A search and find toy. A toy includes at least top cover and a bottom cover that are connected together to form a cavity therein. The cavity is filled with a fill that includes pellets and items such as plastic miniatures and other trinkets. The covers are usually permanently sealed such that the fill is trapped in the cavity. A user searches for the items hidden among the pellets through a window in one of the covers.
Can You Find It
Teddy Bear
Keys
Star
Crayon
Heart
Ball
Triangle
Hanger
SEARCH AND FIND TOY
CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS
[0001] This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provi- sional Patent Application Ser. No. 60/542,730, filed on Feb. 6, 2004, which is incorporated by reference in its entirety.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION
[0002] 1. The Field of the Invention
[0003] The present invention relates to toys. More par- ticularly, the present invention relates to a search and find toy.
[0004] 2. Background and Relevant Art
[0005] Toys are a part of practically every child’s life and children are able to play with a wide variety of toys. Toys can be used to develop a child’s perception, memory, language concepts, thinking, and problem solving ability. Toys can be used to increase sensory motor skills. Unfortunately, children often have short attention spans and can become quickly bored by the same type of toys. Children need toys that intrigue and challenge them. Toys can be expensive and people that purchase toys should expect a toy that can hold a child’s attention. In addition, there is a need for toys that are not associated with violence.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS
[0006] In order to describe the manner in which the advantages and features of the invention can be obtained, a more particular description of the invention briefly described above will be rendered by reference to specific embodiments thereof which are illustrated in the appended drawings. Understanding that these drawings depict only typical embodiments of the invention and are not therefore to be considered to be limiting of its scope, the invention will be described and explained with additional specificity and detail through the use of the accompanying drawings in which:
[0007] FIG. 1 illustrates an expanded perspective view of one embodiment of the invention that illustrates a top cover having a window and a bottom cover;
[0008] FIG. 2 illustrates one example of fill that includes pellets and items;
[0009] FIG. 3 illustrates a top view of a search and find toy;
[0010] FIG. 4 illustrates a bottom view of the search and find toy shown in FIG. 3;
[0011] FIG. 5 illustrates a card identifying the items in the search and find toy of FIG. 3;
[0012] FIG. 6 illustrates items included with pellets in a toy;
[0013] FIG. 7 illustrates the pellets hiding the items in a search and find toy;
[0014] FIG. 8 illustrates a close view of items included with pellets inside of a search and find toy; and
[0015] FIG. 9 illustrates a cross section of a search and find toy that includes a fill bag.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS
[0016] The present invention relates to toys and more particularly to a search and find toy. Embodiments of the toy provide quiet entertainment. Embodiments of the invention can be easily carried in a bag or carried by a child, for example.
[0017] FIG. 1 illustrates an expanded perspective view of one embodiment of a toy 100. The toy 100 includes a top cover 101 and a bottom cover 103. The top cover 101 has been separated from the bottom cover 103 in this example. During manufacture of the toy 100, the top cover 101 is connected to the bottom cover 103 by sewing the covers together. The covers 101 and 103 can also be secured using other connectors such as an adhesive, and the like. In another embodiment, at least one side of the toy 100 may be connected using a connector that can be both opened and closed by a user, such as by a zipper. Typically, however, the top cover 101 and the bottom cover 103 are permanently connected together such that material placed inside of the toy 100 remains inside of the toy 100. Both the top cover 101 and the bottom cover 103 are typically made from a material or other fabric or other pliable material. In this example, the top cover 101 and bottom cover 103 are made from fleece. The selected material or fabric can have any pattern, color or theme. In another embodiment, at least one of the covers may be more rigid.
[0018] During manufacture, the toy 100 is usually filled with a fill before the top cover is sealed or fully connected with the bottom cover. For example, FIG. 2 illustrates one embodiment of a fill 200 that may be placed in a cavity formed between the top cover and the bottom cover when connected. The fill 200 includes poly pellets 201 or other small beads in this example. The pellets 201 are typically non-toxic and semi clear to opaque in appearance. This makes it easy to distinguish between the pellets and the other items. However, there is no requirement on the appearance of the pellets. The fill 200 also includes small plastic items 202. The plastic items 202 include, but are not limited to, plastic miniatures, buttons, and other objects or trinkets that can be included with the pellets 201. Typically, more pellets 201 are included in the fill than items 202. This enables the items 202 to “hide” among the pellets when the fill is placed inside the toy 100. After the fill 200 is placed in the cavity of the toy 100 formed by the covers 101 and 103, the top cover 101 is sealed with the bottom cover 103 such that the fill 200 does not spill out, but is trapped inside the toy 100. The top cover 101 also includes a window 102 that is formed, in this example, from a transparent material such as plastic or clear vinyl. The window 102 may also be sewn or otherwise permanently connected with the top cover 101. The window 102 permits a user to see inside the toy and view the fill 200 and/or the items 202.
[0019] Once the toy 100 is assembled, the items 202 are effectively hidden among the pellets 201. As previously stated, the top and bottom covers 101 and 103 are formed from a material like fleece or other fabric. Using this type of material enables a user to bend twist or otherwise manipulate the toy. A user typically tries to manipulate the toy in a manner such that the user can search for the items 202 that are mixed in with the pellets 201. A list of the items 202 is typically included with the toy 100 such that the user can
identify the items being searched for through the window. The toy can be used as if it were a treasure hunt and a user is searching among the pellets for the various treasures.

