

Follow the picture clues

Ages 4–7 with a grown-up · 5–10 minutes · Follow and make clues

<https://kiddos.ai/explorations/benny-everyday-detectives/follow-the-picture-clues>

Wonder together

Where does the next picture send you?

Materials

Three simple picture cards: basket, cup, cloth; Basket; Large empty cup; Cloth; Large toy.

Adult setup – read before trying

Choose one safe area with three low reachable stops: basket, large empty plastic cup and cloth. Use a large age-appropriate toy and picture cards that clearly match these objects. An adult prepares and cuts cards, then puts the scissors away. Check the whole chain before inviting the child.

Try together

1. Grown-up prepares three reachable stops in one agreed area. Hide a large toy under a cloth.
2. Place the CLOTH picture card in an empty cup. Place the CUP card inside a basket. Give the child the BASKET card.
3. Child matches the first card to the real basket, looks inside and finds the cup picture. Leave the basket card by the basket.
4. Follow the cup picture to the real cup and find the cloth picture. Leave the cup card by the cup.
5. Find the cloth, set its card beside it and lift it to reveal the toy.
6. Swap: child makes a one- or two-stop hunt for the grown-up. Adult checks the hiding places.

Keep the comparison clear

Keep fixed: The three reachable stops remain basket, cup and cloth. Each card depicts exactly one of them; the large toy is under the cloth until the reveal.

What changes: Benny carries the current clue to its matching stop, leaves the used card there and takes the next card: basket, cup, cloth. Lifting the cloth reveals the toy.

Look for: Each picture names the NEXT place to look: basket, then cup, then cloth. Finding a new card advances the hunt; the toy under the cloth completes it.

Explain with care

Each picture names the NEXT place to look: basket, then cup, then cloth. Finding a new card advances the hunt; the toy under the cloth completes it.

Pictures show the next place to look, not a route map or a reading test. Prepare the chain backwards and check it before play. The illustrated three-stop route is one example; a one-stop hunt is a complete starting game.

Talk about it

What picture do we give the child at the start?

Answer cue: The basket card. The cup card goes inside the basket, and the cloth card goes inside the cup.

Benny finds a cup picture in the basket. Where should he look next?

Answer cue: Inside the real cup. Leave the used basket card beside the basket.

What finishes the pictured hunt?

Answer cue: Following the cloth card to the real cloth and lifting it to find the large toy duck. Then the child can make a shorter hunt for the grown-up.

A parent move: Set the clue chain backwards: toy under cloth, cloth card in cup, cup card in basket, then give the basket card. Stay together within the agreed area and let the child choose or direct each next move. Help them make a short hunt for your turn.

Start simply: Start with one picture and one reachable stop. The child may point and direct the grown-up.

Explore further: Let the child draw or choose pictures for a one- or two-stop hunt. Help place the clues in reverse order and check the route before the grown-up follows it.

Return to it: Change one safe stop on another day and draw its matching picture. Keep the route short enough to follow together.

In the classroom

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

2 min · Match a picture and place

Show the first card and invite pointing toward its real match. Explain the agreed search area.

3 min · Follow Benny's chain

Read pages 1–4, pausing on page 3 to name the next place. Follow the cloth clue to the reveal on pages 5–6.

7 min · Take turns guiding a hunt

Try an adult-prepared one- to three-stop hunt. Leave each used card at its stop. Help children make a one- or two-stop version for a partner or grown-up, with adult-checked locations.

3 min · Retell the places

Use the cards to show where the hunt went first, next and last. Accept pointing or adult-directed movement.

Understanding check

The child can match the current picture to a reachable stop or direct another player there, then show the next clue. Remembering the full chain unaided is optional.

Answer guidance: Each picture names the NEXT place to look: basket, then cup, then cloth. Finding a new card advances the hunt; the toy under the cloth completes it.

Participation choices: Accept pointing, showing, home-language words or directing an adult. Keep the materials within comfortable reach; no spoken answer is required. Start with one picture and one reachable stop. The child may point and direct the grown-up.

Words to explore

next — What comes after the step you are doing now.

clue — Something that helps you work out where to look.

sequence — Things arranged in an order.

Full adult notes and honest limits

Set the clue chain backwards: toy under cloth, cloth card in cup, cup card in basket, then give the basket card. Stay together within the agreed area and let the child choose or direct each next move. Help them make a short hunt for your turn.

Pictures show the next place to look, not a route map or a reading test. Prepare the chain backwards and check it before play. The illustrated three-stop route is one example; a one-stop hunt is a complete starting game.

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 — Follow the picture clues: authored game rules and pictured answer — <https://kiddos.ai/explorations/benny-everyday-detectives/follow-the-picture-clues>

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

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>