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Review: A Child's Missal

By Alyice Edrich

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A Child's Missal

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Not being a Catholic myself, I have often arrived at the church, with my in-laws, to find myself in awe of the beauty of the Catholic ceremonies. The rituals always seemed to have deep meaning and the stained glass windows always stood out with such vibrancy. Yet, the symbolism and rich culture left me a bit bewildered. That is, until I read A Child's Missal. It is a beautifully illustrated book showcasing the various stages of a Catholic Mass. It explains the different stages of the mass through photographs, paintings, drawings, and short blurbs. In my humble opinion, this visual prayer book would make a great gift for anyone entering the Catholic church, graduating from Catechism, or getting baptized. Finally, it would make a nice conversational piece and/or coffee table book for devout Catholics.

Courtesy of Alyice Edrich, editor of The Dabbling Mum.com; where BUSY parents find advice, balance, inspiration, and how-to e-books.

Ten Things You Should Know Before Buying

By Michelle Andrews

Your young child's playtime is his first real learning experience, and toys can act as catalysts in your child's growth. The benefits of educational toys are many and varied, and by choosing the right toys, you create an environment that is fun and conducive to learning vital skills.

But currently it is hard to find what you need if you do not know what you are looking for. With a million toys on the market today, it is tough to pick out the best combinations of fun and learning. However, every beneficial toy should be fun, safe, and help the child develop and exercise some skill. When faced with so many choices, asking yourself some simple questions about your child's development can help you make the best selection.

The following is a list of characteristics you should look for in a good, educational toy:

- 1.Sensory attraction: How many senses will the toy occupy? Does it respond to and with lights, sounds, or movement? Is it colorful? Does it have a smell or a texture?
- 2.Activation method: Will the toy provide a challenge without frustrating your child? Will it be a fun and rewarding experience?
- 3.Self-expression: Will the toy allow your child to express himself, be creative, and make choices?
- 4.Success potential: How many "correct" ways are there to play with the toy? Can play be open-ended with no right or wrong responses? Will the toy adapt to your child's ability and style?
- 5.Ways of use: Can the toy be used in many different positions? Can it be used in different kinds of play?
- 6.Popularity: Is it a popular toy? Can it be tied-in with other media such as storybooks, television or movies?
- 7.Flexibility: Does it have adjustable volume, speed, and level of difficulty?
- 8.Opportunities for interaction: Does the toy provide a chance for you or other children to be involved? Will it build social skills?
- 9.Individuality and growth: Will the toy engage your child in activities that indicate the child's developmental age and growth? Does it reflect the child's interests?
- 10.Safety and durability: Is the toy durable, considering your child's age and strength? Is it safe?

So, giving your child the right toys will be benefit for all. Your child's play time is not only a time of fun and development for them, but can also be a great way for you to relax and enjoy your child's company. With educational toys, you can follow, supervise and direct your child's development, and

find great thrill and amusement in their playtime activities.

Michelle Andrews, a former middle school teacher who now stays home with his three children. He wrote "Parent's Guide on How to Raise a Smart Child by Choosing the Right Educational Toys." Visit his Website EducationaltoysGuide.com at



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