Creating a Dichotomous Key Assignment

Working individually or with a partner your will create a dichotomous key based on the characteristics of various organisms. Your key will be evaluated by other groups of students as they use the key to try and identify each of the ten organisms.

When constructing a dichotomous key, the first step is to look at the group of objects or organisms and separate them into two groups based on a single distinguishing characteristic. Then continue to separate each of the groups until each object has its own separate set of characteristics.

1. Pick one of the lists from the groups A – F on the following page.
    - As mentioned above, in constructing dichotomous key you will distinguish between organisms on the basis of a variety of characteristics. If you are not familiar with the main characteristics if some of the organisms in the list you choose, find out more about the organisms in your textbook or online.

2. Get images of each of your organisms from the internet. All ten of your images should fit onto **ONE PAGE**. Email them to me so that I can print them in color for you.

3. Carefully examine or think about the characteristics of the ten organisms and create a dichotomous key using some of these characteristics.
    Set up your dichotomous key **CHART** on **ONE PAGE**. Set up your dichotomous key **TEXT** on another page. On your page of images leave a blank where each of the answers should go so that another group can write in the answers. Put your names and the groups name at the top of the page.

4. Make a **second page of images as an answer key**. Your answer key should be the same as your first image page but with the names of the organisms underneath instead of blanks.

5. Hand in your finished dichotomous key along with the answer key. A copy of your key will be distributed to the other students in your class for evaluation.

Groups of Organisms:

Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D	Group E	Group F
1. housefly	1. amoeba	1. hydra	1. red algae	1. penguin	1. beaver
2. mushroom	2. birch tree	2. cow	2. wasp	2. robin	2. sugar maple
3. pine tree	3. horse	3. snake	3. python	3. cricket	3. blue green algae
4. pig	4. bread mold	4. spruce tree	4. prairie dog	4. paramecium	4. tick
5. paramecium	5. blue jay	5. bread mold	5. dandelion	5. porcupine	5. lice
6. tulip plant	6. earthworm	6. robin (bird)	6. beetle	6. blue heron	6. zebra
7. iguana	7. lion	7. sunflower	7. poison ivy	7. tamarack	7. grizzly bear
8. leech	8. bat	8. ant	8. blue whale	8. killer whale	8. grasshopper
9. salamander	9. moth	9. starfish	9. moss	9. canola	9. wolf
10. hornet	10. wheat	10. sea anemone	10. E. coli	10. tape worm	10. tulip