Sunshine

PASSAGES

Read the passages and choose the correct answers.

Hermit crabs occupy the empty shells of dead sea snails for protection while still retaining their mobility. They are capable of discriminating among a selection of shells of various sizes and species, and they choose the one that fits the body most closely. Hermit crabs change shells as they grow, although in some marine environments a large enough variety of shells may not be available and the hermit crab may be forced to occupy a smaller-than-ideal "house". When a shell becomes too small for the hermit crab to occupy, it will sometimes become aggressive and fight other hermit crabs to gain a larger shell.

Hermit crabs may encounter empty shells in the course of their daily activity, but the vacant shell is usually spotted by sight. The hermit crab's visual response increases with the size of an object and its contrast against the background. The hermit crab then seizes the shell with its walking legs and climbs on it, monitoring its size. If the size is right, the crab investigates its shape and texture by rolling it over between its walking legs and running its claws over the surface. Once the shell's opening has been located, the crab uses its claws to remove any foreign material before preparing to enter. The crab rises above the opening, flexes its abdomen, and enters the shell backward. The shell interior is monitored by the abdomen as the crab repeatedly enters and withdraws. When completely satisfied with its new mobile home, the hermit crab will emerge one last time, turn the shell over and make a final entrance.

1. Hermit crabs occupy vacant shells for _____.

   A. mobility B. flexibility C. protection D. discrimination

2. A hermit crab changes shells when it _____.

   A. outgrows the one it has B. hunts for food

   C. becomes aggressive D. locates any vacant shell

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3. The way in which hermit crabs locate empty shells is through which of the following senses?

A. Hearing B. Touch C. Taste D. Sight

4. A crab investigates a vacant shell for all of the following EXCEPT _____.

A. size B. type C. shape D. texture

5. A hermit crab settles into its new 'mobile home' _____.

A. after entering and leaving several times

B. without inspecting the interior first

C. Immediately after locating the shell opening

D. after fighting other hermit crabs for a larger shell

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Wood has long been a popular building material in North America because it has generally been plentiful and cheap. Swedish settlers in Delaware built log cabins as early as 1630s. In New England, British colonists built wooden 'saltbox houses'. Most of the wooden homes of Colonial times could be built with simple tools and minimal skills.

In the early 19th century, the standard wooden house was built with beams set into heavy posts and held together with wooden pegs. This method of construction was time-consuming and required highly skilled workers with special tools. The balloon-frame house, invented in 1833 in Chicago by a carpenter from Hartford, Connecticut, used a frame of lightweight lumber, mostly 2x4 and 2x6 inches. This type of house could be assembled by any careful worker who could saw in a straight line and drive a nail.

This revolution in building was made possible by improved sawmills that could quickly cut boards to standard sizes and the lower cost of lumber that resulted. There were also new machines that could produce huge quantities of inexpensive nails. Skeptics predicted that a strong wind could send such houses flying through the air like balloons and, at first 'balloon frame' was a term of derision. But the light frames proved practical, and wooden houses have been basically built this way ever since.

6. According to the passage, where did the inventor of the balloon-frame house originally come from?

A. Connecticut B. Chicago C. Sweden D. Delaware

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7. The author implies that which of the following types of houses required the most skill to produce?
   A. The log cabin built by Swedish settlers
   B. Saltbox houses
   C. Standard wooden houses of the early 19th century
   D. balloon-frame houses

8. All of the following are factors in the development of the balloon-frame house EXCEPT _____.
   A. the invention of sophisticated tools
   B. the production of cheap nails
   C. improvements in sawmills
   D. the falling price of lumber

9. According to the passage, why was the term balloon-frame applied to certain houses?
   A. They could be moved from place to place.
   B. They could be easily expanded.
   C. They had rounded frames that slightly resembled balloons.
   D. They were made of lightweight materials.

10. Most of the wooden houses of Colonial times were
   A. difficult to build
   B. easy to build
   C. demanding
   D. challenging