CLASSIFYING ANIMALS

READ AND LEAVE TRACKS OF YOUR THINKING:

WRITE at least \_\_\_ QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS:

You are responsible for making a poster about one of the 5 classes of animals.

Animals are either classified as in**vertebrates** or **vertebrates**.

* An invertebrate has no backbone—more than 90 percent of the animal

species in the world are invertebrates and most of these are insects.

* A vertebrate animal possesses an internal backbone that forms the supporting axis of the body and protects the spinal cord.

There are five classes of vertebrates: fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals.

**1) Fish** live in water. Some fish live in salt water and others live in fresh water. They are cold-blooded animals, which means their body temperature rises and falls with that of the surrounding environment. Most fish breathe oxygen through gills and move through the water using their tail and fins. They are protected by a coating of scales that often have a coating of slippery mucus that helps them glide through the water. Fish lay many eggs in the water. Some stay around and protect the eggs until they hatch while others lay eggs and leave them on their own. Samples of different types of fish include:

**2) AMPHIBIANS** can either live on dry land or in the water. They usually live in damp places where their skin won’t dry out. Examples of amphibians are salamanders, frogs, and toads. Amphibians are cold-blooded animals. They spend the beginning of their lives in the water and as they grow, their bodies change shape (**metamorphosis**). An example of this is a frog, which starts as a tadpole and breathes through gills, then develops legs and begins to breathe through lungs. Amphibians can also get oxygen through their mucus- covered skin. Some amphibians live in water and breathe through gills their whole lives.

**3) REPTILES** have dry, scaly skin made up of waterproof scales. They are **terrestrial** (live on land) and cold-blooded. To be active, reptiles must bask in the Sun to warm their bodies. As a result, reptiles cannot live in cold parts of the world. Reptiles lay eggs that are sealed in a strong membrane (**amnion**) that keeps them from drying out. Young reptiles hatch as small versions of their parents, and do not undergo metamorphosis like amphibians do. Some examples of reptiles are lizards, turtles, snakes, iguanas, crocodiles, and dinosaurs. Most reptiles do not care for their young.

**4) BIRDS are** animal with feathers. They are warm-blooded, which means they are at a constant warm temperature generated by heat from the blood circulating through their bodies. Birds are the only animals besides bats (which are mammals) that are capable of flight. Birds do not have teeth and instead of jaws they have a beak or bill. They reproduce by laying eggs with a hard covering called an eggshell. Birds can live on land, in fresh water, and at sea. Some examples of birds are parrots, hummingbirds, owls, ostriches, and penguins. Birds care for their young.

**5) MAMMALS are** animals with hair that feeds its young milk. They are warm-blooded and make up one of the most diverse groups of animals. Some examples of mammals are elephants, bats, whales, monkeys, humans, horses, and squirrels. Mammals have hairs on their body, though some mammals don’t have very much hair. They suckle their young on milk, and some mammals care for their young for many years before the young have to fend for themselves.