

# Copyright *for* kids

## abc's of copyright

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

To be copyrighted, your work has to be **original** — it can't be a copy of someone else's picture, story, song, or other work.

**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 [www.copyright.gov](http://www.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.



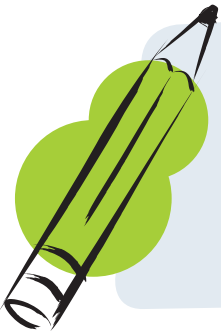
**If Alex draws a picture, who owns it?**

He does!



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

Ask him if it's okay.



**If Jade writes a story, who owns it?**

She does!



**What law says you own the pictures you paint and the stories you write?**

Copyright law!

# create a copyrighted work



Use the space below to **create an original work** by expressing something that you experienced today. It could be something you did, said, heard, saw, or even ate. You can express it with a drawing, a story, a song, or any other art form you like.

© \_\_\_\_\_  
your name year

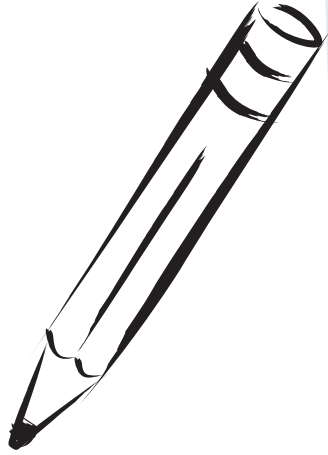
**Your work is now protected by copyright!**

# search this

Find the following **copyrightable works** in the puzzle below.

BLOG  
BOOK  
LYRICS  
MAP  
MOVIE  
NEWSPAPER

PAINTING  
SCRIPT  
SCULPTURE  
SOFTWARE  
SONG  
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

# copy facts

President George Washington signed the **first United States copyright law** on May 31, 1790.

Copyright lasts for the life of the person who creates a work **plus 70 years**.

After a copyright ends — that is, after the life of the author plus 70 years — a work goes into the “**public domain**.” Anyone can freely use works in the public domain.

Congress created a copyright law because writers, composers, photographers, and other creative people need money and time to do their

work. **Copyright law gives them rights so they can make a living and continue creating.**



Congress did not make copyrights last forever because it wanted to make culture and knowledge available to everyone.

**Many authors use the works of people who came before them to create totally new works.**

One example is the famous movie *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*; it's based on a book author L. Frank Baum wrote in 1900.



## early american made living from copyright

**Noah Webster** is best known today for the dictionary he published in 1828, still in print as Merriam-Webster Dictionaries. But he was 70 years old when he published his dictionary. During most of his life, he was famous for a best-selling spelling book. He got Connecticut state copyright 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 large 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.”

## statue of liberty is copyrighted

The **Statue of Liberty** is one of the most famous sculptures ever registered for copyright and may be 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 erected 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.

