

What's in the mystery bag?

Ages 4–7 with a grown-up · 5–10 minutes · Feel, describe and check

<https://kiddos.ai/explorations/benny-everyday-detectives/whats-in-the-mystery-bag>

Wonder together

Which familiar object fits your touch clue?

Materials

Open cloth bag without drawstrings; Large wooden spoon; Soft folded cloth; Large smooth plastic cup; Three simple picture cards showing those objects; A place to conceal unused objects.

Adult setup – read before trying

Choose a soft open cloth bag without drawstrings, a large wooden spoon, a folded cloth and a large smooth plastic cup. Prepare their three picture cards and a separate covered place for unused objects. Check surfaces and keep the bag below the face.

Try together

1. Together, look at and feel three large familiar objects: spoon, folded cloth and cup. Lay out their three picture cards.
2. Child looks away. Grown-up puts one object into the open cloth bag and completely conceals the other two elsewhere. Leave all three cards visible.
3. Child may feel inside the bag without looking. Keep the bag below the face. Touch is optional: grown-up can feel and describe instead.
4. Describe one clue, then choose a picture. Any guess is welcome.
5. Pull out the object and check it against the chosen picture.
6. Swap roles. Keep unused objects hidden again so the next answer cannot be found simply by noticing what is missing.

Keep the comparison clear

Keep fixed: The three possible objects are the spoon, folded cloth and cup, with their three picture cards visible. During the guessing turn, the two unused real objects stay completely hidden.

What changes: One object is put in the bag. Benny feels, chooses a picture and pulls out the spoon to check. The next turn uses a different object and swaps roles.

Look for: The spoon's long handle and rounded bowl distinguish it from the folded cloth and open cup. Feeling suggests an answer; pulling it out lets both players check.

Explain with care

The spoon's long handle and rounded bowl distinguish it from the folded cloth and open cup. Feeling suggests an answer; pulling it out lets both players check.

Touch is optional. A description suggests a choice; the reveal checks it. Keep all unused objects hidden so their absence does not give the answer away. Accept an uncertain or changed guess; this is not a test of

sensory ability.

Talk about it

What could a spoon feel like inside the bag?

Answer cue: A long handle with a wider rounded bowl. Use the actual large spoon to check; a grown-up may feel and describe it.

Why are the other two real objects hidden too?

Answer cue: So the child can use the touch clue rather than identify the answer by seeing which object is missing. All three picture choices stay visible.

How do we check the picture choice?

Answer cue: Pull out the object and compare it with the chosen picture. If it differs, explore which clue could help next time.

A parent move: Let the child explore the three objects first. While they look away, put one in the bag and fully hide the unused two. Offer to feel and describe for them; wait for a picture choice, then reveal and check without scoring.

Start simply: Use two very different objects. Touch is optional: the grown-up can feel and describe while the child chooses a card.

Explore further: Let the child choose which familiar object the grown-up will feel. Help conceal the unused objects, and let the child lead the reveal and check.

Return to it: Use the same three objects on another day, or replace one with a large safe familiar object and update its picture. Keep touch optional.

In the classroom

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

2 min · Meet the possible objects

Look at the spoon, cup and cloth with their cards. Offer optional touching and model describing one feature.

3 min · A clue before the reveal

Read to page 5. Invite a picture choice or a description, then reveal the spoon on page 6 and compare.

7 min · Feel or listen, choose and check

Adult hides one object in the bag and the other two elsewhere. Child may feel or listen to the adult's description, choose a card and reveal. Swap roles and reset all unused objects out of sight.

3 min · Share one useful feature

Invite a gesture, texture word or shape description that helped. A revised guess is welcome.

Understanding check

The child can connect one felt or described feature to a picture choice, then compare it with the revealed object. Touching and guessing correctly are not requirements.

Answer guidance: The spoon's long handle and rounded bowl distinguish it from the folded cloth and open cup. Feeling suggests an answer; pulling it out lets both players check.

Participation choices: Accept pointing, showing, home-language words or directing an adult. Keep the materials within comfortable reach; no spoken answer is required. Use two very different objects. Touch is optional: the grown-up can feel and describe while the child chooses a card.

Words to explore

texture — How a surface feels.

describe — Show or tell what you notice.

check — Compare your idea with the object you reveal.

Full adult notes and honest limits

Let the child explore the three objects first. While they look away, put one in the bag and fully hide the unused two. Offer to feel and describe for them; wait for a picture choice, then reveal and check without scoring.

Touch is optional. A description suggests a choice; the reveal checks it. Keep all unused objects hidden so their absence does not give the answer away. Accept an uncertain or changed guess; this is not a test of sensory ability.

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 — What's in the mystery bag?: authored game rules and pictured answer — <https://kiddos.ai/explorations/benny-everyday-detectives/whats-in-the-mystery-bag>

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

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

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