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Children Can Learn With Classic Toys

By Robert Benson

Have we lost our children in a hypnotic video game trance? Have they become "drones" to the "video age"?

Sometimes it may seem that way as many children spend hour upon hour in front of a video screen, pressing buttons or jockeying around a joystick. But it is up to the parents of children to say enough, let's find some educational alternatives. However, it wasn't that long ago when we were kids....we had real toys....classic toys.

Let's step into a time tunnel of sorts and recall some of the fascinating toys that we had the pleasure of playing with:

Tinker Toys

Ahh..Tinker Toys..rods, sticks, spools, spokes..simple, but a true classic toy invented in 1914 by Charles Pajeau, who was a stonemason by trade from Evanston, Illinois. He was inspired by children playing with pencils, sticks and empty spools of thread to create his new toy. He saw them improvising and using their imaginations and wondered if improve upon what they were doing. He designed his first set of Tinker Toys in his garage and displayed them in 1914 at the American Toy Fair.

Alas, his Tinker Toys drew no interest. So he tried again, this time at Christmas time, but with a new marketing plan. Pajeau hired several midgets and had them dress in elf costumes. He then had them "play" with the Tinker Toys" in a store display window in a Chicago department store and with this publicity a new toy was born. After a year or so, over one million sets of Tinker Toys had been sold!

Lincoln Logs

Notched redwood logs that could be used to construct log cabins, Lincoln Logs were the invention of John Lloyd Wright, son of famous architect, Frank Lloyd Wright. The inter locking logs, invented in 1916, were fashioned after the foundation of Tokyo's earthquake-proof Imperial Hotel, which the younger Wright witnessed being constructed.

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During the World War I era, it was in vogue to encourage American patriotism and for American's to buy American made products, thus the new toy was named after one of our most revered presidents, Abraham Lincoln.

The original sets sold very well and became even more popular with the introduction of television to the United States. In fact, Lincoln Logs were among the first toys to be advertised and promoted on television. Capitalizing on the popularity of westerns in early television, Lincoln Logs were successful promoted on 1953's Pioneer Playhouse.

Today, Lincoln Logs are still available and have stood the test of time. As a matter of fact, as late as 1975, Lincoln Logs were still selling at a rate of one million sets per year. A sophisticated toy, it challenges youngsters to use their imagination and improve hand–eye coordination skills.

Robert Benson operates

<http://www.ezshoppinghere.com>

a website devoted to helping shoppers find

unique gift ideas in unique places with over 400 stores to choose from. Find brand name merchandise at brand name stores and look for more articles about classic toys and find classic toys at the site as well.

Smart Children And Smart Toys

By Jessica Davis

Play would always be attached with the term "toys". Toys are the source of fun for children kids and even adults too. If used well, they could be aids in achieving learning and fun both at the same time. What could smart toys do? How could smart parents use these toys for the development of their children?

There are very helpful points that could help out in making your child even smarter:

- * Each child has his or her own preference of toys. Let your child express him by deciding on what toys is fun for him or her. With this, it will be easy for the child to think creatively and use the toys.

- * Childhood is a time to build bonds of friendship among peers. Interaction toys would be of great help as children get along with their peers. Toys like sport game toys would allow them to meet and socialize with children of the same age.

- * Toys could boost the self–confidence of a child. There are these toys which when used could promote the reliance to one's self by a child or children. These come through construction toys. When a child builds it, he also builds the faith in his skill that this building may not be destroyed.

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* Thinking independently is thinking smart for children. As they play using toys that will enhance their thinking and logic skills such as puzzles and mazes would be of great help in polishing one's head.

* A bit similar with interaction toys are relationship toys– these help the communication skills of children. We know how important communication is, therefore, these set of toys would really be smart. These are really aid a child to meet people talk and listen and in the end, build links.

Toys are made not merely to be played with without purpose but we must see to it they learn and bring out the smart young people from them through smart choices of toys. Toys are here not to be used as early symbols of violence.

Jessica Davis is a freelance writer for the Baby Times. She writes a regular column which is published every Thursday. Her latest 'favorite pick' is

<http://www.babygeniusproductions.com/>



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