When the top cover 101 is sealed with the bottom cover 103 using a connector such as a zipper or other resealable connector that can be opened by a user, the fill 200 may be placed in another sealed bag to prevent the fill 200 from spilling. This means that the fill from one toy can be interchanged with the fill from another toy and a user can search for news items. Fill bags can be developed using themes such as Christmas items, or Halloween items, and the like. Themes associated with books, television shows, and the like can also be used for the items 202. Fill bags are typically made of a transparent material and are flexible such that the fill can be manipulated by a child. The child can shift the contents of the toy 100 such that the items and fill move around. As the items and fill move around the items are exposed or “found” by the child. An example of a fill bag is shown in FIG. 9, which is a cross section of a toy including a fill bag. One of skill in the art can appreciate that the fill bag is not required but that the fill and the items can simply be enclosed within the top and bottom covers of the toy. In this Figure, the toy 900 encloses a fill bag 902. The fill bag 902 is filled with pellets or other fill and items described above. The toy 900 has a zipper or other connector that enables the user to remove and insert fill bags inside the toy 900.

FIG. 3 illustrates a top view of a toy 300. The top cover of the toy 300 includes a window 302 through which the fill can be seen. A card 301 accompanies the toy 300 and is a list that identifies the items that are included in the fill and that the user can find by searching through the fill by manipulating the toy while looking through the window 302. A user shifts the fill around inside the toy 300 in order to expose different areas or different portions of the fill. As the user shifts the fill around, the items are exposed and “found”.

FIG. 4 illustrates a bottom cover 303 of the toy 300 shown in FIG. 3. FIG. 5 illustrates an example of the card 301. The card 301, as previously stated, identifies each item that is hidden among the pellets. FIG. 6 illustrates some of the items that are hidden in the pellets of a toy 600. In FIG. 6, items 604, 606, and 608 are seen through the window 610. The pellets 602 are also illustrated. A closer view of the items 604, 608, and 606 is shown in FIG. 8. Item 604, for example, is a miniature Christmas ornament, item 608 is a miniature book, and item 606 is a small clover. FIG. 7 is another perspective view of the toy shown in FIGS. 6 and 8. In FIG. 7, the items illustrated in FIGS. 6 and 8 are hidden from view among the pellets 602. Only the pellets 602 are clearly seen through the window. As previously described, a user can manipulate the toy to find the items that appear in the window as the pellets are moved by a user.

The toy can have various dimensions. A small toy may be 4 inches wide by 4 inches wide with a circular window having a diameter of 3 inches. Alternatively, a toy may be 10 inches by 10 inches with a window having a dimension of 8 inches. One of skill in the art can appreciate that smaller dimensions or larger dimensions are possible. The dimensions increase, however, the amount of fill may also increases. The number of items in a particular toy can also vary and there is no requirement that each toy have a certain ratio of items to pellets.

The search and find toy of the present invention can be of any shape. The Figures illustrate a square shaped toy with a circular window formed or included in one of the covers. However, the search and find toy can be square, round, triangle shaped, star shaped, or any other shape. The search and find toy can be shaped like another toy, a character from a book, movie, television show, etc. The toy can thus have, in addition to a top cover and a bottom cover, other side pieces, depending on the shape of the toy. In each case, at least one window to the inside of the toy is provided such that the user can search for the hidden items included with the fill. The window can be of clear plastic or vinyl, for example. The window can also be of any shape and size. In addition, a top cover may include two windows of the same or different shapes (stars, circles, squares, triangles, hearts, or any other shape) instead of a single window. Also, a window may also be included on the bottom cover.

The present invention may be embodied in other specific forms without departing from its spirit or essential characteristics. The described embodiments are to be considered in all respects only as illustrative and not restrictive. The scope of the invention is, therefore, indicated by the appended claims rather than by the foregoing description. All changes which come within the meaning and range of equivalency of the claims are to be embraced within their scope.

What is claimed is:

1. A toy comprising:
   a first cover formed from a material, the first cover having a first edge;
   a window formed in the first cover;
   a second cover having a second edge, wherein the first edge is permanently connected with the second edge such that a cavity is bounded by the first cover and the second cover; and
   a fill that includes pellets and items, the fill being placed in the cavity such that the fill can be seen through the window.

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