SPEAKING 1

Name: _____ Course: _____ Date: _____

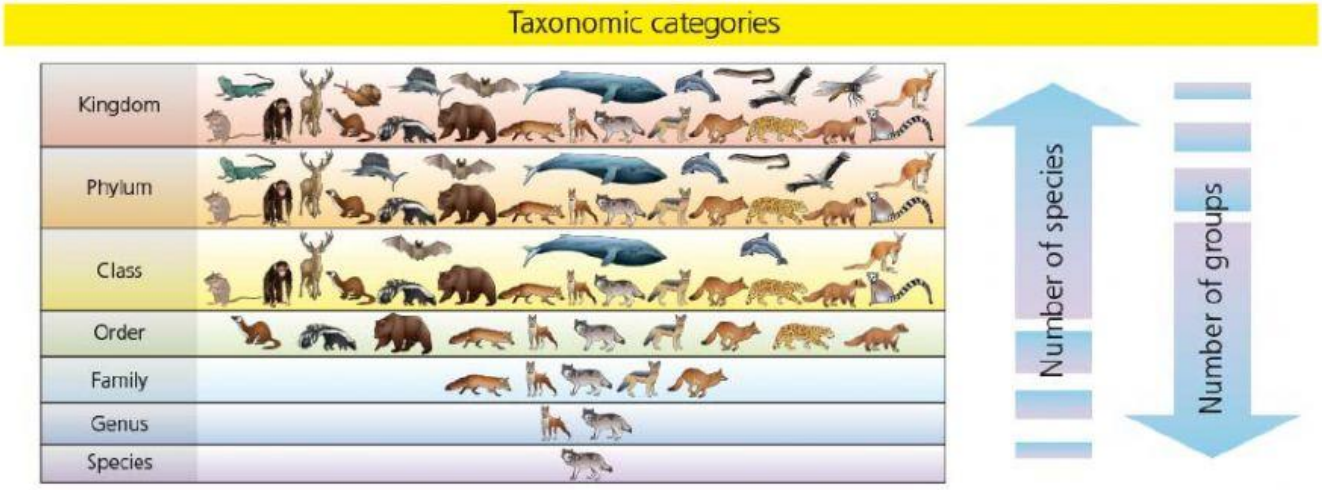
1. Classification of living things

Taxonomy is the science of classifying living things. Scientists group living things according to their characteristics or by classification criteria. The classification criteria should be:

- **Objective**: not dependent on the person making the classification.
- **Discriminatory**: the characteristics chosen to establish the groups are common to some living things, but not all of them.

Each group is given the name of a **taxonomic category** or **taxon**. The basic taxonomic category is the **species**. A species is a group of individuals that share common characteristics and can reproduce, creating fertile offspring.

Taxonomic categories



Species that share common characteristics are grouped into the next taxonomic category, the **genus**. Genuses are grouped into **families**, and then further groups are formed, as in the diagram.

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