










Active Play

<p>★★★ 4 +</p>	<p>GAKSPLAT FOOTBALL JAKKS PACIFIC INC. 34502</p>	<p>Splat the gak! This is a gel-like football that is easy to toss and catch. The ball makes a water-like splat when it hits a surface. Children enjoy using the ball but dislike the fact that it needs to be cleaned after each use - it tends to collect dirt quickly - and also has an oily residue that stays on hands.</p>
<p>★★★★ 4 +</p>	<p>HOT WHEELS T-WRECKS MATTEL CANADA INC. 57439</p>	<p>Dinosaur sized fun! Children have hours of fun loading up a mouthful of cars into "T-Wrecks" and then watching him spit them out and back onto the track or scattering them about. Two switches must be activated (making for a some-what loud atmosphere) before play can begin. Everyone is thrilled with this amazingly designed toy, complete with power-charged action and roaring sound effects. NOTE: Requires 4 D and 3 AA batteries; vehicles not included.</p>
<p>★★★★ 4 +</p>  	<p>PATHFINDER TOOL (OFF THE MAP) WILD PLANET 11316</p>	<p>Clip on this cool tool! Children go a long way in discovering the world around them with this neat, compact and portable six-in-one tool. Campers and hikers love clipping this simple toy to their packs, using the tweezers, blue flashlight and compass. This small durable toy is perfect for camping trips and makes a great birthday gift. NOTE: Requires 3 button cell batteries.</p>
<p>★★★★ 4 - 8 yrs</p>	<p>PLASMACAR PLASMART, INC. PlasmaCar</p>	<p>Plasma to go! This ride-on toy uses a youngster's limitless energy for its power. It requires a bit of practice to learn how to maneuver the car without using feet, but once children get the hang of it, they love riding around their driveway, sidewalk and neighbourhood! NOTE: Best suited to smooth flat surfaces. Not recommended for use on hardwood floors or for more than one rider at a time.</p>
<p>★★★★ 4 +</p>	<p>SING 'N' DANCE ORCHESTRA CHICCO 66593</p>	<p>Dancing DJ wannabes take note! This wonderful sound effects keyboard has many features including a microphone that can be used for singing along to the melodies. There are animal voices, funny sounds, eight rhythms and 15 instrument sounds. Budding young musicians listen to the pre-recorded melodies or play them following the guiding lights. Four drum sounds and several sound effects increase the play options. Children can record and playback their own melodies. Includes a songbook with ten simple happy melodies. NOTE: Requires 4 AA batteries. Can also be attached to AC/DC 6Volt adapter (not included).</p>




Arts & Crafts

<p>★ 4 +</p>	<p>AQUACOLOR GLITTER MARKERS JAKKS PACIFIC INC. 69604</p>	<p>This set of six "too cool" coloured markers do inspire the budding artist. However, these markers must be used very gently to avoid damage to the tips. Permanent stains result from when the tips break or retract into the marker. Kids enjoy drawing with these markers, but they can cause big messes. NOTE: Marker stains do not launder as well as stated in directions.</p>
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Arts & Crafts

