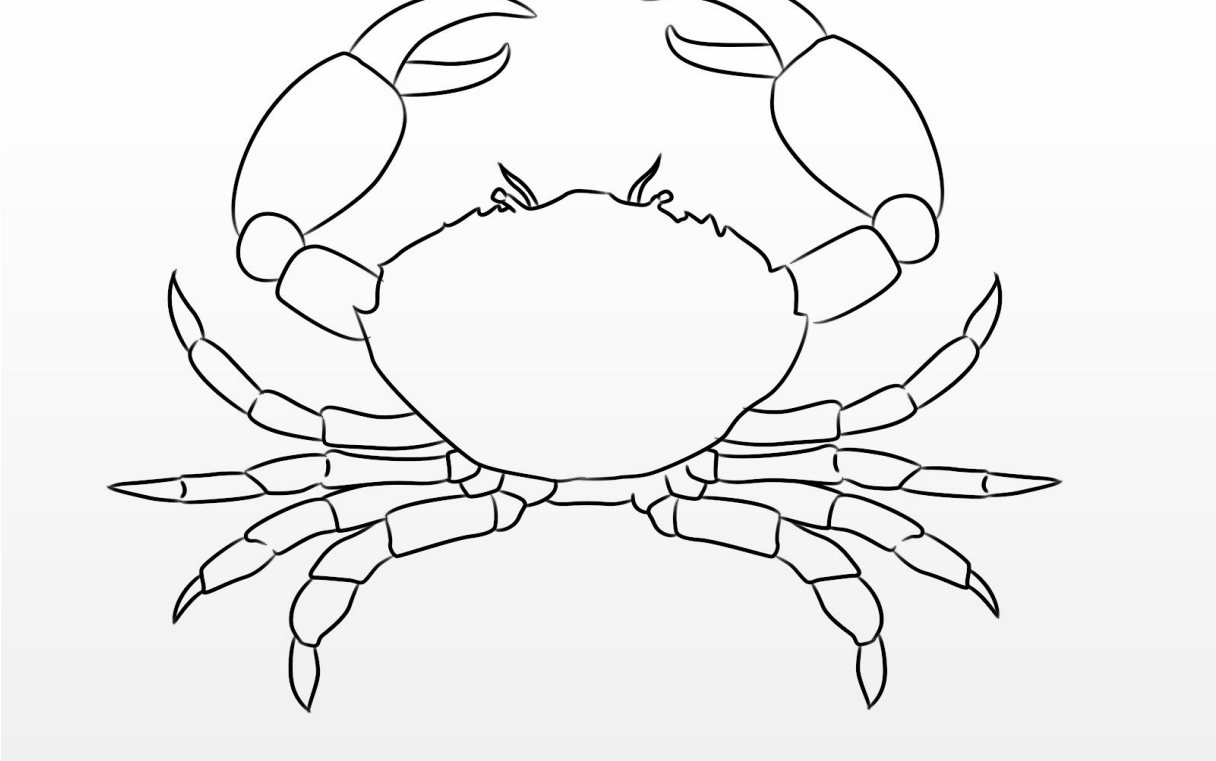


Crab Lab!



Crabs are amazing invertebrates! They belong to a group of animals called *crustaceans* because of their strong exoskeleton, paired claws, and antennae. Color the crab, label its body parts, and answer the questions below:

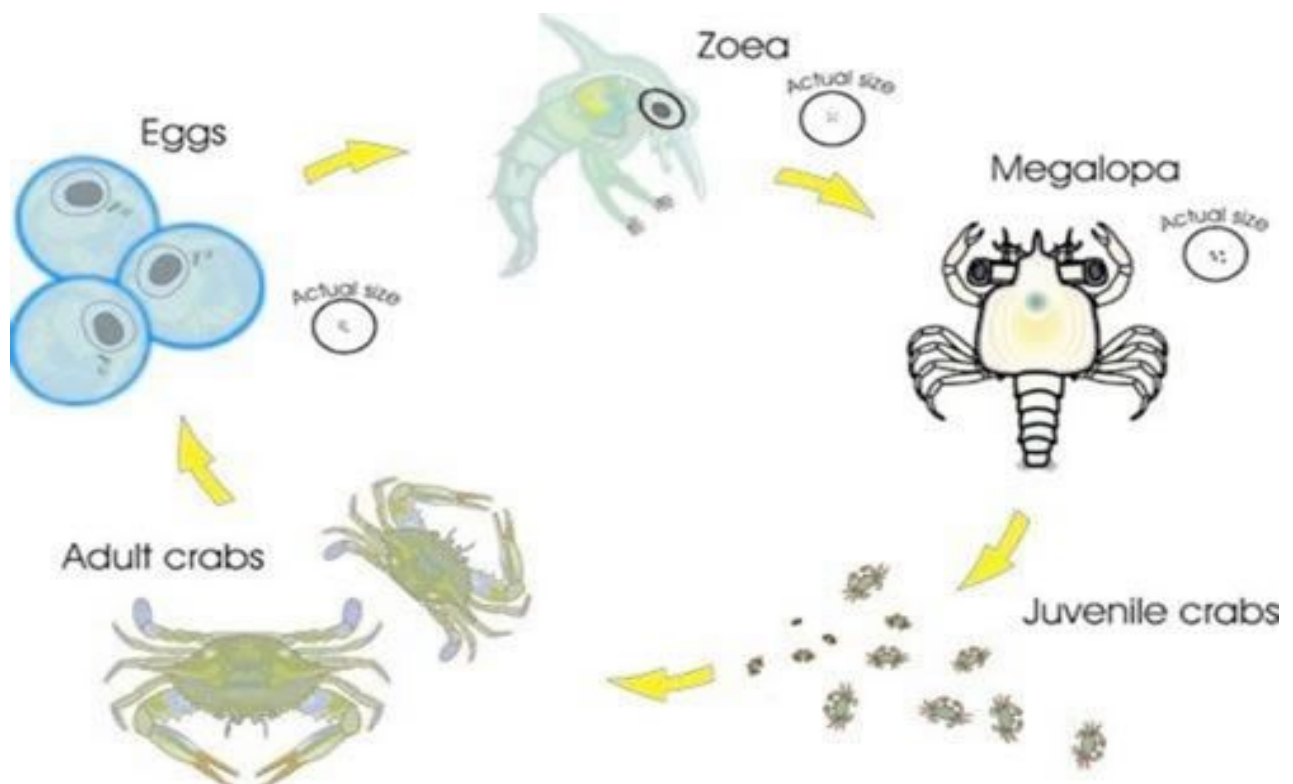


Claws	Antennae	Eyes	Carapace (body)
Walking legs	Swimming legs	Mouth	

1. How does an exoskeleton help a crab survive?
2. What is the purpose/function for each of their body parts listed above?
3. Many crabs have a flattened body shape and walk sideways instead of forwards and backwards. How do you think this helps them survive in their habitat? (Hint: they can often be found along rocky coastlines)

Cycle of Life:

Some invertebrates go through many changes while they are growing into adults. This change is called *metamorphosis*. For example, butterflies start their lives as caterpillars, then carefully build a cocoon to protect themselves while their bodies go through many different changes before becoming a butterfly. Crabs are a marine invertebrate that begin their lives looking nothing like a crab! Below is a picture of the different stages a crab goes through while becoming an adult:



While crabs go through these stages, they have to shed their exoskeleton so that their soft body can grow. This is called *molting*. Vertebrates do not have an exoskeleton to molt because their backbone and skeleton can grow inside them along with the rest of their body.

Follow directions on the [second Crab Lab link](#) to make your own crab life cycle!