

# Houston Zoo at Home

## OBSERVING THE MASAI GIRAFFE HERD

### Count the Spots

Age: 3-6

For this project watch the Giraffe Feeding Video with keepers Heather and John.  
[Click here to watch!](#)

Count how many spots Bobbie and Joshua have. As you heard from our keeper Heather, Joshua has a different skin color than Bobbie. What other differences can you see? Draw your best comparison of these two giraffes side by side.

We love our giraffe herd. Show us you love them too through your drawings below!

**Share your project with us!**

Tag your photo using #HoustonZoo or email us your story at [communications@houstonzoo.org](mailto:communications@houstonzoo.org).

# Webcam Ethogram

Age: 12-16

Use the Houston Zoo’s web cam to watch our giraffe herd for this project. [Click here to watch live.](#)

An ethogram is a catalog of observations our Zookeepers do to monitor our animals. A good ethogram is objective and documents an observation of exactly what was seen. There are many different types. For example, it can be done chronologically as a timed study where an observer sets a timer, chooses an animal to observe and notes what the animal is doing when the timer goes off. It could also be creating a list of expected behaviors and documenting how many times each is observed

For this activity, use the Zoo’s web cam to watch our giraffe herd and observe all of the animals for 5 minutes. List each behavior you see in the column below labeled “behavior”.

Examples: Sleeping, walking, sparring, eating, preening (grooming), dancing, wing flaps, etc.

After that 5 minutes, choose one of the animals to watch set a timer for 10 minutes and record the number of times that animal does a behavior. Be sure to include walks off screen, as the animal may move out of sight!

Once you are done, chart your observations and answer the questions below.

BEHAVIOR	NUMBER OF TIMES OBSERVED

What was the most common behavior you observed?

What do you think that behavior means?

What do you think the giraffe feels when they do that behavior?

What was the least observed behavior?

Why do you think you did not see if as much as others?

Categorize the behavior you observed. What are the major categories?

What behavior did you expect to see but did not? Why do you think you did not see it?

How might the behaviors be different if the Houston Zoo was full of guests?

As an added challenge, repeat this exercise with another Zoo’s giraffe webcam and compare.

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