

Constructed Response Questions – Grade 5 2013

From SBAC portal – Practice Test Scoring Guides at SBAC.com

New Homes for Hermit Crabs

by Bart King

Hermit crabs are nature's recyclers. Like many other crabs, the hermit crab eats waste. By living on sea scraps, hermit crabs help keep oceans and shores clean. Some hermit crabs hide in reefs or live in shallow waters, while others scuttle on the ocean floor. There are also hermit crabs that spend most of their lives ashore.

Unlike other crabs, the hermit crab has a thin outer shell over its soft tail. This makes the hermit crab easy prey for hungry predators. Hermit crabs stay safe by living in old seashells. A hermit crab is picky; it tries on many shells until it finds one that fits just right. The hermit crab backs into its new home and uses its tail and rear legs to grab onto the shell and carry it. If a predator shows up, the crab retreats into its shell and blocks the entrance with its strong claws.

During a lifetime, one hermit crab will inhabit many different seashells. As a hermit crab grows, the crab leaves its home, upgrading to a larger shell. In recent years, however, many hermit crabs have had trouble finding their perfect homes. What is the problem? There are not enough shells to go around!

One reason for the seashell shortage is that ocean water is not as clean as it once was. This has caused chemical changes to seawater. Some sea animals, like snails, are affected by these changes. Now there are fewer snails making shells. People visiting the beach often take shells home as souvenirs. This is another problem. Other people even take shells for their own pet hermit crabs! They do not realize that hermit crabs in the wild need those shells too.

The hermit crabs in the ocean have learned to adapt to the changing housing situation. Like the good recyclers they are, hermit crabs started moving into small bottles, plastic cups, and other ocean litter. None of these are very good choices for crabs.

Now people are working to solve this hermit crab housing shortage. They are teaching beach-goers to leave seashells where they belong—at the seashore! Some people even make fake seashells that they hope the hermit crabs will like. For example, a group called Project Shellter invited people who visited their Web site to create different designs for hermit crab shells.

These designers had a lot to consider. What kind of material should be used to build a seashell? The material must be light enough for the hermit crab to carry, but strong enough to protect the crab from predators. The fake shells could not contain glue or any other substance that might harm a hermit crab. Another challenge with building a hermit crab home was the opening to the shell. Too big would mean the crab would not feel safe. Too small would be uncomfortable, and the crab would not want to move in.

Project Shellter designs were tested on hermit crabs in two aquariums. That way, project leaders could watch the crabs to find out which shells were their favorites. The most popular of these new hermit crab homes are made of plastic, but they look like real seashells.

These artificial shells have two important purposes. First, people who own hermit crabs can give them to their pets. That keeps real seashells in the ocean, rather than in home aquariums. The Project Shellter shells are also placed in the wild for hermit crabs to find. Lucky hermit crabs can move into these new dream homes and leave those plastic cups behind.



Project Shellter is helping hermit crabs by creating artificial shells for them to use as shelters. Explain the process that is used in designing and selecting the shells. Use details from the text to support your answer.

Type your answer in the space provided.

A two-point response includes a correct description of the process that is used to design and select artificial shells for hermit crabs. Responses must also use direct evidence from the text. Responses are not scored for grammar usage, conventions, spelling, or punctuation.

Sample two-point response:

First, they consider the kind of material to use, to be sure it is light enough and contains nothing that might be toxic for the crabs. And then, they consider the size of the shell opening, to be sure it is not too small or too large.

A one-point response gives a correct description of the process that is used to design and select artificial shells for hermit crabs with limited or missing evidence from the text.

Sample one-point response:

They must consider the kind of material to use and then test the shell opening.

A response that provides no evidence from the text to describe the process of selecting a shell for hermit crabs receives no credit.

Sample zero-point response:

Project Shellter is helping design new shells for crabs.



Read the sentence and the directions that follow.

The hermit crabs in the ocean have learned to adapt to the changing housing situation.

Using details from the text, define the word adapt and explain how the crabs have adapted.

Type your answer in the space provided.

A two-point response defines the word adapt based on context and explains the word's meaning in relation to hermit crabs. Responses are not scored for grammar usage, conventions, spelling, or punctuation.

Sample two-point response:

The word "adapt" means to change one's behavior in response to a changing situation. Since they cannot find seashells, the crabs have adapted by using other materials, such as cups, bottles, and other litter, for homes.

A one-point response provides a limited definition of the word adapt or attempts to explain the word's meaning in relation to hermit crabs.

Sample one-point response:

Adapt means they used cups and garbage instead of shells.

A response that does not explain the meaning of the word adapt or relate it to the text receives no credit.

Sample zero-point response:

The crabs are smart because they learned how to adapt.



People affect hermit crabs in many ways. Using **at least two** details from the text, explain whether people have a positive or a negative effect on hermit crabs.

