Crective PLAYAWARDS 2025





Now in their 18th year,
the prestigious

2025 Creative Play Awards
Winners and
Highly Commended entries
recognise some of the
best creative play toys,
games, books and
resources available in the UK,
emphasising the importance
of screen-free learning
through creative play for
young children.





BUILD Your own

SOLAR

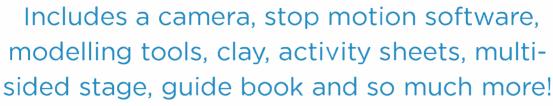
SYSTEM





HUE ANIMATION TOOLBOX



















Find out more today

huehd.com/toolbox



BOOKS 0-5 YRS

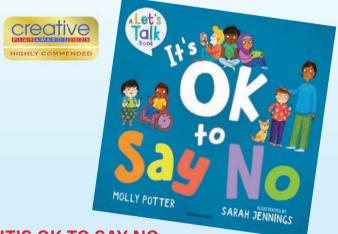




FOLD-OUT + PLAY: DOLL'S HOUSE

This fantastic fold-out book effortlessly transforms into a stylish 3D doll's house that children can explore and play with! There are stand-up characters to bring to life, pieces of press-out furniture to build and colourful stickers to decorate the house with. Enjoy hours of play in your customised doll's house "Great value for money and more robust than we anticipated. Little ones needed help building the furniture but loved playing with it and had hours of fun. The book itself, the rooms it makes and the storage compartment are gorgeous and such a good idea."

Nosy Crow £20.00 nosycrow.com



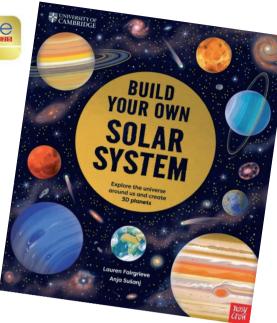
IT'S OK TO SAY NO

From PSHE expert and bestselling author Molly Potter comes a reassuring picture book about consent. With child-friendly explanations and Sarah Jennings' illustrations, it teaches children aged 4+ that it's OK to say "no" and respect others' "no." Covering personal space, sharing, privacy, and help-seeking, it includes guidance for parents.

"A really good book that broaches a sensitive subject, but breaks it down perfectly with child-friendly illustrations and explanations that clearly illustrate feelings and behaviours linked to consent. An invaluable resource and will be using it in our provision in the future."

Bloomsbury £12.99 bloomsbury.com





BUILD YOUR OWN SOLAR SYSTEM

A creative introduction to the Solar System! Explore fascinating text and stunning illustrations covering everything from stars and asteroids to galaxies and black holes! Then turn to the back of the book to find press-out planets and the Sun that can be slotted together, hung up and displayed.

"A very good book — quality is amazing, with clear instructions and meant the planets could be put together easily. Loads of facts and enjoyed building the planets and reading about each one."

Nosy Crow £12.99 nosycrow.com



SUPER CUTIES A COSY HALLOWEEN COLOURING BOOK

A fantastic mindful activity that cultivates creativity and calmness. Colouring is also a wonderful alternative to screen-based activities and encourages self-expression and the development of concentration and focus. Immerse yourself in 30 cute, cosy, tearout postcard-style colouring pages, and daydream about the joys and comforts of the Halloween season

"Love the idea! Great quality paper for colouring and easy to use perforations — loved the idea of posting finished pictures to friends and family! Girls found these cute and really enjoyed colouring them in. Would recommend for 7 years"

DK £14.99 dk.com

CRAFT KITS 4-7







UNDER THE SEAS SENSORY DOUGH CRAFT

Dive into creativity with the Under the Sea Dough Sensory Craft Box! Includes 6 coloured & scented doughs, 8 reusable Australian-illustrated mats, an art board, and ideas book. Perfect for mess-free, on-the-go sensory play that develops fine motor skills. Designed and illustrated in Australia. "Good strong box and reusable playmats, easy to set up and put away. Bright and engaging, encouraging creativity and developing fine motor skills. Children loved the scented playdoh — a fun, creative, sensory-rich activity for young explorers and would recommend/buy as a gift."

