

A1 Classification

1 Methods

Classification is an important writing skill in many academic disciplines. It is used to make complex topics easier to understand, by breaking them down into smaller groups or classes. For example:

Fiction

Fiction is the name given to stories that are made up and written down for entertainment. The novel is the most common form, but short stories, novellas and much longer works are also produced. Among the most popular genres are thrillers, science fiction, romantic fiction and historical fiction, while fiction for children of various ages is also significant.

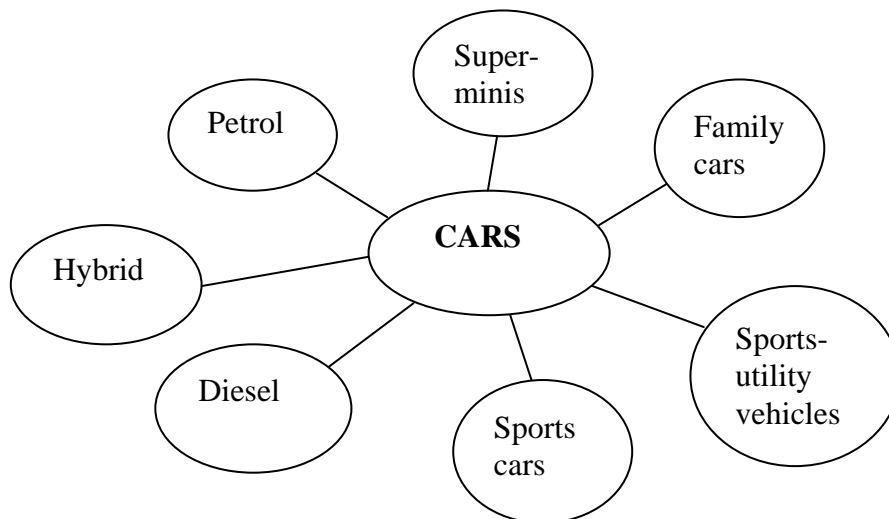
Note that in this example fiction has been classified by:

- (a) structure, e.g. novel, short story
- (b) subject, e.g. thrillers, science fiction

In many cases it may be helpful to use more than one method of classification.

2 Practice A

Study the diagram below and write a paragraph classifying the information.



3 Using hierarchies

In many cases classifying involves establishing a hierarchy of various levels. For example:

Clouds

There are four main types of clouds, classified according to the height at which they are found. The highest type forms above 5,000 metres and includes three main sub-types: Cirrus, Cirrocumulus and Cirrostratus. Middle clouds form above 2,000 metres and are divided into Alto cumulus and Altostratus. Low clouds are found below 2,000 metres and consist of Stratocumulus and Stratus. Finally Low to Middle clouds form between the surface of the earth and 10,000 metres and contain Cumulus and Nimbostratus. Most of these sub-types can be further divided into species, for example Cirrostratus consists of species fibratus and nebulosus.

Using the text above, draw a diagram showing the classification of clouds.

4 Classification language

General	Specific	Verbs
type kind category sort variety form genre	species sub-species order genus	to divide to categorise to classify to consist of

5 Practice B

Draw a diagram of a subject from your own academic discipline and write a paragraph to show how the components of the subject are classified. For example:

Business studies – types of commercial organisations

Law Students – the system of courts

Education students – structure of secondary education