Type your answer in the space provided.

A two-point response uses two details from the text to explain whether people have a positive or a negative effect on hermit crabs. Responses are not scored for grammar usage, conventions, spelling, or punctuation.

Sample two-point response:

People have more negative effects on hermit crabs than positive effects because people are the reason crabs have a seashell shortage. People litter, which causes hermit crabs to try to use trash as homes, and this causes chemical changes in the oceans. People also take seashells from the beach to take home as souvenirs or for their pets. That means there are fewer shells for wild hermit crabs. Hermit crabs would not have a problem at all if it weren't for people.

A one-point response uses one detail from the text to explain whether people have a positive or a negative effect on hermit crabs.

Sample one-point response:

People cause more problems for hermit crabs than they solve. There are companies trying to solve the seashell shortage problems by making artificial shells, but they wouldn't need to if people weren't stealing the homes of the hermit crabs in the first place.

A response that does not use appropriate details from the text to explain the effect people have on hermit crabs receives no credit.

Sample zero-point response:

People affect hermit crabs in positive ways when they keep them as pets in their homes.



Explain why the author calls hermit crabs “nature’s recyclers.” Use details from the text to support your answer.

Type your answer in the space provided.

A two-point response uses evidence from the text to explain why the author calls hermit crabs “nature’s recyclers”. Responses are not scored for grammar usage, conventions, spelling, or punctuation.

Sample two-point response:

The author calls hermit crabs “nature’s recyclers” because they eat waste, keeping oceans and shores clean. They also “recycle” old shells to use as their homes. When no shells are available, they use plastic cups, bottles, or other ocean litter.

A one-point response uses limited details from the text to explain why hermit crabs are called “nature’s recyclers” by the author.

Sample one-point response:

The author calls hermit crabs “nature’s recyclers” because they eat waste.

Sample zero-point response:

A response that uses no details from the text to explain why hermit crabs are called “nature’s recyclers” receives no credit.

Hermit crabs live in shells.



A student is writing a narrative story about a mystery for English class. She has shown her draft to the teacher, who suggests that she continue writing, and include details in the narrative. Read these sentences from the story. Then, read the directions that follow.

"I lost another pencil!" Henry moaned after recess.

"My ruler is gone," Jill whispered. "I wonder where they went."

The next day, Henry and Jill decided to come in early from recess to help the teacher set up for a class project. As they entered the classroom, Jill noticed that the animal cage was open and Gibbers, the class gerbil, was missing!

Write **at least two** paragraphs to finish the story. Use narrative strategies such as dialogue and description as you complete the story.

Type your answer in the space provided.

A two-point response uses narrative strategies such as dialogue and description to adequately conclude the story. Responses are not scored for grammar usage, conventions, spelling, or punctuation.

Sample two-point response:

Jill looked in the bookshelf, where Gibbers liked to go on short walks. But he wasn't there. He wasn't even hiding behind his favorite encyclopedia. Before too long, the kids gave up to get materials ready for the class project.

Just as she started to cut out shapes, Jill heard a rattling noise come from inside her desk.

"Don't scare him," Henry said.

"Sshh," Jill said.

But before she could open the lid, Gibbers poked his nose up through the pencil holder. In his teeth was the last inch of her ruler. Jill and Henry looked at each other and laughed. Now they knew where their school supplies had gone!

A one-point response uses some dialogue or description to conclude the story.

Sample one-point response:

Henry and Jill looked all over for Gibbers. He reminded Jill of her hamster, Frederick, who usually got stuck inside a drawer at home. They finally found him by just by waiting and listening. He was inside the cupboard at the back of the class, where the cupcakes for Jill's birthday had been waiting.

A response that does not provide dialogue or description to conclude the story receives no credit.

Sample zero-point response:

They didn't find the pencil or the ruler.



A student has been doing research on the topic of allowing students to have cell phones in schools for an opinion article in the school newspaper. Read the notes and the directions that follow.

Reasons Students Should Be Allowed to Have Cell Phones in School:	Reasons Students Should <u>Not</u> Be Allowed to Have Cell Phones in School:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there is an emergency, students can get help. • Students can contact family members if they need them. • Parents can contact their children. • Cell phones have tools that are helpful like calculators. • Students can use cell phones to do research. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students may forget to turn off their phones and they might interrupt class. • Students may be more interested in their cell phones than in their schoolwork. • Phones may help a student cheat on classwork. • Students may get onto the Internet during class.

Write an article that is **at least three** paragraphs long about your opinion on whether or not cell phones should be allowed in school. Be sure to include reasons for your opinion as well as support for your reasons. Be sure to use details from the notes in the table using your own words as needed.

Type your answer in the space provided.

A two-point response provides appropriate and specific details and uses appropriate word choices for the intended audience and purpose. Students may choose either side of the debate as long as they use ideas from the chart to support their thinking. They may also use prior knowledge to generate reasons of their own, as long as they also use reasons from the chart to support their opinion.

