



A Dichotomous Key Activity for Seashells

Instructions: Using the images on the card set that your teacher gives you, you should be able to correctly place a shell in its correct position on the dichotomous key. Once you have correctly identified where the shell goes in the key, write the number of each shell (noted on the card) on the line provided.

- I. Univalve **2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,14,16**
 - A. Outer Projections (spikes) **3,4,5,7,8,10**
 1. Spikes at two ends **8,10**
 - a) Shell solid white in color **8**
 - b) Shell not solid white **10**
 2. Spikes at one end only **3,4,7**
 - a) Shell is longer than it is wide **3,4**
 - (1) Shell has vertical stripes **4**
 - (2) Shell has no vertical stripes **3**
 - b) Shell is wider than it is long **7**
 - B. Spikes not present **2,5,6,9,11,14,16**
 1. Shell is wider than longer **2,16**
 - a) Shell has speckles **16**
 - b) Shell has no speckles **2**
 2. Shell is longer than wider **5,6,9,11,14**
 - a) Shell is speckled **6,11**
 - (1) Shell is approximately 7 cm from umbo to base **6**
 - (2) Shell is approximately 5 cm from umbo to base **11**
 - b) Shell is not speckled **5,9,14**
 - (1) Shell is striped **5**
 - (2) Shell has no stripes **9,14**
 - (a) Curved at pointed end **14**
 - (b) No curve at pointed end **9**
 - II. Bivalve **1,12,13,15,17**
 - A. Two shells present (articulated) **12,15**
 1. Umbo axial length is approximately 5.0 cm long **12**
 2. Umbo axial length is less than 5.0 cm long **15**
 - B. One shell present **1,17,13**
 1. Shell has pointed umbo area **1,13**
 - a) Shell is smooth **13**
 - b) Shell is rough **1**
 2. Shell has straight umbo area **17**

Answer Key



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Answer Key

