

Classifying

Classifying means dividing things into groups according to their type.

Useful nouns when classifying

word	example	meaning
category	Each of our students falls into one of three categories .	a group that shares some significant characteristics
component	Milk is an essential component of any young child's diet.	a part which combines with other parts to create something bigger
existence	The existence of 'dark matter' in the universe was first proposed in 1933.	the fact that something or someone is or exists
feature	Effective use of metaphor is a feature of the poet's style.	typical part or quality
hierarchy	Humans can be described as being at the top of a hierarchy with amoebas on the bottom level.	system in which people or things are arranged according to their importance or power
nature	The nature of her work means that she is under a lot of stress.	type or main characteristic of something
structure	In this unit we shall be looking at the structure of the heart.	the way in which the parts of a system are arranged
type	The lion is one type of large cat.	group with similar characteristics, a smaller division of a larger set

One example of a classification system

There is an enormous variety/diversity of living things (or organisms). To help study them, biologists have devised¹ ways of naming and classifying them according to their similarities and differences. The system most scientists use puts each living thing into seven groups organised from most general to most specific. Therefore, each species belongs to² a genus, each genus belongs to a family, each family belongs to an order, etc. Species are the smallest groups. A species consists of³ all the animals of the same type who are able to breed and produce young of the same kind; each species is distinct from⁴ all other species. Biologists allocate⁵ all organisms to a position in this system.

¹ thought of, invented ² is part of ³ includes, is made up of ⁴ significantly different from
⁵ place (also assign)

Categorising people

When categorising people, it is often necessary to take age, gender¹, social class, occupation, marital status and ethnic background² into account. It may also be appropriate to consider the urban-rural³ dimension⁴. Age, for example, is important in that different generations tend to have different attitudes and other characteristics. Social class can be described in different ways; the term blue collar may be used to mean working class while white collar denotes⁵ middle class. The categories of student, homemaker (i.e. housewife/househusband), and senior citizen, as well as types of employment⁶ are subsumed⁷ under the heading⁸ of occupation or occupational background/status.

¹ sex, male or female ² racial background ³ city versus countryside ⁴ aspect, way of considering something ⁵ means ⁶ paid work ⁷ included as part of a larger group ⁸ title summing up a group

Exercises

42.1 Choose the words to complete these extracts from (1) a lecture and (2) a class.

1 belong categories components consist distinct diversity fall feature structure type

'Computer programming languages usually into one of four: imperative, functional, object-oriented and logic. These languages are from one another in how they operate. The of imperative languages is based on commands, you know, "do this, do that thing". Languages such as Fortran and COBOL to this Functional languages of mathematical functions. The of object-oriented languages are commands which are combined with the data to create "objects". The main of logic languages is that they state facts or relations between things. Now, in the case of human languages, is considered a good thing. In the case of programming languages, it suggests we still haven't found the best one!'

2 blue collar class devise employment ethnic gender generations homemakers occupational senior citizens

'For your end-of-year project, you must carry out a survey of consumer preferences for one product or a type of product. You'll need to a questionnaire, and you'll need to take a lot of factors into account. These include, that is how many males and/or females are in your sample, social, and so on. And also different; will it just be adults, or young people too? And what about? They may be retired, but they still buy a lot of things. Also, what about status? Are you going to separate and white collar workers? Or are you also interested in people who are not in, such as, but who are often the ones who buy the goods? And in our multicultural society, don't forget background.'

42.2 Complete the table. Use a dictionary if necessary.



noun	verb	adjective	adverb
		similar	
		different	
	allocate		
	describe		

42.3 Now choose a word from 42.2 to complete these sentences.

- It is hard to between these two plants. They hardly at all.
- The professor persuaded the university to more resources to his department.
- There are some magnificent passages in the writer's later novels.
- In your essay comment on the and the between the two poems.

42.4 Vary the sentences by using words of similar meaning instead of the words in bold.

- It is difficult to categorise human emotions as we know little about their **basic characteristics**.
- Sensation and action can both be **included** under the term *behaviour*.
- Linguists **allocate** all languages to a place in the system of language families, based on their grammars and other key **aspects**.
- The atmosphere of the planet **consists** of different gases.
- City and country people often differ in their political attitudes. **Whether one is married or single** is also a relevant factor.