

# Copyright *for* kids



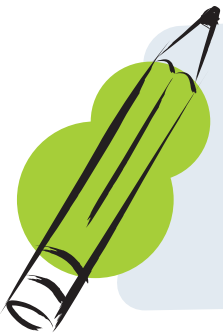
If Alex draws a picture, who is the copyright owner?

Alex is!



If Sara wants to make a copy of Ethan's story, what should she do?

Ask Ethan if it's okay.



If Jade writes a story, who is the copyright owner?

Jade is!



What law says you are the copyright owner of the pictures you paint and the stories you write?

Copyright law!

Copyright protects books, movies, videogames, songs, photos, and more — it applies to any work of the human mind or imagination, **even a child's original finger painting!**

To be protected by copyright, your work has to be **original** — it can't be a copy of someone else's picture, story, song, or other work. It also has to be creative, which is pretty easy when you have an active imagination!

**As soon as you write, compose, draw, or create a work in a fixed form** — like sheet music, a canvas, or a computer file — it is protected by copyright.

Registering your copyright with the U.S. Copyright Office brings important benefits. **Visit [copyright.gov](https://copyright.gov)** to find out about them. But you do not have to register. Your work is automatically protected as soon as you create it.

# Create a Work Protected by Copyright



Use the space below to **create an original work** by writing or drawing something about what you have experienced today. It could be something you did, said, heard, saw, or even ate.

© \_\_\_\_\_

your name

\_\_\_\_\_ year

**Your original work is now protected by copyright!**

# Search This

Find the following **types of works protected by copyright** in the puzzle below.

BLOG	PAINTING
BOOK	SCRIPT
LYRICS	SCULPTURE
MAP	SOFTWARE
MOVIE	SONG
NEWSPAPER	VIDEOGAME
	WEBSITE



A Z N P F H T Q Z S N E Q M G  
C K S E A B E V R R I R Y W S  
L X J K W I G H Z N F U S P S  
B K M C M S N R K S A T O H X  
H O E E L I P T H Q C P F L V  
K V O Q O Q A A I J N L T M M  
M F P K P I O G P N Z U W A L  
V I D E O G A M E E G C A P P  
I I Y S G S K F D U R S R W E  
F V O O O F H V M E Y N E T S  
D N L S N H N U O V C K I C N  
G B S C R I P T V T M S I G J  
H Q K D V Z Y G I K B R M V T  
Q U D E L J S W E E Y L S Z K  
G F X N I W N A W L V N K C U

# Copyright Facts

Congress created copyright law to **promote the progress of creativity**, encouraging people to create works that can be enjoyed and, in a number of situations, used by everyone. Copyright law gives copyright owners rights that let them benefit from their creative works and this helps them keep creating.

If something is protected by copyright, you might still be able to use it. First, you could ask the person who owns the copyright whether they will let you use the work. Second, there are some ways you can use works protected by copyright even without permission. But you can only do this if the law lets you, like if you make what is called a **“fair use”** of the work. If you want to use a copyright-protected work in one of these ways, check with your teacher, parents, or an adult that can help you figure out what types of things you can do.

Copyright protection has a time limit, called the **copyright term**. For most people, copyright lasts for the life of the person who creates a work plus 70 years. After the end of the copyright term, a work goes into the **public domain**. Anyone can freely use works in the public domain. In fact, many authors use public domain works to create totally new works. One example is Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*. This famous play has been in the public domain for centuries, and many people have used it to make new movies and plays.



## Statue of Liberty Registered

The **Statue of Liberty** is one of the most famous sculptures ever registered with the Copyright Office and is one of the largest. In 1876, French sculptor Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi submitted a photo of a model of his statue for copyright registration. On August 31, 1876, the “Statue of American Independence,” as the Statue of Liberty was first named,

was assigned registration number 9939-G. It was

put up 10 years later in New York Harbor and was presented to the people of the United

States from the

people of France to honor the great friendship between the two nations.

## Spelling Books to Dictionaries

**Noah Webster** is best known today for the dictionary he published in 1828, still published as Merriam-Webster dictionaries. During most of his life, however, he was famous for a best-selling spelling book. He got Connecticut state copyright protection for his 120-page speller on August 14, 1783 — there was no federal copyright law at the time. Schools that had closed during the Revolutionary War were reopening, and they needed books. By 1875, more than 75 million copies had sold. Copyright royalties from the popular speller helped Webster support his family and develop his famous dictionary. Convinced of the importance of copyright, Webster lobbied Congress to pass the nation’s first federal copyright law. His efforts earned him the nickname, “Father of American Copyright.”