<p>★★★★</p> <p>4 +</p> 	<p>BODY ART FUN PACKS</p> <p>SHURE PRODUCTS INC. 783</p>	<p>Temporary tattoos provide totally cool fun! This compact set comes with four full-colour sheets of tattoos and nail decals. Children love the wide variety of colours and patterns. HINT: Tattoos can be easily removed with cold cream or rubbing alcohol.</p>
<p>★★★★</p> <p>4 +</p> 	<p>CRAYOLA DECODERS</p> <p>BINNEY & SMITH 8105</p>	<p>A secret agent marker set! With seven bright colours plus one invisible writer, agents can write and decode secret messages or create colourful pictures that change colours magically. Children love the colour change effects of all these markers and enjoy creating and decoding their secret messages. NOTE: This product contains dyes that may stain. Refrain from shaking markers.</p>
<p>★★★★</p> <p>4 +</p> 	<p>CRAYOLA ERASABLE COLOURED PENCILS</p> <p>BINNEY & SMITH 63652 20100</p>	<p>"No more do-overs"! These pencil crayons easily erase any mistakes made while colouring. The set includes 10 erasable coloured pencils. Erasers do not rip paper or smear colours. Children love the results of their colouring sessions. NOTE: For best results, use a hand held sharpener.</p>
<p>★★★</p> <p>4 +</p>	<p>MAKING FINGER PUPPETS</p> <p>SILVER DOLPHIN BOOKS ISBN 1-57145-894-8</p>	<p>This all inclusive kit comes with everything needed to make a whole "play" full of finger puppets! The instruction book is amazing with lots of helpful hints and detail. However, children become somewhat frustrated when everything they have glued together falls off due to the fact that the glue is not strong enough. A wonderful kit that requires better glue.</p>
<p>★★★★</p> <p>4 - 7 yrs</p> 	<p>MYSTERY SPIN DOODLES</p> <p>CURIOSITY KITS INC. C413</p>	<p>Spinning creativity! This versatile drawing set includes a plastic frame, spiral art ring, seven spiral art gears, a dial-a-pattern stencil, six mystery picture stencils, three markers and 24 sheets of paper. These provisions allow children to make three different types of pictures. Mystery pictures are made by moving the stencil to three locations to reveal the completed picture. Stencils and gears are used to make and colour patterns. Children enjoy creating mystery pictures for their parents and making spirals. Although the plastic frame is quite stable, younger children may need help. The markers included in the set do not last very long and the paper is not regular size so replacement pieces need to be cut.</p>
<p>★★★★</p> <p>4 +</p> 	<p>PUPPET THEATRE MODEL MAGIC, CRAYOLA</p> <p>BINNEY & SMITH 04-2411</p>	<p>A fun and creative puppet theatre project for kids! Children create their own modelling clay characters, attach them to the sticks provided, cut out the box to make a theatre and let their imaginations build a fantasy world. Children enjoy showing off their plays to all. Included are 14 packages of modelling clay to keep children and their friends very busy. NOTE: Over time clay becomes dry; figures may come apart.</p>


Computer Software & Games

<p>★★★★</p> <p>4 - 11 yrs</p>	<p>GAMEBOY ADVANCE: FINDING NEMO THQ 32130</p>	<p>Finding Nemo, for Gameboy Advance, is true to the movie it is based on. Players spend a day with Nemo, go to school, and help him find his friends. After Nemo's capture by fishermen, players help his Dad and new friend Dory, find him. Swim through obstacles and solve tests, in 12 levels, to return Nemo to his Dad. NOTE: Players must be able to read to play and having previously viewed the movie is helpful in understanding what is happening.</p>
<p>★★★★</p> <p>4 - 7 yrs</p>	<p>LAVA LANDSLIDE, RESCUE HEROES KNOWLEDGE ADVENTURE ISBN 0-7849-2029-X</p>	<p>This computer software program gives children the chance to experience the exciting role of being a Rescue Hero. With six levels, which increase in difficulty and ultimately lead up to the final rescue, players are faced with many challenges. Younger computer users have some difficulty manipulating game functions however older players are able to meet the challenges without problem. A real must for Rescue Hero fans! NOTE: Windows and Mac compatible.</p>
<p>★★★★</p> <p>4 - 6 yrs</p> 	<p>MAGICAL DRESS-UP, DISNEY PRINCESS DISNEY INTERACTIVE ISBN 1-57350-634-6</p>	<p>Styling magic! Young girls will enjoy this software program where they can design their own princess by choosing various body types, eyes, hairstyles, dresses and accessories. Once the princess is designed, children can select another Disney princess to act as their guide to four magical worlds where more accessories can be added and a Disney storybook can be created. A purely imaginative and creative game that many young princesses adore! NOTE: Windows and Mac compatible.</p>
<p>★★★★</p> <p>4 - 6 yrs</p> 	<p>MUSICAL MEMORY GAME, CLIFFORD THE BIG RED DOG SCHOLASTIC CANADA LTD. ISBN 0-439-44342-3</p>	<p>Help Clifford and friends bring music back to Birdwell Island! Take a tour around the Island, learn catchy new songs and make instruments from everyday objects. Children love to sing and play music along with their favourite characters. NOTE: Windows and Mac compatible.</p>
<p>★★★★</p> <p>4 - 7 yrs</p>	<p>PET PARADE, KELLY CLUB VIVENDI UNIVERSAL GAMES ISBN 0-7849-1989-5</p>	<p>Come join the parade! This very easy and fun software package is a big hit with Kelly fans. Children are able to teach cute little animals fun tricks, design and decorate parade floats and bring it all to life as the crowd cheers everyone on. Little designers enjoy printing out pictures of the floats and little bracelets that they are able to cut out and wear. NOTE: Windows and Mac compatible.</p>
<p>★★★★</p> <p>4 - 6 yrs</p> 	<p>PLUMO AT THE PARK COGNISCIENCE PUBLISHING 37170 03193</p>	<p>A carnival of delights! Every child loves the carnival with its exciting sights and sounds, and in this software they join Plumo the Parrot for a wonderful carnival experience. Children develop cognitive skills and general knowledge by playing one of twelve colourful activities. Older children enjoy the two levels of difficulty provided. NOTE: Windows and MAC OS compatible.</p>




