



# Hermit Crab Day 1

TK-Kinder

## STEM THOUGHT FOR THE TEACHER:

*Children's delight in play is commonly accompanied by signs of positive affect (emotion) and expressions of joy. Although not essential, smiling and laughter are often signs of a playful orientation.*

*The Powerful Role of Play in Early Education  
California Department of Education, Sacramento, 2021*

## WELCOME (5 min)

### WELCOME:

Greet your students and talk about the word of the day—hermit crab.

Say: “Did you know that hermit crabs have very soft bodies and they need a shell to protect them? Hermit crabs cannot make their own shells. They use the shells that other sea creatures make. When a hermit crab grows, it has to find a new shell. They are constantly changing out their shells!”

Talk about the word of the day.

**HERMIT CRAB: A hermit crab is a soft-bodied crab that lives in an empty shell for protection.**

Refer to the picture gallery on the web page and take your students through the photographs of hermit crabs.

## WARM UP (10 min)

### STORY TIME:

**Instructions:** Read the story for the day.

It is titled “Ann-Nem-Oh-Nee finds Adventure”. Let students explore the pictures and enjoy the adventure. Students will already be familiar with tentacles from the jellyfish day.

## BIG QUESTION

**HOW DO HERMIT CRABS SWITCH SHELLS?**

**STEM TIME**

(30-60 min)

**Materials:**

- Cardboard boxes
- Butcher paper
- Crayons
- Tape (optional)
- Plastic or paper cups (optional)
- Streamers or fabric for ocean waves

**SHELL SWITCH**

Instructions: This activity is best to run outside, weather permitting. It also could work in an open indoor area where there is plenty of room for the kids to move around. Students will be pretending to be hermit crabs and anything that students can use as a shell will work. Use what you have easily available around you.

1. First watch and discuss the short class movie with your students. The movie was filmed with a spy robot crab that has a little camera in the shell! See how hermit crabs line up according to size to switch shells.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qUisYE5kOZI>

Say: "Today we are going to pretend we are hermit crabs! We get to make our own shells out of cardboard, fabric, or paper!"

2. Have students pretend to be hermit crabs. They can curl up on the ground or crouch down. If you have paper or plastic cups students can use them as crab claws to help the imaginative play.
3. Have butcher paper, cardboard boxes, fabric, or totes that students can turn into their make believe shells.
4. Have students get on the ground with their "shells" and try and move around. Allow them to have some imaginative play time to be hermit crabs.
5. One time during their play explain the game called "Shell switch!" Students switch shells according to the hermit crabs' size. Tell students to line up as best as they can according to their size and then switch shells just like real hermit crabs do!
6. Have fun switching shells like a hermit crab! Play some more!
7. Discuss what your students learned today.

Say: What was it like to move around like a hermit crab?

How do hermit crabs switch shells?

How did you know who to switch shells with?

Was it easy to line up according to size?

