



HERMIT CRAB MORPHOLOGY WORKSHEET

Hermit crabs are **crustaceans** that protect their soft, curled abdomen by living inside empty gastropod (snail) shells. By studying their body parts and comparing species, we can understand how their shape, claws, and legs help them survive in different habitats.

FIND A HERMIT CRAB

Check out WORKSHEET BE19 (Animal Tracks & Homes : Hermit Crabs) for super tips on where to look, how to spot their trails, and where they like to hide.

PART 1: LOOK, COUNT, AND OBSERVE

Legs & Claws

Look closely at the hermit crab you are observing. Count the limbs sticking out of the shell (including its pincers/claws).

How many legs do you see? _____

Total Leg Count: _____

Antennae (Feelers)

Look at the crab's head near its eyes. Count the feelers sticking out.

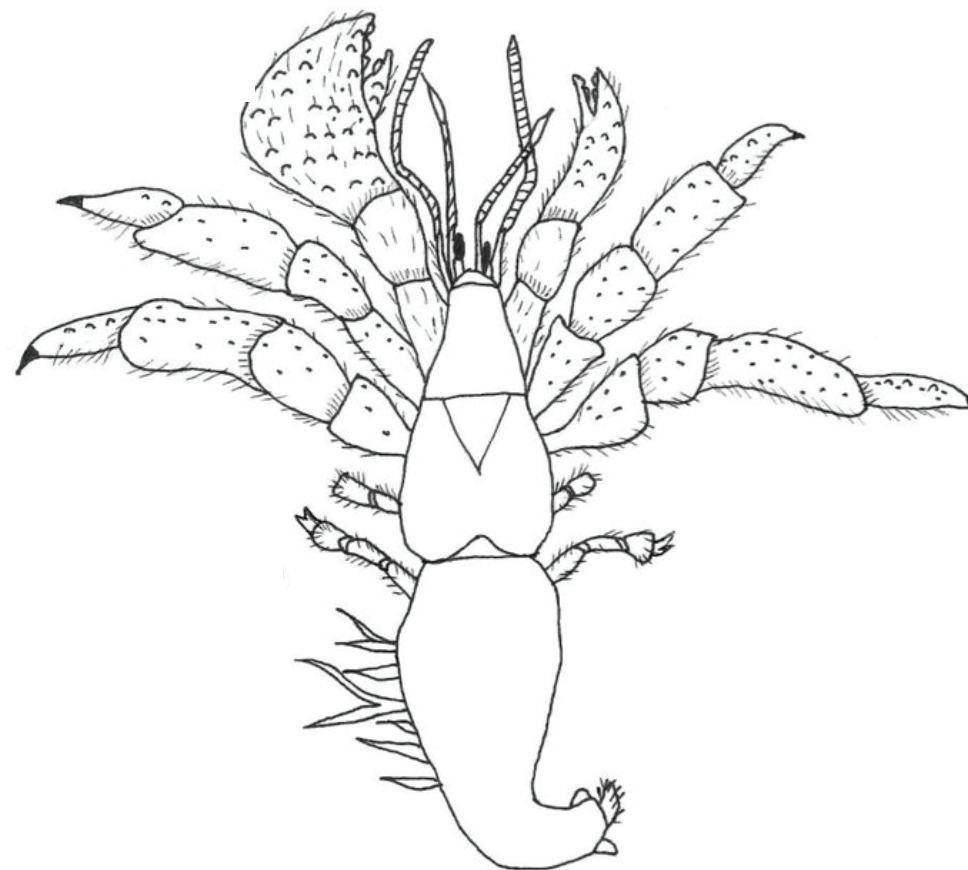
How many total antennae do you see? _____

PART 2: LABEL THE HERMIT CRAB

Label each body part on the hermit crab diagram using words from the Word Bank.

Word Bank:

Cephalothorax	Abdomen	Chelipeds (Claws)	Walking Legs
Antennae	Eyes	Small Rear Legs	Pleopods



PART 3. HERMIT CRAB SHELL

Where does the shell go? Draw a shell over the hermit crab

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VOCABULARY AND HINTS

Crustacean: An animal that usually has a hard outer shell (exoskeleton) and two pairs of antennae (feelers).

PART 1: LOOK, COUNT, AND OBSERVE

Legs & Claws

Look closely at the hermit crab you are observing. Count the limbs sticking out of the shell (including its pincers/claws).

How many legs do you see outside the shell? _____

(Hint: You should see 6 visible limbs – 2 pincers and 4 walking legs.)

Inside the Shell:

There are 4 small rear legs hidden inside the shell. These act like tiny grappling hooks, gripping the inner walls of the shell so the crab does not fall out.

Total Leg Count:

Add the legs outside the shell to the hidden legs inside the shell:

6 visible legs + 4 hidden legs = _____ total legs

Decapod: An animal with 10 legs (deca = ten, pod = foot)

Antennae (Feelers)

Look at the crab's head near its eyes. Count the feelers sticking out.

How many total antennae do you see? _____

(Hint: Look closely! Crustaceans have 2 pairs. There are 2 long feelers and 2 short feelers = 4 antennae total.)

PART 2: LABEL THE HERMIT CRAB

Eyes : Eyes on stick-like stalks used to look all around.

Antennae : Long and short feelers used to touch, smell, and taste things.

Cephalothorax : The main front body area (head and chest) covered by a hard shell.

Chelipeds (Claws) : Big front claws used to grab food and block the shell opening.

Walking Legs : The 4 main legs used for walking and crawling across sand.

Small Rear Legs : Tiny back legs hidden inside that hold tightly onto the shell.

Abdomen : The soft, squishy, curled tail protected inside the shell.

Pleopods : Small appendages on the abdomen used to carry eggs and help secure the body inside the shell.

PART 3: DRAW THE SHELL

The shell should cover the abdomen and small rear legs on the back end, while the eyes, antennae, cheliped claws, and walking legs stick out from the front opening

MY NOTES