Computer Software & Games

<p>★★★★ 4 - 7 yrs</p>	<p>RAPUNZEL, BARBIE VIVENDI UNIVERSAL GAMES ISBN 0-7849-1987-9</p>	<p>"Rapunzel, Rapunzel let down your long hair!" Rapunzel's castle is ruined and Prince Stefan is missing. Barbie must transform the castle with special tools (a magic wand and twinkle sprinkles) in order to find the gems needed to decorate the Prince's crown and rescue him. With eight magical adventures (and only one difficulty level), Barbie enthusiasts will enjoy everything this simple CD-ROM software program has to offer. NOTE: Windows compatible.</p>
<p>★★★ 4 - 7 yrs</p>	<p>RESCUE HEROES MISSION SELECT ISBN 0-7849-2234-9</p>	<p>Be one of the Rescue Heroes; select one of three missions and help save people in need. Aim Billy Blazes' water cannon to put out raging city fires, guide Hal E. Copter in his helicopter backpack to reach hikers stranded near an erupting volcano or navigate Gil Grippers' hydrofoil boat to save people trapped by floodwaters. Younger children find it hard to control the mouse to accomplish all the tasks within a mission, while older players find the tasks to be some-what repetitive as there are only three missions available. However, Rescue Heroes fans enjoy the ability to become one of their favourite characters and lead the team to success. NOTE: Runs on both PC/MAC and comes with a bonus DVD that includes three episodes of the Rescue Heroes television show.</p>

Construction Toys

<p>★★★★ 4 - 6 yrs</p> 	<p>FOOTED FRIENDS: KID K'NEX K'NEX INDUSTRIES, INC. 85115</p>	<p>Footed friends for hands-on enjoyment! This unique multi-coloured building set has a variety of pieces (55), including a set of large eyes and feet made of soft plastic. Everything is stored in a lightweight carrying case. The pieces connect together to allow for the creation of different creatures as shown in the building guide or from a child's imagination. Kids love the large bug eyes and feet of their creations and how they stay together during active play.</p>
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Educational Toys

<p>★★★★ 4 +</p>	<p>DIZZY FUN LAND BUILDING SET LEARNING RESOURCES LER 9199</p>	 <p>Gears, gears and more gears! This 120-piece set includes everything needed to build a motorized amusement park. There are three different sized gears, four various sized bases, many connectors, a Ferris wheel, merry-go-round, bumper cars, four children, three carousel horses and a roller coaster car, including track. Younger builders may require parental help to put the park together. Once complete, children enjoy many hours of dizzy fun, playing at the park. NOTE: Requires 2 AA batteries.</p>
<p>★★★★ 4 - 9 yrs</p> 	<p>LEAP PAD PINK LEAP FROG 80063</p>	 <p>Learning to go! This learning system is a great way to learn on the run. The leap pad is about the size of a binder and opens to reveal a book and magic pen. Children use the pen to interact with the book and learn everything from reading to music. The set comes with a sample book that includes small sections for preschool to grade five. Children enjoy the colourful and informative book, while parents enjoy the volume control and auto shut-off. A great toy for car trips. NOTE: Requires 4 AA batteries and has a jack for earphones. Additional books can be purchased separately.</p>

