



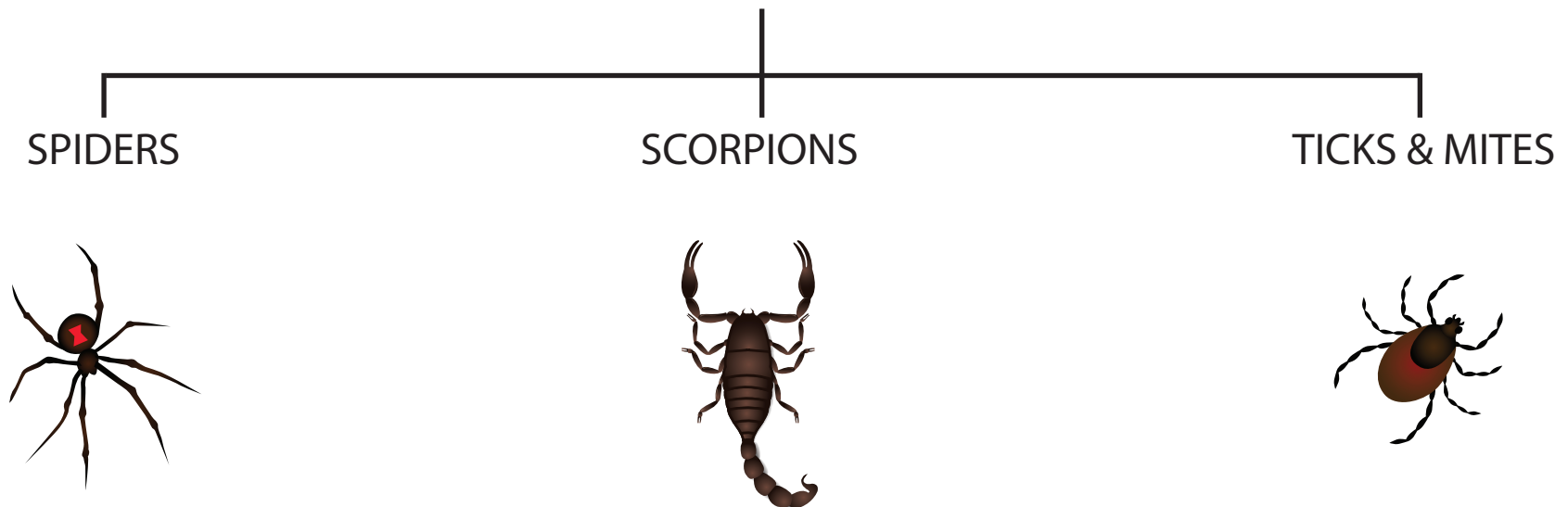
Arachnids

Discussion Questions:

- 1) What animals belong to the arachnid group?
- 2) What features do they have in common?
- 3) What types of environments do they inhabit?

ARACHNIDS

- Have an exoskeleton.
- Have eight jointed legs and two pairs of antennae.
- Have two body parts.
- Moults by shedding outer skeleton to allow for growth.
- Lay eggs.





Spiders

Spiders have eight legs and up to eight eyes. These eyes can vary in size. Even though they have many eyes, spiders do not have particularly good eyesight.

Spiders are covered in fine hairs which help them sense danger in their environment. These hairs also help them grip when climbing different terrains.

Spiders produce silk from spinnerets at the back of their bodies. This silk is used for spinning webs, wrapping their prey and for transporting themselves through the air. Some spiders eat their silk webs when they are finished with them.

Spiders have a set of fangs that inject venom when they bite. This venom usually paralyses their prey but is sometimes strong enough to kill. Only a few spiders have venom strong enough to be harmful to humans.





SCORPIONS



Scorpions have eight legs, a segmented body and a flexible tail. The stinger at the tip of the tail is used for hunting and for protection. They use their large, pincer like appendages for grabbing and holding on to prey.

Scorpions babies are generally born in eggs that are retained in the mother's body until they are ready to hatch. Scorpions then carry their babies on their backs (see above picture) until they have grown big enough for their first moult.

Arachnids have a hard, outer skin (exoskeleton). When the scorpion has grown too big for their exoskeleton they moult. This means that they shed their old skin. A scorpion will moult numerous times before reaching an adult size.

TICKS and MITES



Ticks feed on the blood of a variety of animals including humans. Its bite is usually painless and the host is generally unaware of the tick's presence. However, because of the toxins that pass from the tick, the host can experience skin irritation and allergic reactions to the tick bite. Some ticks also carry diseases that can be passed on to the host such as Lyme's Disease.

Some tick species are particularly dangerous to humans and pets as their bite can cause paralysis. This can lead to breathing difficulties and death if correct treatment is not sought.

Mites are tiny creatures that feed on dead skin cells of their hosts. They cause itchy skin irritations. Some types of mites spread diseases such as scabies.