

Educational TOYS

for girls and boys

BY KATHY BUCKWORTH

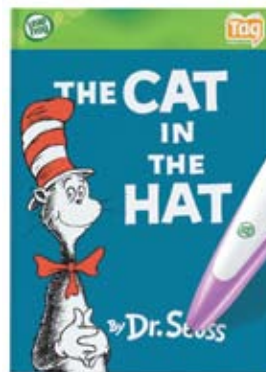


Shopping for children can be a challenge at times, especially when they're not your kids. Finding presents for nieces, nephews, friends, or grandchildren poses an additional challenge. With the plethora of toys in the marketplace, buyers want to make sure they're getting value, as well as preferably a toy, which provides some sort of educational or learning feature.

Trevor Dayton, VP of Kids & Entertainment at **Indigo Books**, says they strive to

find that balance in the toys they offer. "We look for toys that have enduring play value; that kids will play with the most." Keeping it simple is key, and buyers should remember the fact that the toys kids ask for (after repeated exposure through ads) might not be the ones they will truly enjoy the longest.

Here's our list of toys, which satisfy budget, "playability", learning and creativity. Keep this handy when you're shopping this Christmas season.



1. LeapFrog Line of Products: From the Tag Junior learning system, to the Scribble & Write, Text & Learn (a child's version of a BlackBerry), and the Fridge Phonics system, LeapFrog products are durable, fun, feature kid-friendly big buttons, lights and sounds, and kids from

ages 2-6 will play with them for hours. parents love the electronic handheld toys which are age appropriate (sturdy construction, big buttons) and encourage independent play and learning. It helps children to learn letters, count, draw etc.

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