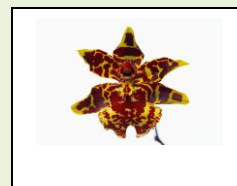
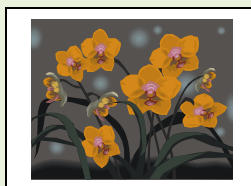
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8. \_\_\_ E C \_\_\_ S

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**Fun Fact:** Tropical Rainforests contain half of the species on Earth. For example, the rainforests contain over 9,000 species of orchids!



## Adaptations and Environments

Adaptations are characteristics that enable an organism to survive in its environment. Take a short walk outside and take note of the living things you see. These organisms live in the same environment as you. List six of these living things, and then write what characteristics the animal has that enables it to live in its environment.

| Organism | Characteristics |
|----------|-----------------|
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|          |                 |
|          |                 |
|          |                 |
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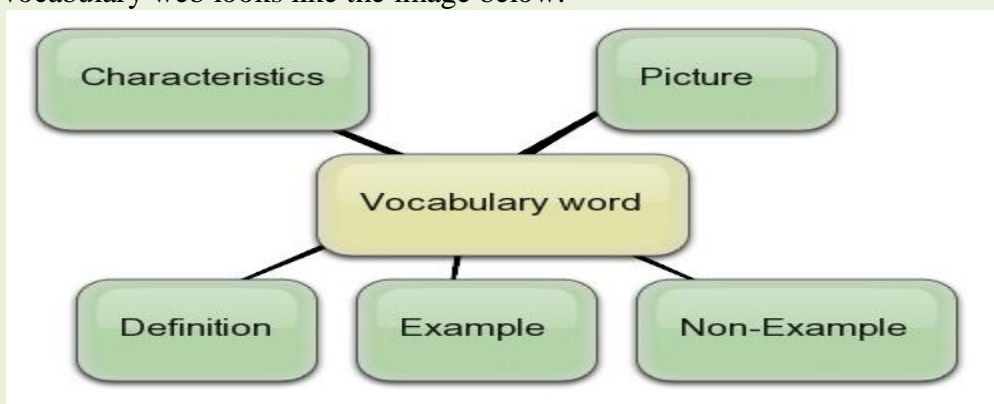
## Meaningful Application of Word in Education

Reflection by: Stephanie Green

As educators, we are often faced with many educational concerns for our students. The above activity packet for my students and their parents addresses two of those educational concerns in my classroom. The first goal I want to accomplish is to establish parental participation in their child's education. This may seem obvious, but the lack of parent involvement school wide is a concern that my entire district faces. Using this handout as a guide, parents can easily ask questions about the content their child is learning and help their student make these learning connections at home. The activities given are designed to engage both the parent and the student in learning together and to become active participants in the educational process. This enables students to see that education can take place anywhere and also teaches them that their parent's value learning both at school and at home.

Another educational concern addressed in the take home science packet is for students to become familiar with and understand science vocabulary. Most students miss questions on a test because they don't understand the vocabulary used in the question. The more students see and use a new word, the more they can apply that word to new situations. Science vocabulary is often difficult for students to remember simply because they don't use the words outside of science class. By bridging a connection to home and school, students begin to see that science is all around them. This document concentrates on the science vocabulary within our unit and leads students to observe ways to apply their knowledge of the word. Through the use of a lab investigation, a word puzzle, and connections tool, students receive alternate methods of seeing how science is integrated into the real world.

By completing this document, students are expected to finish the activities with the guidance of their parents. They are expected to use the learning tools provided in class and share them with their families. At the beginning of each unit students create vocabulary webs for each word and apply these words throughout the lessons. A typical vocabulary web looks like the image below:



Students use this tool to help explain to their families what the words mean and how to apply them.

Upon completion of the packet students write a reflective journal entry that summarizes the unit we have learned using all of the vocabulary from the chapter. Students express the activities that helped them to learn and remember the terms

including at least one activity that they did with their families. This also serves as part of the review for the unit assessment. Below is the rubric used to assess the unit summary:

### Unit Summary Rubric:

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summarizes the main ideas of the unit and details succinctly</li> <li>• Uses text elements, ideas and all key vocabulary in a concise, thoughtful manner</li> <li>• Includes the author’s purpose</li> <li>• Reflects on an activity or “something I learned...”</li> </ul> |
| 8  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summarizes the main ideas and some details succinctly</li> <li>• Uses text elements, ideas and some key vocabulary</li> <li>• May include author’s purpose</li> <li>• May reflect on an activity or “something I learned...”</li> </ul>                                     |
| 6  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summarizes the main ideas concisely</li> <li>• May give some details</li> <li>• Uses some key vocabulary</li> <li>• May include minor inaccuracies</li> <li>• Reflection of activity is unclear</li> </ul>  |
| 4  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retells just the text and alludes to the main ideas</li> <li>• Uses some vocabulary</li> <li>• Has a sense of order</li> <li>• May include some inaccuracies</li> <li>• Reflection of activity is missing</li> </ul>  |
| 2  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retells the text with some inaccuracy</li> <li>• May be out of sequence</li> <li>• Includes some inaccuracies (details, etc.)</li> <li>• Reflection of activity is missing</li> </ul>   |
| 0  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retells giving a minimal amount of information</li> <li>• May include information that is off topic</li> <li>• Reflection of activity is missing</li> </ul>   |