Sample two-point response:

Students should be allowed to use cell phones in school. Cell phones have many uses that can benefit students in their classwork as well as in an emergency.

For many students, a cell phone is more than a way to communicate. It has many tools that are helpful. For instance, a student may use the calculator on a phone. Also, many phones have calendars to help students stay organized. Another reason why students should be allowed to have cell phones at school is because they can reach their parents in case of an emergency. Sometimes students need to contact their family to let them know they are staying after school. This way, students can have better communication with their families.

On the flip side, sometimes families need to contact their child and don't want to bother the class. Families can send a simple text to a student. Then the student can contact them during lunch or free time.

Some people think that cell phones will be distracting and allow students to cheat.

However, teachers can take care of this problem by making students keep their phones in their backpacks during class time unless there is an emergency.

For these reasons, I believe that students should be allowed to have cell phones in class. The benefits of cell phones far outweigh the downsides.

A one-point response provides mostly general details and evidence, but may include extraneous or loosely related details.

Sample one-point response:

Students should be allowed to have cell phones in class because they have tools that are helpful to learning. Many phones have a calculator and that way a student doesn't need to buy one to bring to school. Many phones also have calendars to help organize students. This is why students should be allowed to bring a cell phone to class.

A response that includes few supporting details or is vague, repetitive, or incorrect receives no credit.

Sample zero-point response:

Students should be allowed to bring cell phones to school so that they can make plans with their friends.



This paragraph was written by a student for a social studies paper. It contains an error in grammar. Read the paragraph and the directions that follow.

This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

(1) The most important holiday in China is the Spring Festival or Chinese New Year. (2) It is celebrated on the first day of the first month in the Chinese calendar. (3) People all over China travel home to visit their relatives. (4) They celebrate the New Year. (5) With lots of good food such as noodles, fish, and dumplings.

Part A: Identify which sentence is incomplete. **Part B:** Rewrite the incomplete sentence so it is correct.

Type your answer in the space provided.

A two-point response includes a correct identification of the incomplete sentence and a corrected version of the combined sentences.

Sample two-point response:

The fifth sentence is incomplete. It should be combined with the previous sentence:
“They celebrate the New Year with lots of good food such as noodles, fish, and dumplings.”

A one-point response includes correct identification of the incomplete sentence without a corrected version of the sentence or a corrected version of the incomplete sentence without an identification.

Sample one-point response:

Sentence 5 is a sentence fragment. It needs to be longer.

A response that does not identify any error in sentence structure receives no credit.

Sample zero-point response:

Sentence 4 is not very descriptive.



A principal has asked students to write opinion articles about whether or not electronic reading devices are helpful to students in school. Read the following paragraphs from two different articles. Then, read the directions that follow.

Article 1

Electronic devices have changed the way students read. We can read on our computers, our gaming devices, and even on our phones! Some people feel that reading can be easier on an electronic device. Most electronic devices have a dictionary and access to unlimited games and programs. You can follow a link to find your topic on the Internet. You can choose a special voice and have the text read out loud to you. The light of the screen will allow you to read anywhere, even in the dark. These features make reading fun. Furthermore, devices are small, which means traveling with them in cars or on buses makes them even more convenient. The cost of electronic readers is also appealing. Less expensive devices can be purchased for less than \$100.

Article 2

Supporters agree that electronic readers and tablets are suited for today's fast-paced, modern learning environments. Interactive and visual tools are helpful as teachers work with students and appeal to the different needs of learners. Many teachers ask their students to read in school every day. Teachers make this time because they feel reading is important. Students are allowed to read any book or magazine they choose, but some students may want to bring an electronic reader to school. Others believe this is not a good idea because you can do more than read on an electronic reader. You can search the Web or the Internet. You can play games. Students can pretend to read during this time but really be searching the Web or playing a game. These devices also allow students to be distracted at other times instead of working or paying attention in class. It is better to leave an electronic reader at home.

Which opinion article has the **best** support and should be used in the school newspaper? Explain why that article is more appropriate for the school newspaper, using information from the articles to support your reasoning.

Type your answer in the space provided.

A two-point response identifies Source 2 as more appropriate. It also uses relevant details from the source to support this conclusion.

Sample two-point response:

Article 2 is more relevant to the principal's request because it actually talks about students in classes and how the devices will affect their behavior. The article says that students will just pretend to read instead of actually reading when the teacher says, which is bad because reading is important.

A one-point response includes either a correct identification or a correct detail.

Sample one-point response:

The principal wants to know if electronic readers are useful but the paragraph says that students can be distracted and not pay attention in class.

A response that does not include either a correct identification or a correct detail receives no credit.

Sample zero-point response:

Source 1 is more fun to read because it tells you how you can read on your phone.