Copy, cover, check

Ages 4–7 with a grown-up · 5–10 minutes · Build and compare

https://kiddos.ai/explorations/benny-everyday-detectives/copy-cover-check

Wonder together

How can we make the two models match?

Materials

Two matching sets of three large blocks; Cloth.

Adult setup — read before trying

Provide two identical sets of three large age-appropriate blocks on a stable reachable surface and an opaque cloth. Leave room between model and copy. Begin with a row and use one shared viewing side.

Try together

1. Grown-up makes a simple arrangement with one set of three large blocks. Keep the second matching set separate.

2. Look together from the same side. Child may point to the order or describe the shapes.

3. Cover the model with an opaque cloth. Child uses the second set to build a copy; peeking is welcome.

4. Uncover both arrangements and compare from the same direction.

5. Move any blocks needed to make them match. In Benny's example, one end block moves to the other end.

6. Swap: child makes a model, grown-up copies, and both check it.

Keep the comparison clear

Keep fixed: Both sets contain one red cube, one yellow triangular prism and one blue cylinder. The first model stays red, yellow, blue from the shared viewing side.

What changes: The model is covered and uncovered. Benny first copies yellow, blue, red, then moves the red cube from the right end to the left. Page 7 deliberately begins a new model.

Look for: The model is red cube, yellow triangular prism, blue cylinder. The copy starts yellow triangular prism, blue cylinder, red cube. Moving the red cube from the right end to the left makes the rows match.

Explain with care

The model is red cube, yellow triangular prism, blue cylinder. The copy starts yellow triangular prism, blue cylinder, red cube. Moving the red cube from the right end to the left makes the rows match.

Covering is optional and peeking is welcome. This is a build-and-check game, not an unaided memory test. Compare from the same side; a different viewpoint can reverse how an order appears. The one-block move solves Benny's pictured copy, not every possible copy.

© 2026 Kiddos LLC · Shared family & classroom discovery

Talk about it

What order do you see in Benny's first model?

Answer cue: From the shared viewing side: red cube, yellow triangular prism, blue cylinder. Shapes or pointing work as well as color names.

Which part of the first copy is in a different place?

Answer cue: The red cube is at the right end. The yellow and blue blocks come before it.

What move makes the two rows match?

Answer cue: Move the red cube from the right end to the left, then compare both rows again from the same side.

A parent move: Build a simple model and look together from one side before covering it. Offer another look whenever wanted. After uncovering, ask what differs and let the child move a block or direct your hands. Swap maker and copier.

Start simply: Leave the model uncovered and use two blocks first. The child can direct the grown-up's hands.

Explore further: Let the child make a new two- or three-block model for the grown-up. A low stable stack is optional; check shape and position together from the same side.

Return to it: Use the same blocks in a fresh simple arrangement. Ask whether keeping the model visible or taking another look helps today.

In the classroom

Flexible 15-minute small-group sequence; prepare materials first, and shorten or pause as needed.

2 min · Meet the matching sets

Pair the matching blocks and choose one side from which to view both arrangements.

3 min · Watch a copy change

Read pages 1–5 and pause to compare the uncovered rows. Read page 6 after children suggest or show a possible move.

7 min · Build, cover and check

Adult models once. Pairs take maker and copier roles, leave the model visible or peek as needed, uncover both, revise and swap.

3 min · Describe a helpful check

Ask children to show how they checked the two arrangements rather than how much they remembered.

Understanding check

The child can compare a part of the model with the copy and move a block or direct an adult to make the chosen arrangement match.

© 2026 Kiddos LLC · Shared family & classroom discovery

Answer guidance: The model is red cube, yellow triangular prism, blue cylinder. The copy starts yellow triangular prism, blue cylinder, red cube. Moving the red cube from the right end to the left makes the rows match.

Participation choices: Accept pointing, showing, home-language words or directing an adult. Keep the materials within comfortable reach; no spoken answer is required. Leave the model uncovered and use two blocks first. The child can direct the grown-up's hands.

Words to explore

model — The arrangement you are trying to copy.

copy — Make another arrangement to match a model.

compare — Look at both to notice what is the same or different.

Full adult notes and honest limits

Build a simple model and look together from one side before covering it. Offer another look whenever wanted. After uncovering, ask what differs and let the child move a block or direct your hands. Swap maker and copier.

Covering is optional and peeking is welcome. This is a build-and-check game, not an unaided memory test. Compare from the same side; a different viewpoint can reverse how an order appears. The one-block move solves Benny's pictured copy, not every possible copy.

These are authored shared-play examples. Suggested ages and times are starting points, not an assessment or evidence of measured learning outcomes.

Related reading

Meet Benny in Benny the Forest Detective, an interactive Little Clue Tales forest mystery about noticing clues, counting, matching, sequencing and sharing. This household detective game is a new editorial adaptation, not a page from the book. Explore the digital story in Kiddos Books and browse Amazon for the physical titles currently available; no matching paperback is promised.

Activity sources

Kiddos — Copy, cover, check: authored game rules and pictured answer — https://kiddos.ai/explorations/benny-everyday-detectives/copy-cover-check

NAEYC — Making Math Meaningful for Young Children — https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/tyc/oct2014/making-math-meaningful

NAEYC / NCTM — Early Childhood Mathematics — https://www.naeyc.org/positionstatements/mathematics

Read with confidence. Explore Kiddos Books with a grown-up.

App Store: https://apps.apple.com/app/id6720721998

Available physical books: https://www.amazon.com/author/kiddos-books