

The monkeys in *Caps for Sale*, with nearly perfect precision, copy the peddler's every move. This talent—the ability to accurately duplicate the things you see—is of more than passing value. Good penmanship, for instance, relies in part on the facility to make exact copies of letters and numbers. Monkeys do not need penmanship, but people do. And so the art of copying is a good thing to develop in your child.

How can you increase your child's ability to copy? You might try spending a few minutes playing MONKEY SEE, MONKEY DO. To begin the game, you say, "Monkey see,

MONKEY SEE, MONKEY DO

GRADES

preschool and kindergarten

SKILLS

**learning to reproduce the things
you see**

monkey do.” When you have captured your child’s attention, make a face—a really weird face. Once your features are thoroughly snarled, hold that position. Your child’s job is to twist his own face in imitation of yours. It might be hard to stay in your positions without breaking into giggles, but once your child’s face looks as much like yours as possible, go ahead and laugh.

Next contort your body in some strange manner and give your child a chance to contort himself in kind. Or move with a hop and a twist and have your child hop and twist, too. Then hold your hands in an odd way and wait for your child to reproduce the positions of your fingers.

After this much seeing and doing, call an end to the game. Your child might protest, but assure him that you will play tomorrow or the next day. Indeed, this is such a quick and easy game, you can almost always find a moment for a couple of rounds. While you are putting away groceries, for instance, turn to your child and say, “Monkey see, monkey do,” then make a face. When sorting laundry, shout out, “Monkey see, monkey do,” and swivel yourself this way or that. If you are willing to embarrass yourself while waiting in line at the supermarket, you can suddenly announce, “Monkey see, monkey do” there, too. Of course, your child might want to pose in peculiar positions and command you to copy him. Go ahead. It’s only fair—after all, MONKEY SEE, MONKEY DO.