My Creative Box £19.99 mycreativebox.com

GARDEN COLLAGE SENSORY CRAFT BOX

Unleash creativity with the Garden Sensory Craft Box by My Creative Box! With 1000+ supplies, an art board, and ideas book, this portable, low-mess, screen-free kit lets kids craft anything their hearts desire—anywhere. Designed and illustrated with love in Australia. "A lovely, well presented craft activity box, well equipped with quality items, reflected in the price. The children loved the activities, easy to follow booklet and it encouraged discussion to enhance their knowledge. Great storage box — easy to refill for future activities."

My Creative Box £39.99 mycreativebox.com

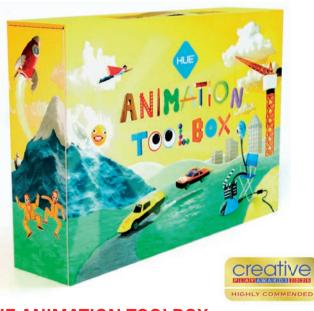




OUT TO IMPRESS AQUA JELLY ART CRAFT SET

This set is sure to astound and delight any little crafter! Mix the special powder with water in the tray provided. Squeeze the colourful gels into the included moulds, layering the different colours if desired, and place them into the solution to watch your creations set. Once set, remove the moulds and show off your vibrant underwater friends! "All the children that tested this product loved the concept. Very easy to set up and use without supervision with great end results. All the children were very pleased with their gel creations. Really good value for money — made lots of creatures — and would definitely buy again."

Addo Play £7.00 mycreativebox.com



HUE ANIMATION TOOLBOX

HUE Animation Toolbox is the ultimate movie-making kit for your creators. It's a one-of-a kind gift box that folds out into a multisided animation stage and includes everything kids need to start animating right away — camera, software, modelling tools, clay, activity sheets and more. "Really enjoyed testing and playing with this animation set. Instructions were clear and had great fun creating their stories. A great product. They particularly liked the supplied backdrops and incorporating their own toys with the models made from the modelling clay. Inspired their creativity and devising scripts. Felt this would be used a lot in the future."



THE COMPLETE COLLECTION OF NURSERY RHYMES IN MANDARIN CHINESE

Fish Tales & Rhymes creates bilingual music toy books that play Chinese nursery rhymes while fostering the love of culture through language, music and play. The four-part collection features 8 soothing childhood songs in each toy book, some of which are based on ancient poems and wise folk tales from China and now adapted into catchy songs.

"These are really fun for kids who are starting to learn Mandarin. The use of music for language learning is unique and the illustrations are engaging. Songs are catchy — our 4 year old tester enjoyed dancing to the tunes, whilst older children enjoyed reading the book. Great for travelling with integral headphone link. Highly recommend!"

Fish Tales & Rhymes £25.00 each / £80.00 set of 4 fishtalesandrhymes.com

ELECTRONIC & MULTIMEDIA 4-7 YRS





TONIEBOX 2

Meet Toniebox 2 — the screen-free audio player for kids 1—9+. Built tough for play, it sparks independence with songs, stories, games, and Tonieplay interactive fun. With bedtime tools, no ads, and easy app controls, Toniebox 2 grows with kids — bringing joy, confidence, and safe entertainment all day. "Sturdy, safe with clear instructions and, once set up, allows for independent play. The included Paw Patrol game maintained our 2 year old's attention and was enjoyed by children of varying ages. A great fun educational product to encourage screen-free play."

