



## A Message to Parents

**Y**our child is participating in an educational program that is designed to encourage creativity and foster respect for the creativity of others. **Join the ©Team** (pronounced *see-team*) introduces children in grades K-5 to the natural connection between creativity and copyright through hands-on projects that give them a firsthand understanding of the importance of intellectual property. Working individually and in small groups, students apply their artistic and language arts talents to create original works in print and on the computer, gaining experience with the creative process while enhancing their research and communications skills along the way. At the same time, students learn basic lessons in respect for intellectual property rights, including the rules for avoiding plagiarism in their school work, and discover the intrinsic value of copyright by becoming creators of copyrighted works themselves.

We know you will want to help your child learn these important lessons, and we understand that you yourself may be uncertain about the rules of copyright, especially when it comes to making copies with computers. That's why we are providing you with this in-depth explanation of the rules kids should follow to copy right.

## Online Resources for Parents

**Copyright Kids**  
[www.copyrightkids.org](http://www.copyrightkids.org)  
Interactive lessons on intellectual property.

**Copyright Society of the U.S.A.**  
[www.csusa.org](http://www.csusa.org)  
See homepage for information on annual Copyright Awareness Month.

**Cyberethics for Kids**  
[www.cybercrime.gov/rules/kidinternet.htm](http://www.cybercrime.gov/rules/kidinternet.htm)  
Guidelines for good citizenship on the Internet.

**Join the ©Team!** is made possible by the Entertainment Software Association, which serves the business and public affairs needs of companies that publish video and computer games for video game consoles, handheld devices, personal computers, and the Internet. To learn more about the ESA, visit their web site at [www.theESA.com](http://www.theESA.com).

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# Join the ©TEAM!

Help your child understand the concept of intellectual property.

Made Possible by  
The Entertainment  
Software Association

\* pronounced "see-team"



**Copyright** is important because it protects creative work by making it against the law for anyone else to copy that work or use it on their own.

## In School

Back in the days of paper and pencils, it was usually easy for students to know when they were copying the work of someone else. With computers, however, students now cut and paste text, or scan and copy images, so automatically that it's easy for them to lose track of what they have copied and what they have created themselves. That's why it is important for students to understand from the start that they have a responsibility to acknowledge ideas and information borrowed from others.

**Know Your Sources** Help your child get in the habit of making a note every time he or she copies something for school. No need to worry about the formalities of footnotes and bibliographies. Your child's teacher will explain those things when the time comes. For now, it is enough to note the source of facts, ideas, quotations, pictures, charts, and maps that might go into a class presentation or school report, so that your child can give the source credit.

**Computer Notetaking** Luckily, computers make it easy to get in this habit, since one can

usually just copy source information directly from a CD-ROM or webpage and paste it next to the copied item. That way, giving proper credit can become almost automatic too.

## At Home

Outside the classroom, making copies nowadays usually means duplicating a CD or DVD, which may have audio, video, multimedia content, a game, or some other software encoded on it. In many cases, making such copies without permission is **against the law**. In fact, you will often find that the original content carries an explicit warning against such unauthorized duplication, in hard copy or digital form, along with the copyright symbol.

**Look for the ©** Teach your child to look for the copyright symbol (©), and explain that it protects the intellectual property – the creativity and ingenuity – of the people who made the digital content. They are the only ones allowed to make copies of what they created. When other people make copies, they are breaking the law.

## On the Internet

Once they become aware of the copyright symbol and its significance, most children quickly realize that Internet content, though easy to access, is not free for the taking. It belongs to someone else, who put it there for us to use and enjoy.

**Copyright on the Web** Almost every webpage now carries a copyright notice, and most websites also provide a link on each page to a “terms of use” statement, which explains how visitors are permitted to use the site's content. When ques-



tions arise about copying content from a specific site, you and your child should look at the “terms of use” statement for answers. If that doesn't help, send an email to the site's webmaster asking for permission to copy.

**What You Can Copy** As a general rule, students are permitted to copy almost anything on the Internet for use in school work, provided they credit their source (usually by giving the web address of the page from which they copied). Non-educational uses of Internet content, on the other hand, are much more restricted. For example, websites generally do not permit visitors to copy pictures, articles, or other content and then send those copies to other people by email. Instead, you may find a link through which the site itself sends copies to those whose email addresses you supply.

**Reliable Content** Teaching children to be aware of the rules for copying Internet content can be an important step in teaching them how to evaluate websites, so they can avoid those that are unreliable. Children too easily assume that everything on the Internet is true. In reality, much information on the Internet is outdated or the work of unqualified authors. By checking their sources,

however, even very young students soon learn to spot these kinds of problems. Copyright dates can tell them if a site is out of date. Web addresses can provide a clue to a site's authority – addresses ending in .gov, for example, are government sites, while those ending in .edu are the work of educational institutions.

**Internet Safety** Parents should, of course, monitor their children's use of the Internet and know what sites they are visiting. Making children alert to copyright rules can also help protect them online. Children who ask permission before copying things on the Internet are less likely to download a computer virus or other potentially harmful content. Children who realize that few things on the Internet are free are less likely to become involved in trading illegally copied music, movies, games, and other software.

**Web Smart** In short, knowing the rules about copying online content can help your child become a more responsible user of Internet technology, and more aware of the risks found on the Web. It's an important first step toward Internet independence that will help prepare your child for academic success.