Educational Toys

<p>★★</p> <p>4 - 8 yrs</p>	<p>LETTERS & SOUNDS, PHONICS ACTIVITY SET LEARNING RESOURCES LER 7050</p>	<p>"Find it, build it, say it, try it", is the principle behind this phonics learning system. The kit includes 108 interconnecting blocks, called reading rods, and 18 activity cards. The cards give parents and children instructions along with increasing difficulty levels, to go from identifying pictures, to upper and lower case letters, and eventually spelling and identifying hard and soft consonants. A great asset for those who home school or in a grade one classroom.</p>
<p>★★</p> <p>4 - 7 yrs</p>	<p>THOMAS' TRACKS & TRESTLES GAME BRIARPATCH BP 08110</p>	<p>All aboard for fun! This is a chutes and ladders based game with a beloved character theme. The game includes a sturdy folding game board, six character markers and a spinner. The first train to get to the shed for a rest is the winner.</p>

Games

<p>★★★★</p> <p>4 +</p> 	<p>A-B-C OY! DREAM GREEN 25399</p>	<p>An alphabetic challenge for every age! With eight different games and many variations within each, this 120-card game pack has something for everyone. Kindergarten to grade two students (K-2) will enjoy playing the first three games explained in the instruction booklet while those a little older (K-4) will be challenged by the next three games. As skills develop, all players (K-4-adult) will have fun showing their excellence in spelling with the last two activities. Games may be played in the language of choice, predetermined by those playing and with a little practice, spelling bees will be fun for all!</p>
<p>★★★★</p> <p>4 - 6 yrs</p>	<p>CAT & MOUSE RAVENSBURGER GERMANY 216895</p>	<p>Let the cheese chase begin! This 3-D board game requires players to collect five pieces of cheese as quickly as possible without Max the cat sneaking up on them. Kids love the idea of sending the mice down the cheese ladder, collecting the plastic cheese and keeping it from the adorable plastic cat. Young players may require adult help in understanding the rules but once the game is played a few times, everyone plays easily and without problem. A great first board game (or family game) that is quick to play, approximately 20 minutes, and lots of fun!</p>
<p>★★</p> <p>4 +</p>	<p>DOGGONE CRAZY! DOGGONE CRAZY doggonecrazy.ca</p>	<p>Doggone it, there sure is a lot to learn about dogs! This game facilitates learning through play. Children act like dogs or identify dangerous behaviours of dogs through pictures in this interactive board game. Correct actions and answers are rewarded with bones and the player with the most bones at the end wins. Dog lovers are sure to enjoy this game for two to six players which takes approximately 40 minutes to play. NOTE: Children should never approach a dog without asking the owners permission first.</p>
<p>★★★★</p> <p>4 +</p> 	<p>DUOMIX TACTIC 01376</p>	<p>An exercise in perception! Children will "bearly" believe their eyes as they are mesmerized by these brightly coloured game cards. The 16 sturdy cards display 15 familiar items that children try to match in both colour and shape. A great focusing game that encourages children to pay very careful attention to detail. Fun for all!</p>

Games



4 +



GREEN ALLIGATORS RINGS AND THINGS
VIDA GAMES LLC
vidagames.com

"Giggly-Silly" definitely describes the reaction from children when they play this fun card game. Rules are very easy to follow as children are challenged to describe things to other players that appear on their cards (without saying the actual word of the item). The cards have very recognizable images so that even pre-readers can play. When a green alligator pops up, players must describe an action word. Kids and parents have fun playing this game over and over again.



4 +

HICKORY DICKERY CLOCK
NORTHERN GAMES
CO. LTD.
7260301707

Watch out for Timothy Mouse. This board game, for one to four players, helps children learn to tell time while matching silly faces. It comes with a five-piece puzzle-like game board containing clock hands in the middle. Cards (48) are distributed around the clock at each hour. Players must match the correct card with the hours before turning up one of four Timothy Mouse cards. This game is a great way for young children to learn the basic hours on the clock, though half and quarter hours are not included. Some children find the game repetitive while other children enjoy playing the game alone, like solitaire.



4 - 5 yrs

HONEY TREE
TACTIC
01219

A realistic looking honey tree where bears race to collect honey balls. With a completion time of only 20 minutes, this sweet game is nice to play before bed or for young ones on the go. The four plastic teddy bears move up the tree to collect the honey at the top, but if a player is caught near the trunk they may get bumped to the bottom. The unique 3D tree structure stands 58 cm tall and requires some space to play. Younger children find the structure topples too easily and most require adult help to set the tree up in order for play to begin.