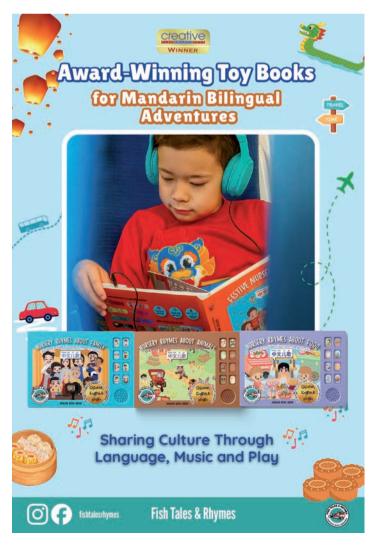
Tonies £94.99 tonies.com/en-gb





LEAPMOVE

Welcome to LeapMove®, a motion-based gaming device for kids aged 4+, where THEY are the controller! Discover 25 preloaded educational games, each covering preschool curriculum with 3 learning levels so they can learn and progress as they play! Kids can experience playing some games as themselves, or magically transform into playable characters for a fun and varied gaming experience. "Really easy to set up and doesn't take up much space. Links directly to the TV, so no internet required to play. Loads of educational games to play, but found it frustrating if the camera stopped picking up motion as they moved around/played." LeapFrog £59.95 leapfrog.com





FISH AND CHIPS

Encourage language, creativity, and social skills with our wooden Fish & Chips Play Food Set. Includes sliceable cod, chunky chips, mushy peas, lemon wedge, salt sachet, takeaway box, and the interactive Gull Gazette newspaper. Made from durable FSC® Certified wood, this 26-piece set supports imaginative role play from 12 months+. "Great wooden toy, the children were excited to play with this and it has been played with a lot. Wooden fish & chips are robust and realistic looking and has been a hit in the role play area and sparked lots of discussion about trips to the seaside, etc." Bigjigs Toys £19.99 Bigjigstoys.com



GIANT POLYDRON DINOSAUR

Build, roar, and explore with the Giant Polydron Dinosaur! Kids create multiple dinosaurs in one set, fostering teamwork and spatial skills. Its removable claws add extra fun. Made from 100% recycled materials, this giant dinosaur inspires hours of imaginative play and prehistoric adventures for children.

"Once built, the children enjoyed playing with the dinosaurs and wanted to move them around the room. Instructions not too easy to follow and younger children needed adult assistance to push the pieces together. Older children enjoyed connecting the pieces and building structures with some adult support."

Polydron UK Ltd £140.00 polydron.co.uk

IMAGINATIVE ROLE PLAY 4-7



MY NEW BABY FOAL

There are nine breed specific sets and make wonderful pony gifts. The sturdy box becomes a stable and field. Written by Helen Haraldsen, best selling children's author, each story book is breed specific, helping children learn about breeds and comes with a cuddly soft toy foal. "A really lovely, cuddly educational pony set, excellent value for money. Great for imaginative play and also for learning about ponies and their care through the accompanying book. Carries it everywhere!"

Crafty Ponies £25.00 craftyponies.co.uk



CAMPFIRE CHATMALLOWS -STORYTELLING SET

Gather around the pretend play campfire to toast marshmallows and tell stories with the Campfire Chatmallows™ Storytelling Set! This fun set has 12 soft-plastic Chatmallows featuring a total of 48 story starter icons and 4 Chatmallow sticks. Randomly choose 3 Chatmallows out of the drawstring bag, add them to a stick and use the icons to tell a story. Great fun making up stories while building vocabulary, imagination, listening, speaking and social skills. "Children have loved it. Taking turns and actively listening to each other telling stories. Builds confidence in speaking, developing vocabulary, problem solving, listening and creativity." Learning Resource £23.95 learningresources.co.uk



IMAGINATIVE ROLE PLAY 8-11



CHALKBOARD BUILDING BLOCK SET

Specifically designed for schools, these square and rectangular blocks are more than just building materials: they are versatile tools that encourage creativity, collaboration and critical thinking among young learners

"A beautifully made set of wooden blocks. The children have enjoyed stacking them and adding their own 'art' using chalks. Adult supervision required if you have children that like to throw things!" Landscapes4Leisure £484.99 landscapes4learning.co.uk



WOODLYS OF WOODLYWOO

Woodlys of WoodlyWoo are eco-friendly wooden play figures designed for open-ended imaginative play. Handcrafted from sustainable materials, they inspire creativity, sensory exploration, and storytelling while fostering social connection. They blend play, development, and sustainability to grow with children.

"Older children enjoyed the open-ended imaginative play these wooden figures offered and were totally engaged in small world role play. Younger children needed some prompting and were keen to draw or paint on their own facial features."

