

Houston Zoo at Home

MONGOOSE MOB

Mongoose Game

Ages: 3 – 8

Mongoose live in underground communities and often have several exits and entrances to their tunnel systems.

1. Print out five photos of a mongoose and five photos of any other animal your child can identify (elephant, lion, or giraffe).
2. Place and tape down the five photos in three rows and mix up where the mongoose is vs the other animals.
3. Have the player sit in front of the rows and use their hands to cover their eyes.
4. Call out an animal on the board and as soon as you do, have your player uncover their eyes and quickly touch the photo of the animal that was called out.

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| Mongoose | Elephant | Tiger |
| Bear | Mongoose | Mongoose |
| Cheetah | Mongoose | Lion |

Materials Needed:

- Five photos of zoo mongoose or internet mongoose
- Five photos of various other easy to identify animals like a flamingo, elephant, zebra, giraffe, snake, cobra, or beetle.
- Tape

Level Up Challenge: Print out words instead of pictures.

Share your project with us!

Tag your photo using #HoustonZoo or email us your story at communications@houstonzoo.org.

Designing Enrichment

Ages: 8-16

For this activity watch the video of Zookeeper Brian and the Zoo's mongoose mob.
[Click here to watch!](#)

Every animal at the Houston Zoo interacts with enrichment. The purpose of enrichment is to provide the animals in our care with opportunities to exercise both their bodies and their minds, while reinforcing natural behaviors. Enrichment can be anything from a puzzle feeder, which requires the animal to manipulate the feeder a certain way in order to get the treat within, to perching or platforms in the exhibit for climbing, to new scents placed in the exhibit, to large and small toys, balls, and ropes.

Enrichment is also species-specific. The elephants are not given platforms to crawl on and over, like the jaguars or clouded leopards. Instead, they have their pool to swim in and puzzle feeders that require them to use their trunks to pull out food. Our gorillas may be given tubes with peanut butter inside, and they must determine a way to remove the peanut butter using their fingers or other tools. Our rhinos, on the other hand, are given a large mud-pit to wallow in and various items to use to scratch and rub against.

While watching the video of Children's Zookeeper Brian and the Zoo's mongoose mob, what enrichment items can you identify? If you were a keeper for mongoose, what type of enrichment would you design? Using recycled materials from around your home, can you create your enrichment items?

Level Up Challenge: For those with animals at home, create an enrichment item for your pet! If you share photos or video with us, explain why you created the item you did and how it will benefit your pet.

Share your project with us!

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