4 - 6 yrs

I SPY BINGO
BRIARPATCH
BP06108

Bingo with an "I Spy" twist! Players learn beginning sounds and practice early reading skills as they "spy" the objects in the bingo cards that match the pictures on their game board. Each game box comes with six double-sided bingo cards, 26 double-sided "calling" cards and 50 bingo tokens. Two levels of play provide challenging games for both beginners and more advanced players.



4 - 8 yrs



PET HUNT
BINARY ARTS
19275 07900

A "doggone" fun matching game for kids! An imaginative approach has players matching pictures on two sets of cards. Players "hunt" for their pets discarding big cards that match smaller cards. The game offers three special ways of hunting for matching pets. This game is a "purrfect" way of developing skills such as visual discrimination, concentration, verbal expression, winning and losing. Children think the pet theme is a real "tweet" and spend hours in this fun hunt for pets!



4 +



PICTURE LINK
BINARY ARTS
19275 07750

Quick linking fun! In this new twist to bingo, children take turns calling out an image on the board and covering it with a marker. The aim is to be the first to make a continuous line of markers from one side of the game board to another. To add some difficulty, players play without looking at their opponents' boards. This is not a long game to play, it is easy to pick up and it can be played with a range of ages. NOTE: The game pieces are small and are not recommended for children under three.




Games

★ 4 - 5 yrs	RAINBOW TREASURE HUNT/FRENCH VERSION WRITE-TO-READ TREASURE HUNT IN 91795 00501	Children initially enjoy hunting for the alphabet cards; however, most find it takes too long to search for the entire alphabet. With only two sets of alphabet clue cards, the game becomes very repetitive. Although the game comes with two white boards and markers to write the alphabet as cards are found, most children are more interested in hunting for the cards and not writing the letters. NOTE: Not all aspects of this game are in French.
★★★★ 4 +	SAFARI TACTIC 01198	***BEST BET 2004***Jungle fun with animal friends! This well-made board game includes a large, four-piece colourful puzzle board, 24 sturdy wooden animals consisting of four each of lions, zebras, hippos, chimpanzees, giraffes and elephants, one explorer figure, six trees, one die and four player boards. Little explorers proceed around the board collecting one of each animal. Some animals are hiding underneath trees while others may require a drink at the pond. The first player to collect all six jungle animals wins. For 2 to 4 players.
★★★ 4 - 7 yrs	SOUND DOMINO RAVENSBURGER GERMANY 216567	Domino with sound! This basic domino game features a big green mouse which when pushed, makes one of seven vehicle sounds. Twenty-eight dominoes with pictures of vehicles on them are distributed among players. Children then try to be the first to match their cards with the sound from the mouse and one end of the row of dominoes. Older players have a definite speed advantage and many players find identifying the vehicle sounds very frustrating. Some children enjoy playing with the big sturdy dominoes on their own without the sound feature. NOTE: Requires 3 AAA batteries; no volume control.
★★★ 4 +	THE LITTLE WOODEN TRAIN GAME TACTIC 01283	Lost luggage. The passengers aboard this little train have lost their luggage. Players must ride the train to try and find their three missing luggage pieces which are hidden on cards placed face down at various stations. Memory is key to winning this game, for if the wrong luggage piece is selected, the player must get back on the train and try again when they stop at that station later on. The first person to find all three luggage pieces wins. HINT: Rules must be read several times for full comprehension of game play.
★★★ 4 +	WOT-A-KNOT PIERRE BELVEDERE INC. 126940	"Twister" for tots! This simple game includes a vinyl mat with large colourful spots and spinner. An adult or child that can read, spins and calls out the colour and whether the right or left leg, or arm must be placed. Whoever falls or places down something other than an arm or leg, is eliminated until only one person is left on the mat. Young children have fun playing this game, but may need an adult to spin and call out the plays and assist in identifying left or right, (or older children can assist and have fun). The game is simple and repetitive, so children that enjoy more of a challenge may not enjoy this as much as others.