VM Design £30.00 woodlywoo.com

INDOOR TOYS & GAMES 0-3 YRS



WOODEN LACING LEAVES

Explore seasons, lacing, and sequencing with this versatile set. Children can sort, lace, and display 20 colourful wooden leaves, made from FSC® certified plywood. The leaves can stand, hang, or lie flat for varied play. Includes five cotton laces with chunky aglets, perfect for little hands to thread easily.

"Beautifully made wooden leaves, perfect for autumn themed creative play. Easily stored in the sturdy box, the children enjoyed threading these — great for fine motor skills. A variety of different sized leaves would extend play opportunities even further."

Educational Advantage £46.00 educationaladvantage.co.uk

OUTDOOR TOYS & GAMES 0-3 YRS



XL OCTOPLAY

This oversized building set lets children create towering structures and intricate designs. Made from 100% recycled plastic, the durable pieces have smooth edges for safe play. The interlocking design ensures stability. Perfect for indoor or outdoor use, it includes 20 pieces and 1 pole for storage and building.

"Our children have loved every minute of playing and creating with XL Octoplay and request to have it available often. Unique construction system that has been designed for young ones to use — lightweight despite its size — and look forward to seeing what else they can create with it."

Polydron UK £250.00 polydron.co.uk



PLUS-PLUS PUZZLE BY NUMBER ACTIVITY PADS

A fantastic all-in-one concept that offers 12 activities. Each pad contains 125 pieces in the storage box and provides the opportunity to create in both 2D and 3D at the same time. It's portable, perfect for travel and four themes to choose from - Transportation, Space, Ocean & Fairytale

"The children really loved playing with these. Easy to follow instructions and minimal supervision required. They made both 2D and 3D creations and this kept them engaged for hours. Liked the storage boxes these sets come in — easy to pack away and ideal for taking on travels. A real hit!"

Plus-Plus UK £12.99 amazon.co.uk



NUMBERBLOCKS ADD IT UP MINI MARKET

Set off on a fun shopping adventure with the Numberblocks® Add It Up Mini Market Figure Playset! Join Numberblock Four, our friendly shopkeeper, who can't wait to help children learn about addition and basic maths with money. There are numbery features at every turn to reinforce early years maths principles through fun, purposeful play. "Strong, durable product which they all wanted to play with. Children enjoyed seeing the characters in physical form and encouraged turn taking, whilst developing number skills and early money concepts."





MONKEY MAYHEM

In Monkey Mayhem, players race to get the lowest hand until BANANA! Someone grabs the banana and ends the round. But look out: if the WRENCH gets grabbed, then suddenly the HIGHEST hand wins! Monkey Mayhem is guaranteed chaotic fun for monkeys of all ages!

"A fun, quick card game to play, once you have mastered the rules. Enjoyed playing with a group of friends, where strategic thinking was required and mayhem ensued!"

Scrungo Games £20.00 amazon.co.uk



TOP TRUMPS GODDIT – WORLD FOOTBALL STARS

GODDIT! is the fast-paced race to shout the answer. Figure out the game, solve the puzzle and shout ""GODDIT! to win! GODDIT! includes 55 different puzzles across 5 different games: Silly String, Maze, Spot the Difference, Jigsaw and Three of a Kind! Race against your opponents to untangle the puzzles and correctly identify the solution to win the card, and when you get it - shout GODDIT!

"A fun, fast paced game that was easy to learn and required no prior football knowledge! Solve the puzzle and be the first to shout Goddit! Sturdy plastic-free packaging, great for packing away and taking on travels."

