

FISH OF NEBRASKA DICHOTOMOUS KEY WORKSHEET

Name _____

1. a. The fish has an adipose fin.....Go to 2
 b. The fish does not have an adipose fin.....Go to 3
2. a. The fish has barbels.....Go to 4
 b. The fish does not have barbels.....
3. a. The fish has one dorsal fin (can have two parts that are connected together).....Go to 5
 b. The fish has two separate dorsal fins (adipose fin is not a dorsal fin).....Go to 6
4. a. The fish has a forked tail fin.....
 b. The fish has a rounded tail fin.....
5. a. The dorsal fin has sharp spines.....Go to 7
 b. The dorsal fin does not have sharp spines.....Go to 8
6. a. The fish has vertical stripes on its sides.....
 b. The fish has a long horizontal stripe on its side.....
7. a. The fish has dark spots all over its body and fins.....
 b. The fish has stripes on its sidesGo to 9
8. a. The dorsal fin is near the back of the fish's body, above the anal fin.....
 b. The dorsal fin is near the center of the fish's body, in front of the anal fin.....
9. a. The fish has a large mouth that reaches back to its eye.....
 b. The fish has a small mouth that is in front of its eye.....

Fish Dichotomous Key Reflections

Directions: Answer the following questions on a piece of lined paper and staple this question sheet to the front with your name on it. Feel free to use your Chromebook to help you answer the questions if you need to.

1. What fish were difficult to key? Why? What fish were easy to key? Why? Why do the fish all look so different?

2. Compare the mouth of the short-head redhorse to the mouth of the northern pike. What does this tell us about what/where it eats?

3. Compare the body shape of a trout to that of a red ear sunfish. What clue does this offer about the speed of the fish in your opinion?

4. Look at the barbels on the catfish. What purpose might these serve? What might this tell us about where it lives?

5. Why would a fish like the crappie need a spiny dorsal fin?

6. What do we call the “*either, or*” choices that you saw on your dichotomous key? _____
7. Where does the word “*dichotomous*” come from?

8. Which species generally get sorted out first in a dichotomous key? *Use the candy dichotomous key activity as well as this one as examples to help you answer this question.*