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# IS THIS A HOUSE FOR HERMIT CRAB?

Author: Megan McDonald

Illustrator: S. D. Schindler

Publisher: Orchard Books

## THEME:

Everyone needs a home—a place to eat, sleep, take shelter, even raise a family!

## PROGRAM SUMMARY:

When Hermit Crab outgrows his old house, he ventures out to find a new one. Finding it becomes particularly humorous when that home is carried on the crab's back!

LeVar builds a house for the flying friends in his backyard while viewers watch the “Lifestyles of the Wild and Tameless” to see where a variety of animals live. Then viewers visit scientists who work in the city to protect and provide roosts for peregrine falcons.

## TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

Just like Hermit Crab in the story, children outgrow some of their possessions as they get bigger. Discuss with the students things that are now too small for them that were once just right. These might include clothing, shoes, toys, a chair, a bed, and other items. Talk about what they can do to replace something they outgrow and how it might be recycled and used again by another child, smaller than they are.

Invite students to share experiences they have had visiting an ocean, lake, pond, or river. What animals did they see? What objects did they find?

Discuss with students why people need homes (e.g., shelter from weather, protection from danger, warmth, etc.). Extend the discussion to include animals' needs for a home. Make comparisons.

## CURRICULUM EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

The sequential nature of this story makes it ideal for retelling by students. Flannel board or magnetic board pieces, actual objects that represent the “homes” Hermit Crab found, and puppets are possibilities for retelling.

Arrange to get a hermit crab from a pet store. Have students research what is needed to establish a habitat for the crab in the classroom. Allow students to share in the responsibility of caring for the hermit crab.

Make a chart with the students that requires them to recall the essential details of the story. On one side of the chart, write the seven homes that Hermit Crab found. On the other side, write the reason why each of the homes, except for one, would not work.

Have students look around the classroom for objects that might become a “home” for Hermit Crab. Since hermit crabs outgrow their shells and look for larger ones to move into, the objects should be arranged in order from small to large. Have students create reasons why the classroom “homes” will not work for Hermit Crab.

Have students research different types of crabs and locate information about their size, how they move, what they eat, where they live (on land or in the water), and find out if they change shells.

Invite the class to bring in shells and have the students sort them according to color, size, pattern on the shell, or other attributes they might suggest. Have them examine the shells and decide which ones might be a potential home for a hermit crab. Ask them to justify why some shells would be good possibilities and others would not.

Discuss animals that have shells. In what ways are the shells similar and different? What function does the shell serve for the animal? Can the animal go away and leave its shell behind?

Brainstorm a list of animal homes (e.g., hive, nest, web, cave, dam, tree, etc.) and have students identify animals that make their homes in those places. Discuss why the homes are appropriate for those animals. Give students a large sheet of paper with the sentence frame, “A \_\_\_\_\_ is a home for a \_\_\_\_\_,” written at the bottom. Have them fill in the blanks and illustrate the sentence. Bind the pages into a Big Book of “Animal Homes” for the classroom.

Have students research the usual habitat for a peregrine falcon. Discuss how these birds are able to survive in a big city. What might threaten them in the city? Why is it necessary for ornithologists to intervene?

Have students investigate what birds that live in their area like to eat. A zoo dietitian, game and parks representative, or bird expert from a college or university might offer advice. Make simple bird feeders to hang in trees in the school yard or for students to take home. A pine cone smeared with peanut butter and rolled in birdseed is easy to make. Filling the empty rind of half a grapefruit or orange or half a coconut shell with birdseed is another possibility. Several items, such as popcorn, raisins, dried fruits, cheese cubes, donuts, etc., may be strung and hung on trees for the birds.

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**RELATED THEMES:**

ocean habitat  
seashores  
houses and homes

**RELATED READING RAINBOW PROGRAMS:**

Program #88 — Seashore Surprises  
Program #116 — Fly Away Home  
Program #33 — Imogene's Antlers  
Program #67 — Jack, The Seal And The Sea

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**

Megan McDonald has worked as a children's librarian and storyteller. *Is This a House for Hermit Crab?* grew out of a story told with puppets to children at the library. She presently makes her home in California.

**ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR:**

S. D. Schindler was born in Wisconsin and enjoyed drawing from the time he was very young. His favorite subjects to draw were animals. Schindler has a degree in biology and has illustrated over 40 books. He is a self-taught artist and uses a variety of styles and media in his work.

**BOOKS REVIEWED BY CHILDREN:**

URBAN ROOSTS  
by Barbara Bash (Little Brown/Sierra)  
SPIDER'S WEB  
by Christine Back and Barrie Watts (Silver Burdett)  
BUSY, BUSY SQUIRRELS  
by Colleen Stanley Bare (Cobblehill/Dutton)

**SUPPLEMENTARY BOOKLIST:**

CRABS  
by Donna Bailey and Christine Butterworth (Steck-Vaughn)  
ANIMAL HOMES: SEASHORE  
by Robert Burton, photos by Oxford Scientific Films (Newington Press)  
A HOUSE FOR HERMIT CRAB  
by Eric Carle (Picture Book Studio)  
A HOUSE IS A HOUSE FOR ME  
by Mary Ann Hoberman, illus. by Betty Fraser (Viking)

**MOVING DAY**

by Robert Kalan, illus. by Yossi Abolafia (Greenwillow)

**THE CRAB THAT PLAYED WITH THE SEA**

by Rudyard Kipling, illus. by Michael Foreman (Peter Bedrick)

**WHY THE CRAB HAS NO HEAD**

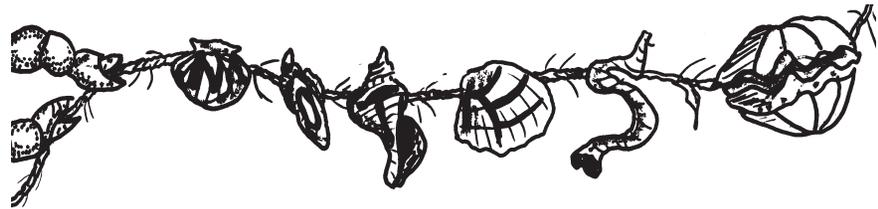
by Barbara Knutson (Carolrhoda)

**THE SHELL BOOK**

by Barbara Hirsch Lember (Houghton Mifflin)

**WHAT'S INSIDE? SHELLS**

by Angela Royston, photos by Andreas von Einsiedel (DK)



LeVar sets out to build a bird house, prompting an examination of animal habitats. Eartha Kitt reads the story of a growing hermit crab, who is now too large for his current shell, and all the difficulties he has trying to find a new place to live, all the while trying to avoid predators who want to eat him. Disney+ is bringing some exciting new movies and series to their catalog of classics! Check out what's streaming this month. See the full list. Around The Web. | Powered by ZergNet. Create a list ». User Lists. Related lists from IMDb users. Children's DVD Features - R-S. a list of 399 titles created 10 Oct 2013. See all related lists ». Photos. Add Image Add an image. Do you have any images for this title? Edit.