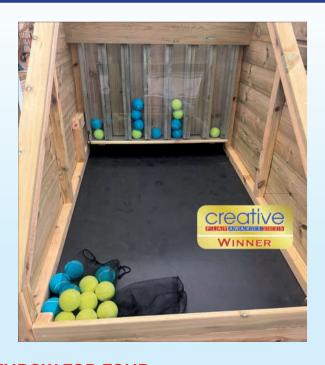
Winning Moves UK £12.99 winningmoves.co.uk



TOYRIFIC: STEPPING STONES

Bring energy and excitement to playtime with this Stepping Stones Balance Game. Designed for indoor and outdoor fun, these eight brightly coloured stones encourage balance, coordination, and sensory play. Each stone features a non-slip textured surface with a rubber base, ensuring safe play on a variety of surfaces "These brightly coloured stepping stones are durable and we have had great fun creating obstacle courses and seeing how the children move across them is amazing. They are suitable for use with a wide age range and stack away neatly when not in use." Wilton Bradley £24.95 amazon.co.uk

OUTDOOR TOYS & GAMES 8-11



THROW FOR FOUR

A bouncy twist on Connect 4! Toss a tennis ball into the tubes and try to connect four in a row. But watch out, the ball might not go where planned, making every turn full of surprise and laughter! "The children had great fun playing games with this - creating their own team games as well as the intended 'connect 4'. Great for taking turns and developing their throwing and aiming. Great addition to our outdoor resources."

Landscapes for Learning £399.00 landscapes4learning.com



LITTLE BRIAN FLIP PAINT STICK

Flip the fun with Little Brian Flip Paint Sticks: Flip 12 paint sticks over to reveal an additional 12 assorted colours - double the creativity with no mess! 24 quick drying vibrant colours come with this pack and the paint sticks are perfect for little hands to hold. "Amazing double-ended, vibrant colours the children found easy to use with the twist up design and they loved them. Created brilliant artworks on all sorts of materials - paper, card, glass, etc Completely mess-free and perfect for creative fun anywhere." Tremart Ltd, Baby Republic £10.00 amazon.co.uk





NICK JR. READY STEADY DOUGH PARTY FOOD STATION DOUGH PLAYSET

This Party Food Station has everything you need to create doughy dishes for all your friends and family on those special occasions. Make endless delightful dishes, from sweet ice cream sundaes to tasty deep-dish pizza with as many toppings as you want. Serve it on one of the plates or in takeaway box included. "A lovely selection of activities perfect for young children, great for fine motor control. Made it easy for them to produce a lovely piece of creative work." Addo Play £15.00 thetoyshop.com



CONNETIX®

Where play and learning connect



WINNER



HIGHLY COMMENDED

PRO Constructor Set 70 pc















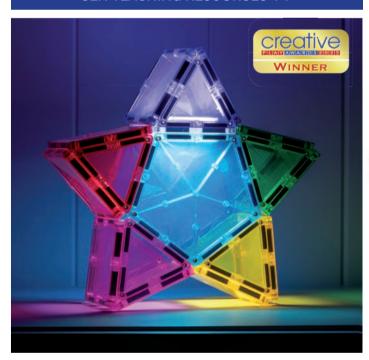




SENSORY BOARD

Encourage early learning through play with this rainbow Sensory Board, featuring 10 textured tubes from smooth felt to rippled silicone. Children can explore touch, match colours, and build dexterity by slotting the pieces into the tray. Made from sustainable FSC® Certified wood, it's a safe, hands-on developmental toy. "A popular toy during open play sessions, perfect for children of all ages to explore the various textures and match with the relevant colours. Has facilitated extended discussions about similar textures, etc. Very young ones enjoyed taking out the pots and exploring the contents. A very well thought out product." Bigjigs Toys £19.99 bigjigs.co.uk

SEN TEACHING RESOURCES 4-7



CONNETIX 28 PIECE LIGHT STAR PACK

Combine bright rainbow colours and a rechargeable light-up tile for dazzling new ways to play - follow the step-by-step instructions or build from your imagination! Light up one or both sides and choose from 3 dimming settings to take light exploration and magnetic tile play to the next level. "A huge hit with our children testers! They had great fun making all sorts of structures, sparking imaginations. Robust and colourful and can be used with other Connetix tiles, the light is a fabulous addition and will be enjoyed for years to come." CONNETIX £59.00 connetixtiles.com



ELC SORT, MATCH & COUNT ANIMALS GAME

Use the tweezers to pick up the animals and drop them into the correct coloured bowl. Then, take some of the animals out of their bowls and try counting how many are left! We can practice basic addition and subtraction, colour matching and recognition or try mixing and matching the colours to create a beautiful rainbow! "A good quality product the children enjoyed playing with. Helped develop fine motor skills, plus encourages sorting, matching and counting. Bright and engaging characters and great value for money resource."

