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Classic Toys Never Go Out Of Style

By Robert Benson

Who hasn't heard the old saying....back when I was young? Times have changed and so have the toys our children play with. Video games now dot the landscape with violence and virtual worlds for our children to "enjoy".

But something else has changed with this new age, the availability of classic toys. With the Internet, it is now possible to find the toys your grandfather or your father grew up playing with. These toys never go out of style. Let's take a look at the history of one of these toys: The Erector Set

A. C. Gilbert was a brilliant man. At the time of his death in 1962, he was credited with 150 patents for the inventions that went into his products. In fact, as a boy he was a talented magician and it was that talent that helped him pay his tuition to Yale Medical School. While going to school and performing as a magician, he formed Mysto Manufacturing, a company that sold magic kits to children.

Gilbert ultimately finished Yale Medical School, but decided to enter the toy business rather than practice medicine. He was a gifted inventor and chose to entertain and educate children. His most popular invention? The vintage construction toy—the erector set.

In 1911, on one of his many train trips from New Haven (his home) to New York City, he watched out the window as workers positioned and riveted the steel beams of an electrical power line tower. He decided to create a children's construction kit, with evenly spaced holes for bolts to pass through and he included nuts, pulleys, gears and eventually engines. Although a British company called Meccano was selling a similar toy, Gilbert thought his "erector set" would be more realistic. His set had more technical advantages, especially steel beams that were not flat, but were bent lengthwise to produce a ninety degree angle, thus, four of them joined together side-to-side, formed a sturdy, square support beam.

Backed by the first major American advertising campaign for a toy, Gilbert started selling the "Mysto Erector Structural Steel Builder" in 1913, (later to be called, simply the "erector set") and the toy became one of the most popular construction toys of all time. It was not unusual for living rooms across the country to be crowded with small skyscrapers and buildings that young minds had carefully crafted.

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It is estimated that the A. C. Gilbert Company has sold more than 30 million sets.

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 all your classic toys and more articles at the website.

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.

* 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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