

## GLOSSARY

### A

**Animalia** the classification kingdom containing complex, multicellular organisms that lack cell walls, are usually able to move around, and possess nervous systems that help them be aware of and react to their surroundings

**Archaea** (AHR kee bak TIR ee uh) a classification kingdom containing bacteria that thrive in extreme environments

### B

**bacteria** extremely small, single-celled organisms without a nucleus; prokaryotic cells

### C

**class** the level of classification after phylum; the organisms in all phyla are sorted into classes

**classification** the arrangement of organisms into orderly groups based on their similarities and presumed evolutionary relationships

### D

**dichotomous key** (die KAWT uh muhs) an aid to identifying unknown organisms that consists of several pairs of descriptive statements; of each pair of statements, only one will apply to the unknown organism, and that statement will lead to another set of statements, and so on, until the unknown organism can be identified

### E

**Eubacteria** (YOO bak TIR ee uh) a classification kingdom containing mostly free-living bacteria found in many varied environments

### F

**family** the level of classification after order; the organisms in all orders are sorted into families

**Fungi** a kingdom of complex organisms that obtain food by breaking down other substances in their surroundings and absorbing the nutrients

## GLOSSARY

### G

**genus** the level of classification after family; the organisms in all families are sorted into genera

### K

**kingdom** the most general of the seven levels of classification

### O

**order** the level of classification after class; the organisms in all the classes are sorted into orders

### P

**phylum** the level of classification after kingdom; the organisms from all the kingdoms are sorted into several phyla

**Plantae** the kingdom that contains plants—complex, multicellular organisms that are usually green and use the sun’s energy to make sugar by photosynthesis

**Protista** a kingdom of eukaryotic single-celled or simple, multicellular organisms; kingdom Protista contains all eukaryotes that are not plants, animals, or fungi

### S

**species** the most specific of the seven levels of classification; characterized by a group of organisms that can mate with one another to produce fertile offspring

### T

**taxonomy** the science of identifying, classifying, and naming living things