Addo Play £8.00 elc.co.uk



PLASTICINE SKWISHEMS

Plasticine Skwishems: mouldable creations are perfect for beginners learning to make animals, figures and more. Whether moulding a masterpiece or crafting a cute character, Plasticine aims to inspire creativity and hours of screen-free fun. With online tutorials, building your masterpiece is easier than ever. The only decision you have to make is Keep'em or Skwish'em. "Our young testers had fun making the characters using the supplied moulds, but then also 'skwishedem' and used the product to create their own characters. Great value and a good stocking filler!"

GP UK £64.99 Amazon.co.uk

Sandra Beale



COOL CHEMISTRY KIT

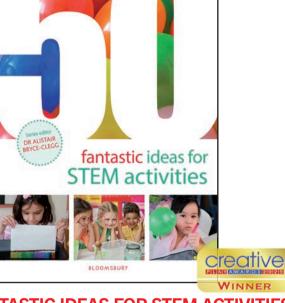
The 42+ piece Cool Chemistry Set from Brainstorm Toys features 8 fun experiments that are perfect for chemistry mad kids. See magma change colour and observe the magic of acid and alkali! It includes online tutorials and easy-to-follow instructions along with a secret code that unlocks amazing multilingual online chemistry facts. "A fun, educational chemistry set, great value for money with easy to follow instructions. Experiments were quick and easy to accomplish and able to use it independently, although some adult supervision is advisable."

Brainstorm Toys £10.00 amazon.co.uk



CONNETIX PRO 70 PIECE CONSTRUCTOR

Creators can push the limits of their designs with the CONNETIX PRO line, featuring super powerful 360 degree spinning magnets and an epic range of PRO tile shapes - build in new directions and level up play and learning. The ultimate open-ended construction toy for older children and kidults alike!. "Loved the colours on these tiles – great for all genders – and the creative opportunities offered by the clever rotating magnets and different sized tiles. Allowed for even greater creativity, especially when incorporating other Connetix tiles sets for extended play. Lack of instructions promoted open ended play."



50 FANTASTIC IDEAS FOR STEM ACTIVITIES

Sandra Beale's 50 Fantastic Ideas for STEM Activities offers fun. low-cost, and practical projects to spark curiosity and creativity in young children. From rainbow volcanoes to magnetic suspension, each activity builds scientific understanding, vocabulary, literacy, and motor skills, while encouraging problem-solving, confidence, and a lifelong love of discovery. "I love this book! Lots of super ideas to get the children thinking, evaluating and wondering. Saving me lots of time not having to trawl through the internet and I have a lovely bank of ideas to hand."

Bloomsbury Publishing £12.99 bloomsbury.com

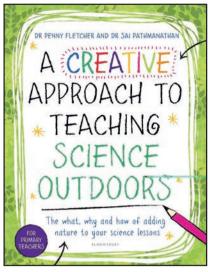
STEM 8 - 11 YRS



SOLARBOTS: COSMIC EXPLORERS

Build and experiment with five out of this world robots that are powered by the sun and discover real life applications of solar technology in a fun and exciting way whilst learning about core STEM principles such as engineering and renewable energy. "Patience and concentration required to complete this robot, with lots of small parts and detailed instructions to be followed. Requires a pair of small cutting pliers – would be useful if these were included in the pack. Finished robot looks great!"

Thames & Kosmos £19.99 thamesandkosmos.co.uk





A CREATIVE APPROACH TO TEACHING SCIENCE OUTDOORS

Innovative activities for teaching physics, chemistry, and biology through nature. With ready-made, curriculum-linked lesson plans - like racing leaves for motion or painting with natural dyes - it encourages critical thinking, creativity, and environmental awareness. Adaptable for any setting, it supports wellbeing while inspiring scientific discovery. "Absolutely love this book! I'm always trying to find ways of making use of the lovely grounds in our school, and this book has given me lots of brilliant ideas. Clearly laid out, with lists of resources required, curriculum links and ideas for further investigation. Highly recommended."

