Top Toys of 2015

What makes a toy a good therapy toy?

1) Cross Disciplinary
   The toy should be able to cross disciplines to encourage collaboration. We believe to provide the best therapy that we can for our kiddos, as well as support and educate the family, we have to look at the whole child. Our therapy toys should facilitate holistic therapy model.

2) Functionality
   The toy must be functional to be used in a number of settings to include home, daycare, and therapy.

3) Developmentally Adaptable
   The toy must be developmentally appropriate for a variety of ages. The toy should allow for scaffolding of play and ideas for therapy application.

4) FUN!
   We're working with children so therapy has to be FUN! If our therapy isn't fun then we're missing something.

5) Easy
   The game or toy should be easy to use, set up, explain, and play. The game should also be easy to adapt for changing the rules and play of the toy / game.

6) Start, Do, Finish
   The toy should support the Start, Do, Finish model for therapy. You should be able to "start" the toy or game to get going and request for certain parts of the game or activity as the therapist directs. The game should allow for you to "do" something, or accomplish a task that is purposeful. The game should have a "finish" component that facilitates in bringing closure to the game / activity as well as cleaning up.

All of the following toys meet this criterion and are Haden's Top Toys of 2015. They are listed in in no particular order:

Squeeze Poppers by Hog Wild Toys



The toys come in an assortment of different animals, and extremely fun!

You squeeze the stomach of the animal to make the ball shoot out of the animal's mouth.

This toy is a great motivator for physical therapy.

This is great for OT for hand strengthening.

This is great for ST for requesting.

This toy can be a choking hazard for children 3 and under.

http://hogwildtoys.com/app.cfm?fa=PRODUCTS.showCategory&categoryID=4

Ring It by Blue Orange Games



This is fast and very simple game, and adaptable for a variety of ages.

This game has a very natural start, do, finish component.

This is a great game for social pragmatic, sentences, and matching. The game has a great adaptability for a number of exercises.

This is great for OT's for sequencing, and has been used in our practice for a number of co-treats with ST and OT, as well as ST and PT.

http://www.blueorangegames.com/index.php/games/ring-it



Wooden Stencil Sets by Melissa & Doug

These are great to use in coordination with the Melissa & Doug Scratch Art Notes.

This is very naturally a great toy for OT, but there are a number of applications for speech as well.

This can be used for articulation, sequencing, parts of a whole, and a number of other therapy applications.

http://www.melissaanddoug.com/product/0/9331/_/Wooden_Stencil_Box

http://www.melissaanddoug.com/product/5945

Filo Mini by Quercetti



It is a sowing / drawing game that sets up and cleans up quickly.

This is a great game for colors, following directions, counting, fine motor, and a number of other therapy applications.

The game is very durable, and hold up very well. Also, if the strings are lost they can be replaced with regular shoe strings.

http://www.quercettistore.com/en/products/filo-small



Mess-Free Glitter by Melissa & Doug

Very reliable toy that lets you use glitter with no mess!

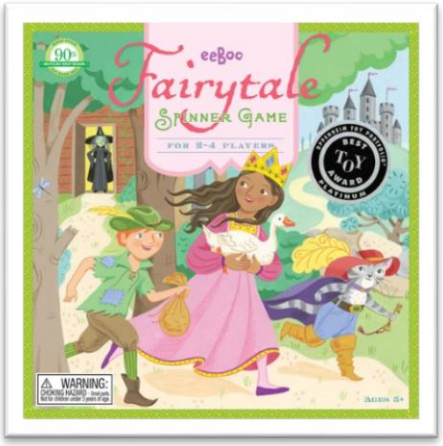
This is a very adaptable game for OT, PT, and ST.

This is great for physical therapy that allows for working with two hands. It is also a great strengthening toy for children who may be weaker on one side of their body than the other.

This also allows children to make a pretty picture which is important for children we treat who have fine motor difficulties, and usually aren't able to make a pretty picture.

http://www.melissaanddoug.com/mess-free-glitter-underwater-scenes

Fairytale Spinner Game by eeBoo

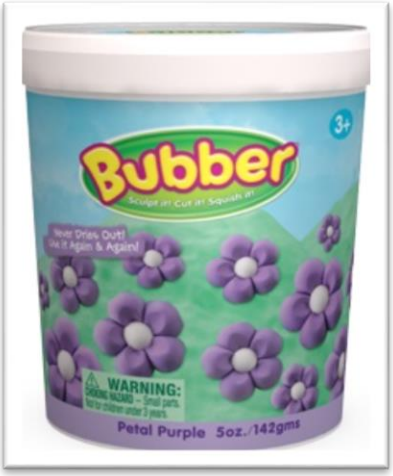


All of eeBoo's games are great because they have such great pictures.

Children play the game to try to collect the different aspects of a fairytale to include a hero, rival, place, helper, treasure, transportation, and magical object. The winner is the first person to collect all of the items. The winner then has to tell a story to include all of the items.

This game is very adaptable and great for speech for working on a number of things. This is also great for social pragmatic and turn taking, as well as pt for hiding the objects in the gym or acting out the scene.

http://eeboo.com/store/show/FAIRGM?parent=games



Bubber by Waba Fun

Bubber is a manipulative like Play-Doh, but it is distinctly different from Play-Doh due to the fact that Bubber is lightweight, moldable, and it never dries out.

Bubber works very well with cookie cutters because it maintains its shape. It's also nice to use it with a tray so you have a defined work space.

This is great for social toy for passing out the bubber and collecting it to and from friends. The toy works great for start, do, finish.

The therapy applications for the toy are endless. We have used it in ST, OT, and PT. This is great for PT because it can be used to help kiddos maintain a desired position for longer because the Bubber is a great motivator.

http://www.wabafun.com/bubber.php

Jungle Jumparoo



This is a great bouncing toy for children. It can be used indoor and outdoor.

This toy is great for helping children who are learning to jump because you can put your foot down on one side of the inner tube to help the child.

The Jumparoo comes in 2 sizes, regular and mini. Both of them ca actually take adult weight jumping on it as well.

Our PT's and OT's love this, and we have used it in st as well.

http://junglejumparoo.com/products/jungle-jumparoo



Color by Dots by Melissa & Doug

This is an older toy by Melissa & Doug, but one of our favorites. This is great to work with because it has a defined color space.

This is great for start-do-finish with colors, choices with colors, parts of a whole, as well as social applications.

This is great for OT so children don't get overwhelmed by a large task of coloring and entire, complex picture.

These sheets are very adaptable as well so you can paint them, color them, use markers, glue sequins on them, and more. It can be used for a wide range of ages.

http://www.melissaanddoug.com/color-by-dots



Thumbs Up by Blue Orange Games

The goal is to be the first to stack different colored rings on your thumb, based on the order shown on a challenge card.

This is a great, easy, fast paced game that can keep children motivated throughout the entire therapy session.

This is a great game for playing when doing articulation because it is so fast paced, and allows kids to get a high number of productions.

This is also great for sequencing, colors, matching, finger isolation, and more. This is also a great game for playing in different postural positions for PT.

http://www.blueorangegames.com/index.php/games/thumbs-up

Alphabet Train Lacing Beads by Melissa & Doug



This is a lacing game that is very adaptable as well as easy to lace (some lacing games aren't so easy). Children draw cards and then create the sequence displayed on the card.

This is great for vision because it requires finding items in a busy field. This can be adapted for a number of therapy applications including working with stickers. It can even be used as a modified "Go Fish" game.

Although lacing games are seen a lot in OT, this game works very well for ST and PT as well.

http://www.melissaanddoug.com/ABC-lacing-train