

EGG-CELLENT CRABS!

Did you know a female shore crab can lay up to 185,000 eggs at a time!?

Many animals on the rocky shore, including crabs, starfish and certain fish, will look after their eggs until they hatch, rather than releasing them into the water.

Class Maths activity - How many eggs?

Give each child a sheet of graph paper and ask them to calculate how many of the smallest squares there are on their sheet.

Then ask them to calculate how many sheets of graph paper would be needed to make 185,000 squares.

Get the required number of children to stand in a row, holding their pieces of graph paper together.

Alternatively arrange them around the classroom.

Then ask each child to think of a number that is significant to them, e.g number of children in the class or in the school. Get them to colour in the relevant number of squares, perhaps calculating what percentage of the total it is.

185,000 shore crab's eggs make a ball about 2-3cm across which the female keeps on her belly, tucked under her tail. Ask the class to imagine how big a pile of 185,000 hens eggs would be!



Extension questions:

Q2. A free range hen lays around 200 eggs in a year. How many years would it take her to lay as many eggs as a crab does?

Q3. Why can't animals which lay larger eggs (for example a hen) lay the same number of eggs as a crab?

Q4. Why do crabs (and many other sea creatures) produce so many eggs?