Bloomsbury Publishing £16.99 bloomsbury.com





COLOUR MATCH EXPRESS

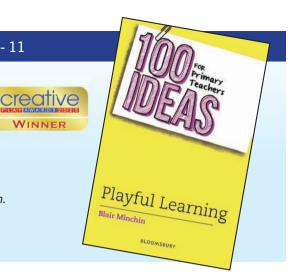
All aboard the Colour Match Express! This fun and engaging colour matching game is perfect for little ones aged 3-6 years that are learning their colours. Designed with chunky, wipe-clean cards that are perfect for little hands! Interchangeable pieces mean players can make a different train every time! "The children all thoroughly enjoyed playing this game — lots of excitement and giggles! Great for colour matching, taking turns, fine motor skills and coordination. Sparked discussions about the different range of animals included." Orchard Toys £12.00 orchardtoys.com



TEACHING RESOURCES 8 - 11

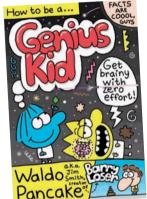
100 IDEAS FOR PRIMARY TEACHERS: PLAYFUL LEARNING

This innovative book offers 100 playful, inclusive activities for Primary, covering all major curriculum areas. From Coding Cones to Magnet Mazes, ideas are easy, adaptable, and classroom-tested. Playful learning boosts creativity, resilience, enthusiasm, and academic performance, making lessons more engaging and enjoyable for pupils. "Exciting, original ideas to support learning through play in the classroom setting encompassing the whole curriculum. Clearly presented by subject area and with easy-to-follow instructions and useful ideas for extended learning opportunities. A great addition to our school." Bloomsbury Publishing £15.00 bloomsbury.com



NOTABLE ENTRIES

Here are a selection of some of the other entries that scored highly with our testers...



FABER BOOKS — HOW TO BE A GENIUS KID

(Books 5 yrs+)

An instantly engaging (gift) book of large and small facts, all threaded through with the relaxed humour and sidelong wit that readers have come to know so well in the Barry Loser books. This collection features all the sorts of questions a child might ask a parent that are generally impossible to answer — like how many atoms are there in a human — leavened by eye-poppingly colourful art and deadpan humour.

www.faber.co.uk £7.99



LITTLEMAGICTRAIN — PICNIC ON THE MOON

(Teaching Resources 4-7 yrs)

Blast off with your little astronauts on an unforgettable picnic on the moon! Through movement, music, and imaginative play, ALL children aged 4–7 explore space, collect moon rocks, and share a cosmic feast while building teamwork, communication, and a love of discovery.

www.littlemagictrain.com £1.50 per child/year

CURIOUS UNIVERSE -DECODEN MAGIC THINK PINK CREATIONS DELUXE KIT

(Craft Kits 8-11yrs)

Enjoy kawaii crafting fun, with this Decoden Magic Think Pink Creations kit. It's bursting with all the supplies you need to customise your own accessories. Just pipe your designs using the cream-like material, then decorate

with sparkly gems, beads and super-cute charms. Create totally unique 3D puffy designs, using exclusive QR codes to follow step-by-step video tutorials!



SCRUNGO GAMES — BANANO!

(Indoor Toys & Games 8-11yrs)

In BanaNO, push your luck and be the player with the biggest banana at the end of the game, all while sabotaging other players! The game ends once 5 'no!' cards have been revealed. Will you succeed, or get chopped?

www.amazon.co.uk £7.99

HARPER COLLINS -PAW PATROL FIRST PHONICS AND FIRST WORDS

(Teaching Resources 4-7 yrs)

FLASHCARDS

Learn with the PAW Patrol pups! Help your little learner get ready to go, go, go with these colourful PAW Patrol Flashcards. Children aged 3-5 will learn phonics and first words alongside their loveable and playful PAW Patrol friends. Ideal for nursery and preschoolers getting ready for school.

www.collins.co.uk £7.99

