



Gift Guide

Best Educational Products

2009

Learning Activities for Inquisitive Kids

www.imaginationsoup.net

By Melissa Taylor

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Melissa Taylor

Melissa Taylor is an expert parenting and education **freelance writer** with a **M.A. in Education** from the University of Denver. As a classroom **teacher** for many years, she lived the educator's life. Now, as a **mom**, she knows and experiences education from a parent's perspective. Daily life, research and continuing education developed Melissa into the parenting expert she is today. Melissa's school district, Douglas County Public Schools, awarded her **Outstanding Teacher** four years in a row. (She's still waiting for the mother of the year award and thinks this might be her year.)

Melissa created Imagination Soup in May 2009. Imagination Soup gives parents fun activity ideas to learn at home in math, science, reading and writing.

Use this gift guide to help you as you consider the holiday gifts. Check back regularly at Imagination Soup (www.imaginationsoup.net) because I'll be offering many of these gifts as holiday giveaways! Hopefully, you'll find some great educational products that your child or children will adore!

TRAVEL	1
GEOGRAPHY / HISTORY	2
LITERACY: READING AND WRITING	3
MATH	5
SCIENCE	7
SPANISH	9
ART, DRAMA & GAMES	10
PRETEND PLAY	11
MUSIC	12

TRAVEL

Product	Description	Website
My Busy Kit: Age 3-7		
	<p>Entertaining kit of activities to color and draw, play and pretend, create and construct, and discovery. Entertainment for hours!</p>	<p>http://mybusykit.com</p>
Eye Find: Ages 4+		
	<p>A seek-and-find book that comes with custom-made tools. Use them to solve the 15 different picture puzzles inside. Use the Big Eye — a magnifying glass perfect for finding tiny things but to find surprises inside a dragon's belly or a pile of spaghetti, grab the Color Eye.</p>	<p>www.klutz.com</p>
Brain Noodles Big Kit: Age 3+		
	<p>Open ended play for countless hours of “big” fun. Each kit contains twenty five 18-inch brain noodles, fifteen 9-inch brain noodles and an idea/instruction booklet. There are 12 assorted vibrant colors.</p>	<p>www.kazotoys.com</p>

Holiday Gift Guide

GEOGRAPHY / HISTORY

Product	Description	Website
 <p>First Month's Explorer Kit</p>	<p>Little Passports: Age 3-10</p> <p>Each month Sam and Sofia, travel to a new country on their magical scooter. Children receive a monthly personalized package via postal mail that includes an adventure letter, fun souvenirs (e.g., origami paper, music CDs, puzzles, and traditional country toys.)</p>	<p>www.littlepassports.com</p>
 <p>MOVABLE PAPER FIGURES TO CUT, COLOR, AND ASSEMBLE</p> <p>FAMOUS FIGURES OF ANCIENT TIMES</p> <p>CATHY DIEZ-LUCKIE</p>	<p>Famous Figure from Ancient Times: Age 6-12</p> <p>Action figures from ancient times. Cut, color, move and imagine you're Julius Caesar, Aristotle and more.</p>	<p>www.figuresinmotion.com</p>
	<p>Map Tangle: Age 3-10</p> <p>Kids play a Twister-like stretching game with the continents, oceans, mountains and famous locations.</p>	<p>www.youngexplorers.com</p>

Holiday Gift Guide

LITERACY: READING AND WRITING

Product	Description	Website
Fridge Phonics: Age 2-5		
	<p>26 letters fit into the letter reader. Hear the letter name and sound plus a song.</p>	<p>www.amazon.com</p>
Tell Me a Story Cards: Age 4–12		
	<p>26 picture cards for children to choose and invent a story to match the pictures. (Circus, Robot, Fairy Tale, Forest Mystery)</p>	<p>www.grasshopperstore.com www.amazon.com</p>
Tessy and Tab Reading Club: Age 2-6		
	<p>Tessy and Tab is a magazine and reading program for preschoolers. It builds early reading skills. Delivered twice a month and includes activities, parent tools and online resources.</p>	<p>www.tessyandtab.com</p>
Indoor Treasure Hunt: Age 5+		
	<p>Play an indoor Treasure Hunt. Game includes an Explorer's Club backpack, treasure map, treasure chest, clues, pieces of treasure and instructions.</p>	<p>www.uncommongoods.com</p>

