

## Constructing Your Own Key



**There are two components to this assignment:**

- I. Research and find out more about a species of salamander.
- II. Create a dichotomous key to identify different species of salamander.

### Part One: Research & Communication

1. Choose **one** of the species of salamander shown on the diagram on the reverse side that you are interested in learning more about.
2. Research the following topics regarding this species. **\*Be sure to record and cite all references as you go along in your research** (citation in **APA** format----see below for example).
  - General physical features (ex. color, size)
  - Habitat (geographic locations and ecosystems)
  - Diet
  - Conservation status and major threats to this species (human and non-human related)
3. Organize and present your research finding in **table format** with appropriate subject headings. You may include notes in point form. **One page maximum.**

### Part Two: Inquiry

Examine the different features of the 11 salamander species shown in the diagram on the reverse side. Identify and group species that have unique characteristics, and create a **dichotomous key** to accurately identify each species. You might want to create a flow chart first to help organize your thoughts and to ensure that each species can be identified using your key.

### Evaluation

	Criteria	Rating Scale
Knowledge /Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ good overview of species is provided in report</li> <li>▪ all information required is given in sufficient details</li> </ul>	1   2   3   4   5
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ information is presented in an organized table with appropriate headings</li> <li>▪ information is clear and concise</li> <li>▪ no spelling and grammar mistakes</li> <li>▪ proper citation of all sources in APA format</li> </ul>	1   2   3   4   5
Thinking/Inquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ dichotomous key is clear and complete and can accurately identify each species given</li> </ul>	1   2   3   4   5
Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ demonstrates an understanding of how the threats are linked to the survival of the species</li> <li>▪ clear understanding of how dichotomous key is used for species identification</li> </ul>	1   2   3   4   5

### **APA Style Referencing**

General format:

Author(s)/Name of sponsoring institution or organization. (Date published). Title of Site or Page.  
Retrieved from <website>.

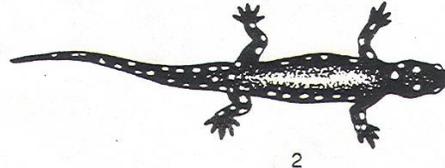
Example:

Ewins, P. (2011, February 10). World Wildlife Fund. *Polar bear population in Western Hudson Bay unlikely to survive climate disruption*. Retrieved from <<http://blog.wwf.ca/blog/2011/02/10/polar-bear-population-in-western-hudson-bay-unlikely-to-survive-climate-disruption/>>



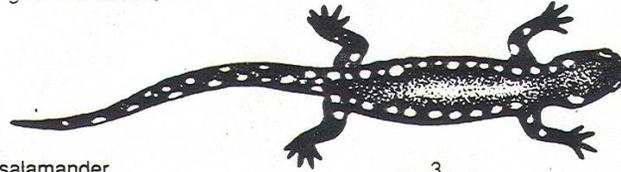
1

*Plethodon glutinosus*, slimy salamander



2

*Ambystoma jeffersonianum*, Jefferson salamander



3

*Ambystoma maculatum*, spotted salamander



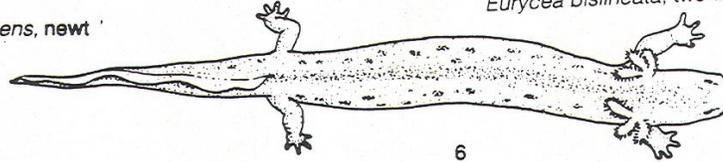
4

*Triturus viridescens*, newt



5

*Eurycea bislineata*, two-lined salamander



6

*Necturus maculosus*, mud puppy



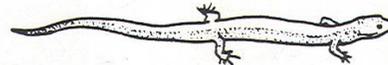
7

*Ambystoma tigrinum*, tiger salamander



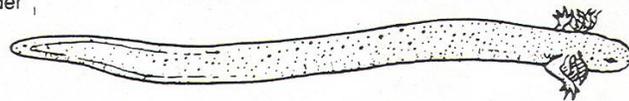
8

*Hemidactylium scutatum*, four-toed salamander



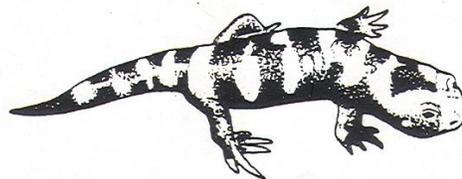
9

*Plethodon cinereus*, red-backed salamander



10

*Siren intermedia*, siren



11

*Ambystoma opacum*, marbled salamander

Figure 1