Imaginative Play

★★★★ 4 +	FOLD & GO PUPPET THEATER PIERRE BELVEDERE INC. 007824	Old-fashioned creativity puts on a puppet show! This bright, colourful, sturdy wood puppet theatre folds up for fun on the go. Fold down the stage, put the four puppets on their stands, draw back the velvet curtain and let the story begin. Children love the detailed puppets and the stories they can create. Expand the possibilities with your own finger puppets or use the supplied puppets with other toys.
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Imaginative Play

<p>★ 4 +</p>	<p>GOGO MY WALKIN' PUP TIGER ELECTRONICS 70439</p>	<p>GoGo looks and feels like the real thing. This electronic dog makes realistic sounds and tries (but doesn't often succeed) to come when she is called. Children enjoy pretending she is a real dog and brushing her with the included brush. This young pup can be a little tricky to "train" and like real dogs, has a mind of her own, as she does not respond to commands very often. NOTE: Requires 4 C batteries.</p>
<p>★★★★ 4 +</p>	<p>HITTIN' THE SLOPES! BETTY SPAGHETTY OHIO ART 38500</p>	<p>Betty is off to the slopes! Children build, dress and undress these dolls from head to toe. The set includes two dolls with long hair, that can be fully disassembled, ski clothing, skis and accessories, snowboard, goggles and beads (36 parts in all). The hair can be braided, beaded or left straight. This construction set provides hours of play, and once assembled, the dolls can be used for imaginative play, then disassembled and put away for easy storage. NOTE: Parts must be put in firmly to stay together.</p>
<p>★ 4 - 6 yrs</p>	<p>MERRYONETTES: BOLT THUNDERFLY & ELIXIE FLITTERDUST MANHATTAN TOY COMPANY 104790 & 104980</p>	<p>These "puppets on a string" look great with their colourful costumes and whimsical expressions. Four strings, attached to the puppet's head, back and knees, are controlled by moving a padded cross bar. The puppet goes into a flying position by looping the back string around a button on the cross bar. Children soon become frustrated by the limited movement and control of the puppets and feel they are best used as a doll or a mobile for their room.</p>
<p>★★★★ 4 +</p>	<p>ROLLING THUNDER FIGURE 8 MOUNTAIN SET LEARNING CURVE TOYS 92827</p>	<p>Rollin', rollin', rollin'! This die-cast and realistic engine and coal car make real chugging noises as they roll smoothly, forward and backward, around the sturdy plastic track, up the hills and through the glow-in-the-dark tunnel. The track stays together well as the pieces snap together and the bridges and risers are also rock steady. Pieces in the set build a good size figure eight track and can be expanded into larger configurations by connecting to the wooden tracks of Thomas & Friends or Brio. Younger children may need adult help to snap/unsnap pieces, but older children appreciate the more mature detailing and the flexibility to attach to a wooden track if available. NOTE: 1 AA and 2 AA batteries required.</p>
<p>★★★★ 4 +</p> 	<p>SUPER COOL CLOSET! BETTY SPAGHETTY OHIO ART 35021</p>	<p>A place for everything Betty! This well designed closet includes two drawers and shelves, three rods and storage in the doors. Also included are various outfits and shoes, beads, coils, hangers and two sets of arms, legs and hands. Add a doll and some imagination, for hours of construction and closet arranging fun. Girls love the design and enjoy constructing the dolls while incorporating them into many imaginative scenarios. NOTE: Dolls sold separately.</p>
<p>★★★★ 4 - 6 yrs</p>  	<p>SWITCH-IT RACE CARS Pamela Drake 8758760001</p>	<p>On your mark, get set - design! This set allows children to rev-up their imagination to dream and create their own race car. With 16 plastic overlays, the possibilities are limitless for a creative mind. A great toy for solo play and is also used for long car rides. Set includes four vehicles, four details, four drivers and four accessories as well as a sturdy layering board. NOTE: Plastic overlap does not withstand rigorous play as they tend to crease.</p>

Imaginative Play

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4 +

SWITCH-IT SPY CARS

Pamela Drake
875876003

Be a spy-car designer. This kit provides 16 clear plastic overlays including four vehicle colours, four equipment changes, four spy changes, four wild action changes and a sturdy layering board for children to design over 200 spy cars with a switch of an overlay. Children initially enjoy this simple activity but quickly lose interest after a few design sessions, as most children in this age group do not relate well to the spy theme.



A good choice for a birthday gift, rated at * and priced under \$25**



A good choice for a travel toy, rated at * and compact**



An Energizer® recommended toy, rated ***