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ILLUSTRATOR:**

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Hermit Crab has outgrown his shell. When he moves into his new shell, he realizes that it is very plain. With the help of other sea creatures, he decorates his new shell.

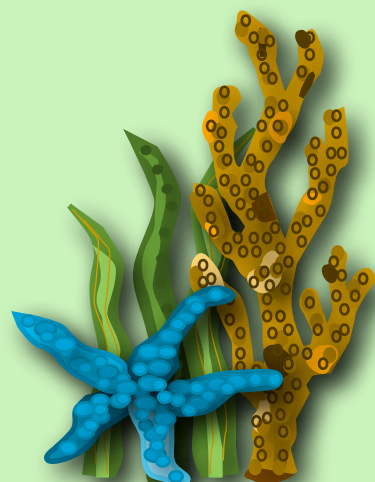
Ages: 3 to 7 years

Lexile: 550L

ATOS level: 3.7

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A House for Hermit Crab

Have you ever moved?

Topics: changes over time, months of the year

Activities To Do Together:

A House for Hermit Crab provides opportunities to talk with children about patterns, cycles, and routines that are related to time. Exploring the concept of time helps children develop expectations about what will happen at a particular time of day, week, month, or season; predict what may occur next; and plan what they want to do and when they will do it.

Before reading the book:

- Ask your child what they know about different types of homes for people and animals. A hermit crab is an interesting animal because it makes its home inside of a shell.
- Talk about what a hermit crab might look for when choosing a new home.

While reading the book:

- Count the sea creatures in the story.
- Compare the creatures that live on Hermit Crab's shell. How are they similar? How are they different?

When you have finished reading the book:

- If we were like hermit crabs, we would have to carry our homes with us everywhere that we go. Talk about the advantages and disadvantages of carrying your home with you everywhere that you go.
- Talk together about how Hermit Crab's shell changes over time in the story. Talk about how often and why a hermit crab might need to find a new home based on the story.
- At the end of the story, Hermit Crab moves again. Predict what his new shell will look like the following December. Make a collage to show what you think it will look like.
- Write a story that tells about Hermit Crab's journey to decorate his newest home.
- Talk about the different creatures living with Hermit Crab. Ask your child to tell you about how some of the creatures helped the other creatures. What did they do? Why was it helpful?
- A well decorated home was important to Hermit Crab. What would be important to you?

Questions for Mathematical Thinking:

1. Are you growing? How can you tell?
2. Hermit Crab asked a lot of creatures to help him decorate his house. Who would you ask to help you decorate your house? Why?
3. How many things does Hermit Crab have on his shell at the end? Count and find out.
4. What happened at the beginning of the story? What happened at the end? How are the beginning and the end of the story similar?

Early Math Project Resources:

Visit [A House for Hermit Crab](http://countplayexplore.org/book/a-house-for-hermit-crab) (countplayexplore.org/book/a-house-for-hermit-crab) to find activities and related California Learning Foundations and/or Mathematics Standards for this book.

Vocabulary

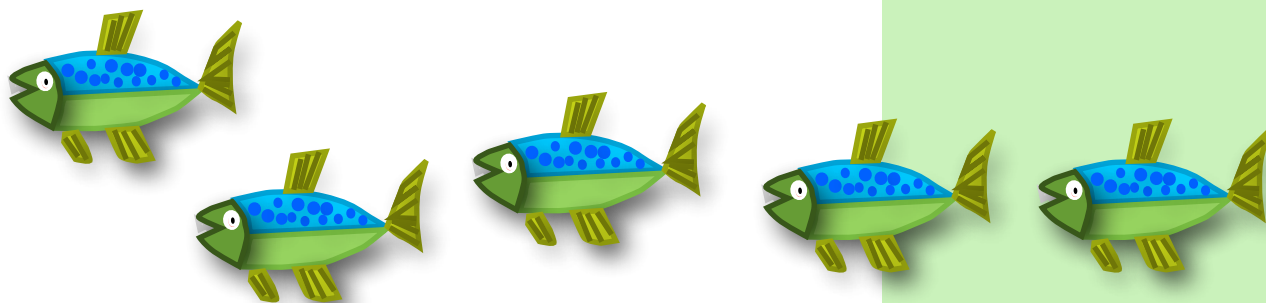
Math words found in the story: big, January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, December

Related math words: passage of time, one year, month

Words to build reading comprehension: snug, gingerly

Related Books: *Even an Octopus Needs a Home* by Irene Kelly; *Even an Ostrich Needs a Nest* by Irene Kelly; *Anno's Counting Book* by Mitsumasa Anno

Click this link to the [World Catalog](http://bit.ly/3mohrOP) or enter <http://bit.ly/3mohrOP> to find *A House for Hermit Crab* in the public library.



Math Connections:

Use *A House for Hermit Crab* to talk with your child about time and routines related to time. Hermit Crab selects a home, decorates it over months, grows, and becomes so big that he must start the process all over again. The story provides a timeline of what takes place in a year of the life of a hermit crab. Encourage your child to draw pictures to keep track of what happens during a week and use the pictures to explain their weekly routine and changes that took place over the week. Consider making a timeline with your child and noting the significant events that have occurred since your child's birth.

Explain that hermit crabs must look for larger shells to move into as they grow. Ask your child why they think hermit crabs need to do this. Ask your child what they have grown out of as they have gotten older. They may respond that they need larger clothes or shoes, a larger bed or chair, or have grown out of toys that they enjoyed when they were younger.

Talk with your child about the order in which Hermit Crab decorates his shell. What is the first creature to live on the shell, which is second, and what creatures come later?

At the end of the story, Hermit Crab must find a larger shell. Ask your child to predict what the crab will do and what his new home will look like based on the crab's former actions and the information in the story.

Discuss some of the problems that Hermit Crab encounters in the story and how the problems are solved. For example, how does the crab find a way to see in the dark forest of seaweed or how is the hermit crab able to leave all of the creatures who lived on or near his shell?

Count the number of sea creatures in the story and compare them. Are there more snails or sea urchins? How many sea anemones and starfish were there all together?

A House for Hermit Crab provides excellent opportunities to discuss differences and similarities. For example, how are sea anemones and starfish alike? How are they different? Consider similarities and differences in the ways the animals look and move. Which creatures swim? Which creatures crawl? Which creatures are attached to the ocean floor? Ask your child how they would sort the creatures into different groups. Children make sense of the environment as they sort, classify, and compare objects.

