

Houston Zoo at Home

GALAPAGOS TORTOISE

Hungry Hungry Tortoises

All Ages

Supplies: Two old boxes, socks, scissors, coins or other small items, a partner

You saw how our Galapagos tortoises eat when the keepers were feeding them. They can stretch out their necks to reach food like lettuce and apples. Remember Scott told us these tortoises don't have teeth. For this activity, you will get to create your own "Hungry Hungry Tortoise" game.

1. First, take two old boxes turn them upside down so the open end sits on the floor or table.
2. Cut a half circle opening into one side of the box (see photo).
3. Place a sock over your hand and stick your arm through the opening. This will be your turtle!
4. Place a small pile of coins or other items in between you and your partner.
5. When one of you says go, each turtle must try to grab as many of the items as they can and place them to the side of their box.
6. When all the items are out of the middle, the turtle who collected the most "food" is the winner!



Level Up Challenge: Try playing with different items. Which items are easier to pick up? Which items are more difficult? Are there any items that you are unable to pick up?

Share your project with us!

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

Finch Response

All Ages

For this activity watch the video of Zookeeper Scott and our Galapagos tortoises. [Click here to watch!](#)

Supplies: Clothing (T-shirts, sweaters, jackets), a partner or family member

You heard from Scott that Galapagos tortoises can feel touch through their thick shells. When finches land on and near them, they freeze and stretch to allow the finches to pick insects off their bodies. For this activity, you will get to test your own “finch response.”

1. With a family member, gather up as many t-shirts, sweaters, jackets, etc, as you can.
2. Place a shirt on over what you are wearing, one at a time.
3. After putting each shirt on, have your family member gently scratch your back.
4. If you can still feel their touch, put another clothing item on over the ones you are already wearing.
5. When you can just barely feel their touch, congratulations, you now have your own tortoise shell!

How many shirts did it take before you could not feel their touch? With your new “shell” on, what activities would be harder to do now with all your layers? Switch roles and let your family member see how thick of a shell they would need!

Share your project with us!

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