

GIFT GIVING IDEAS

Finding Toys That Teach

(NAPSA)—According to a recent survey by NPD research group, toys are expected to be among the top three gifts this holiday season. Many of them will add an important educational element to play-time while still being fun for kids.

From infants to toddlers, educational toys can help shape children's minds, letting them acquire new skills while improving on their existing ones—and the market is stocked with toys for all skill levels and age groups.

When looking for the best toy this gift-giving season, here are some tips to consider when searching for educational toys:

Think Age

Find an educational toy that will not only challenge the child mentally but will be enjoyable for his age group. For instance, Brian the Brain is great for children 8 and up. It incorporates The Concise Encyclopedia from Britannica with voice recognition technology to respond to verbal prompts, providing an interactive “roommate” for children. Not only an academic aide, the toy also asks questions concerning the child's likes and dislikes, using responses to personalize conversations and to tell jokes.

Think Skills

Whether it's numbers, reading or motor abilities, there are toys out there that can help develop any skill. The Award-Winning 18-Inch Skill Teaching Doll is a good choice for kids 2 and up—an age group that often needs assistance developing motor skills. Chosen by Nickelodeon Jr. magazine as a “Best Toy,” this interactive teach-



This holiday season, parents are working to give the gift of knowledge to their children.

ing doll provides audible encouragement for children as they practice seven fine developmental motor skills.

Think Safety

Check out the quality of the materials and design of each toy. If shopping for toys for an infant, you may consider the Giant Curiosity Cube a safe choice. It meets the U.S. federal toy safety standards for lead. Designed for ages 6 months to 3 years, this toy combines play with learning by rewarding children's curiosity, developing motor skills and teaching shape and color recognition.

Think Budget

Remember, there's a wide variety of toys for those sticking to a tight budget. The Child's First Science Kit, for example, can be an affordable, high-quality option to give to children who are eager to explore.

Find More

For more information on the toys used here and to see other award-winning toys, visit www.Hammacher.com or call (800) 421-9002.