

Children's Literature Reviews

Item 31 of 134

Do-it-yourself early learning : easy and fun activities and toys from everyday home center materials

Jeff A. Johnson and Tasha A. Johnson.

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St. Paul, MN : Redleaf Press, c2006.

218 p. : ill. ; 28 cm.

Annotations:

Introduction -- Why make your own learning toys? -- What kids learn while playing -- Getting started -- Activities : exploring gravity and motion -- Activities : matching, sorting, and estimating -- Activities : problem solving -- Activities : manipulatives -- Activities : kids in motion -- Activities : dramatic play -- Activities : nurturing and caring -- Activities : sensory play -- Activities : construction -- Activities : exploring tools -- Activities : art -- Activities: Learning equipment to build.

Reviews:

Gwynne Spencer (Children's Literature)

You have probably noticed that toys have morphed into commercials or are marketed as “learning tools” but are actually electronic bombardment systems that blitz a poor kid’s sensory system. And the truth is that kids still often have more fun with the box than the toy that came in it. This is a 218-page celebration of ways to make your own fun, and it delivers everything it promises, while delivering a sense of empowerment and imaginative invention. Instead of spending a gazillion dollars on plastic or short-lived play center “stuff”, the authors encourage you to visit the hardware store, the paint store, and the lumberyard scrap pile so you can collect some really engaging learning materials yourself. The first three chapters include: “Why Make Your Own Learning Toys” (they’re affordable, durable, flexible, sensible, and fun), “What Kids Learn While Playing” (language and literacy, math and logical thinking, science, art, music and creative expression, social relationships, physical skills), and “Getting Started” (tools, materials, construction tips, safety, maintenance, storage). The next twelve chapters are divided into more specific activities that focus on such things as “Gravity and Motion,” “Matching, Sorting and Estimating,” “Problem Solving,” and “Exploring Tools” (which encourages grownups to teach kids how to use real tools to do real stuff with none of this play-plastic-hammers stuff!) The description of each activity include age recommendations, materials, tools, estimated build costs, directions, storage, what’s learned, and more. Almost every activity has a photo, and many of them make you laugh out loud! Indexed by age as well as by activity. Highly recommended. 2006, Redleaf Press, \$19.95. Ages adult parent/professional.

Subjects:

[Play.](#)

[Early childhood education.](#)

[Child care.](#)

[Educational toys.](#)

[Toy making.](#)

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