

Activity Plan for Hermit Crab Game – Lively Physical Activity with Metaphysical Message

Duration 30 to 40mins

This activity needs little more than a large space – outdoors is best

Optional – Show pictures of types of homes and the animals that live in them.
Nests, shells, burrows, sets, webs, hives, caves, tents and types of houses

Ask - “What happens if we leave our home and can’t find another home?”

Explain or show pictures and films of hermit crabs changing shells. This link to BBC Earth 4 minute film clip is a good one -

<https://youtu.be/f1dnocPQXDQ>

Before you start children need to know that when a hermit crab leaves a shell they must find another bigger shell quickly or be eaten or roasted by the sun.

Outdoors or in a large space -

Warm-up challenge make a crab



Warm up challenge make a shell



Divide the group into equal groups of crabs and shells. Use an adult to make an even number of each if necessary

GO! The 'Crabs' find a shell and crawl underneath

Message - Creatures need shelter. It's good when there is enough shelter for everyone.



Everyone relaxes and the teacher explains that they are a shell collector and you take one 'shell' away. This 'shell' joins you as a team of collectors.

GO! The crabs must find a new home but one crab will be left without a shell.

- Before continuing, ask what is going to happen to this crab with no shelter?
- The options are to move to a new beach or be eaten or roast in the sun
- This 'crab' can join the shell collectors and gets help to select another shell

GO! Repeat a few times but leave a few surviving crabs

- Start again and reverse the roles of crabs and shells

Alternative – Everyone gets in size order as a crab and shell. (Smallest crab with the smallest shell - biggest child with the biggest shell). The biggest crab gets a new home and every crab can "move to a bigger home but they must be quick because the sun is hot".

Sit in a circle and discuss the consequences of

- Removing shells from beaches
- Destruction of shelters for other species – and ways of preserving habitats and preventing extinctions of any species

The message can be taken further to –

- Destruction of shelters for humans (war/ famine/ floods / failing ecosystems) and ways of maintaining and providing shelter for all