

Describing the Nine Animals Using Aristotle's Ten Categories

Each card below uses the Ten Categories as a thinking framework — the same categories that organize the N-Back, the Socratic questions, and the brain mapping. Practice with children by pointing to each house card and asking the category question.

Who/What	Quantity	Quality	Action	Place	Time	Possessions	Posture	Relation	Reaction
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1 BEAR • Green House • Use Aristotle's Ten Categories to describe what you see

Who / What Bear	Quantity Four legs, one nose, two ears	Quality Green, furry, large, strong	Action Walking, foraging, sniffing	Place In the forest · in the green house
Time Awake in summer, sleeps in winter	Possessions Thick fur coat	Posture Standing on four legs, head down	Relation Mama bear, baby bear are part of a family	Reaction / Passion Growling, scary, powerful

2 FISH • Blue House • Use Aristotle's Ten Categories to describe what you see

Who / What Fish	Quantity Two eyes, fins, one tail, many scales	Quality Blue, shiny, smooth, spotted	Action Swimming, darting, gliding	Place In the water · in the blue house
Time Swims all day and night	Possessions Fins and scales	Posture Gliding through water, fins spread	Relation Part of a school of fish	Reaction / Passion Quiet, slippery, surprising

3 SNAKE • Red House • Use Aristotle's Ten Categories to describe what you see

Who / What Snake	Quantity Zero legs, one tongue, one long body	Quality Red, spotted, smooth, flexible	Action Slithering, coiling, flicking tongue	Place On the ground · in the red house
Time Awake in warm weather, hides in cold	Possessions Scales and a forked tongue	Posture Coiled in a spiral	Relation Part of the reptile family	Reaction / Passion Hissing, scary, surprising

4 ELEPHANT • Yellow House • Use Aristotle's Ten Categories to describe what you see

Who / What Elephant	Quantity Four legs, one trunk, two tusks, two big ears	Quality Yellow, wrinkled, very large, heavy	Action Walking, spraying water with trunk, trumpeting	Place On the savanna · in the yellow house
Time Travels long distances to find water	Possessions Trunk, tusks, large ears	Posture Walking tall, trunk swinging	Relation Herd animal: remembers family members	Reaction / Passion Loud trumpet, gentle, powerful

5 TURTLE • Black House • Use Aristotle's Ten Categories to describe what you see

Who / What Turtle	Quantity Four legs, one shell, one head, one tail	Quality Black and brown, hard shell, slow-moving	Action Walking slowly, hiding in shell	Place On the ground, near water · in the black house
Time Lives a very long time — one of the oldest animals	Possessions Shell: its home it carries everywhere	Posture Low to the ground, slow and steady	Relation Lives alone, steady and independent	Reaction / Passion Quiet, steady, determined slow wins the race

6 HORSE • Orange House • Use Aristotle's Ten Categories to describe what you see

Who / What Horse	Quantity Four legs, one mane, one long tail, four hooves	Quality Orange/chestnut, smooth, strong, tall	Action Running, galloping, standing, neighing	Place In the field · in the orange house
Time Runs fast — can travel far in one day	Possessions Mane, tail, and hooves	Posture Standing tall, head raised proud	Relation Works with and for people	Reaction / Passion Neighing, strong, graceful, beautiful

7 CAMEL • Brown House • Use Aristotle's Ten Categories to describe what you see

Who / What Camel	Quantity Four legs, one hump, one leash or rope	Quality Brown, rough fur, tall, patient	Action Walking, carrying heavy loads, chewing	Place In the desert · in the brown house
Time Can go many days without water	Possessions Hump (stores fat), colorful saddle blanket, leash	Posture Walking with long stride, head held high	Relation Carries people and goods across the desert	Reaction / Passion Stubborn, strong, patient, reliable

8 SPIDER • White House • Use Aristotle's Ten Categories to describe what you see

Who / What Spider	Quantity Eight legs, two body parts, eight eyes	Quality White / gray, small, delicate, quick	Action Crawling, spinning a web, waiting	Place On the web · in the white house
Time Spins web at night, waits by day	Possessions Web — its home and its trap	Posture Hanging from the web, crouching	Relation Lives alone in its own web	Reaction / Passion Scary, surprising, clever and patient

9 PIG • Purple House • Use Aristotle's Ten Categories to describe what you see

Who / What Pig	Quantity Four legs, one snout, one curly tail, two ears	Quality Purple, round, smooth, sturdy	Action Sniffing, oinking, looking up, trotting	Place On the farm · in the purple house
Time Active during the day, playful and curious	Possessions Snout for digging, curly tail	Posture Standing with snout raised up, looking up	Relation Lives with other pigs on a farm	Reaction / Passion Oinking, curious, friendly, playful

How to Use These Cards

Point to the animal on the house card and ask: 'What do you see?' (Who/What). Then move through each category in order. Let the child answer before you show the card. Accept any words they use — the goal is thinking, not getting it 'right.'

Good Questions to Ask

'How many legs does the spider have?' (Quantity) · 'What color is the bear?' (Quality) · 'What is the elephant doing?' (Action) · 'Where does the turtle live?' (Place) · 'What does the camel have with it?' (Possessions) · 'How does the snake make you feel?' (Reaction)

The Thinking Behind This

Aristotle organized all of reality into ten categories 2,300 years ago. When a child describes a bear using Who/What, Quantity, Quality, Action, Place, Time, Possessions, Posture, Relation, and Reaction — they are using the same framework that organizes the N-Back, the Socratic questions, and the brain mapping table. The house card is the entry point. These categories are the door.