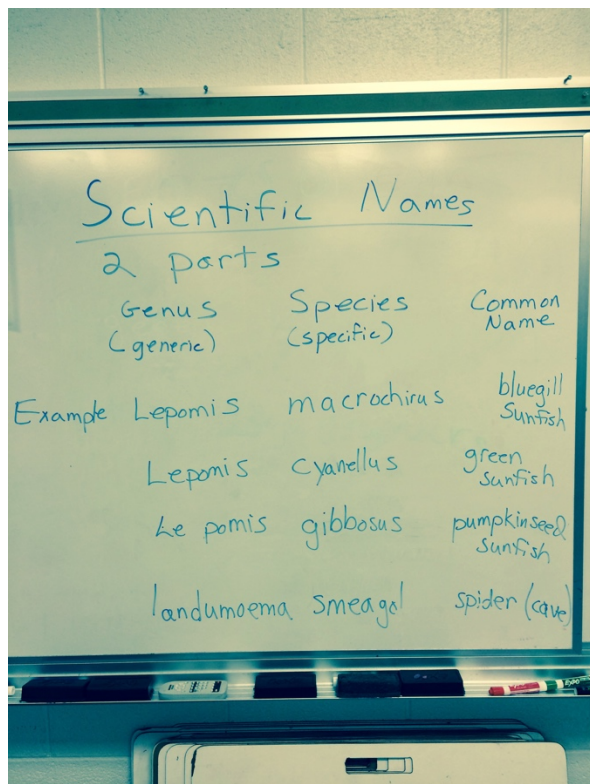


All living things are classified into 3 domains. Each domain is further split into kingdoms (notice, Archaea and Bacteria don't really have kingdoms!!) Each kingdom is split into Phyla (plural – phylum is singular). For example, animals are split into 32-26 phyla. Plants are split into 10 phyla but botanists call them Divisions. Each phylum is further split into class. Each class is split into orders and each order is split into families. Each family is further split into genus and finally you get down to a specific organism, a species.

The confusion comes in the categorization. Some think it should be based on body structures, some on DNA similarities and some on evolutionary relationships.



A scientific name describes one specific organism. It is made up of 2 names, the genus name and the species name. The species name can be a word that describes a feature of the organism - for example the bluegill sunfish's scientific name is *Lepomis macrochirus* because macrochirus means big ear because the bluegill sunfish has a big flap like an ear. The species name can be named after a person like the wasp *Alberus longfellow* named after the poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. The species name can also be named after a place such as Lucy's name *Australopithecus afarensis*. She was found in the Afar region of East Africa. Species names can come from just about anything. In 2015, Brazilian scientists found a new spider that lives in caves, out of sunlight. They named it *Landumoema smeagol* after the character Smeagol in Lord of The Rings. Stephen Colbert thought it should be named *Landumoema Gollum!*