

Houston Zoo at Home

MEERKAT MOB

The Family Business

A group of meerkats is called a mob. Here at the Houston Zoo, we have 6 meerkats in our mob: three boys and three girls. Meerkat mobs are one of the most advanced societies in nature. Members take turns babysitting, foraging for food, mentoring youngsters and guard duty.

If danger is spotted, the guard alerts the meerkats with a bark or whistle. There are different calls for if the threat is on the land or coming from the air. When the alarm is raised, the meerkats run for the nearest hole. The meerkats do a great job protecting each other, looking out for threats, and taking care of all the jobs that are necessary for the mob to succeed!

For these activities watch the video of meerkat mob. [Click here to watch!](#)

Chart the Chores

Ages: 8 and up

Materials Needed: Paper and Pen

1. Write a list of everyone who lives in your home down one side of the paper
2. Write a list of jobs that need to be done across the top of the paper
For example, you might write “Cooking”, “Laundry”, and “Feeding the Pets” across the top
See how many jobs you can list
3. Next, put a check mark next to a family member’s name under the job they do in the house. A family member might have more than one check mark next to their name
For example, next to your name you might have a check mark under “Laundry” and “Feeding the Pets” because you are responsible for both of those jobs in the house
4. Compare the different jobs people do you in your house.
Does everyone share the workload?
Do some people do more jobs than others?
How can everyone work together to help the house run?

Share your project with us!

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

ALERT!

Ages: 4 and up

1. Assign one person in your family to the Meerkat Guard
2. As a group, determine what alert will be for the threats coming from the ground and which alert will be coming from the air and assign an action for each alert.
For example, if the threat is coming from the ground, the Guard might point to the ground and yell “There!” and the rest of the “meerkats” might have to jump on the nearest piece of furniture.
Another example is if the threat is coming from the sky, the Guard might cover their head with their arms and yell “Cover!” and the rest of the “meerkats” might have to crouch down on the ground and cover their heads
3. Once the alerts and the actions have been established, play the game similar to Simon Says
4. The Guard will alternate between the ground threat and the sky threat and the rest of the meerkats will see how fast they can keep up
5. See if you can trick each other and find out how well everyone listens to the commands
6. Take turns being the “guard”

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