Holiday Gift Guide

Product	Description	Website
Journal Jots in a Jar: Age 8+		
	<p>Instant journaling and writing assignments and a wealth of ideas for young writers at home. 101 unique and creative prompts start kids thinking and make writing fun.</p>	<p>www.freespirit.com</p>
Take your Pix Board Book Photo Albums: All Ages		
	<p>Chunky board book style photo album with page notches and protective plastic covers. Perfect for small children learning words, or older adults relearning words.</p>	<p>www.boardbookalbums.com</p>
Diary of a Worm and Inst-a Worm Kit" Age 6+		
	<p>Enjoy the story <i>Diary of a Worm</i> then mix up a batch of instant worms!</p>	<p>www.stevespanglerscience.com</p>
Imagination Soup's Ready, Set, Blog: All ages		
	<p>Easy steps with screen shots will guide you through setting up a free family blog. Use your blog to stay in touch with family and write frequently. Writing ideas included.</p>	<p>www.imaginationsoup.net</p>

MATH

Product	Description	Website
Learn Time, Teach Time Analog Clock: Age 4-10		



Colorful, decorative and instructional clocks that look like art and teach children the minutes. Pick from twenty designs. You'll receive a fully functional hanging wall clock and a paper practice clock.

www.schonart.com

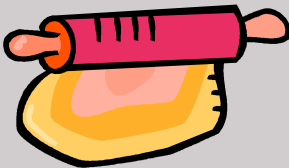
Chalk Chess: Age 3-10		
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Enjoy this thinking game of mental dexterity, using beautifully crafted pieces made from black and white chalk.

www.moderntribe.com

Yummy Fun Kooking Club: Age 5-15		
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Monthly recipes, surprises and letters for kids.

www.yummyfun.com

Set Game: Age 6+		
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Visual perception skills. Winner of 12 game awards. Try to form a SET® from the twelve laid face up on the table.

www.setgame.com

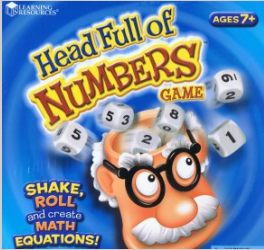

Tangrams In a Jar: Age 3-10		
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Use geometric shapes to match images on the cards.

www.freespirit.com




Holiday Gift Guide

Product	Description	Website
Head Full of Numbers: Age 7+		
 <p>The image shows the box for the 'Head Full of Numbers' game. It features a cartoon character with glasses and a mustache, surrounded by dice. The text on the box includes 'Head Full of NUMBERS GAME', 'SHAKE, ROLL and create MATH EQUATIONS!', and 'AGES 7+'.</p>	<p>Use three custom dice with numbers 0, 1, 2, 7, 8 and 9 to make equations -- addition or subtraction, or multiplication and division.</p>	<p>www.educationallearninggames.com</p>
Balancing Monkeys: Age 5-10		
 <p>The image shows a wooden balancing toy called 'Balancing Monkeys'. It consists of a central wooden post with a green, leafy top. Several small, colorful monkey figures are hanging from the top of the post, and the goal is to balance them.</p>	<p>Try to maintain the tree's equilibrium. Kids will learn how to calculate the correct distances and numbers required to balance all the monkeys.</p>	<p>www.uncommongoods.com</p>

SCIENCE

Product	Description	Website
Six Test Tube Experiments in a Rack: Age 7-10		
	<p>Six great science experiments each packed in a large plastic test tube. Experiment with a growing alligator, gooey jelly crystals, bubbling potions, magic sand that stays dry under water, color-changing beads, polymer plants, a test tube rainbow and erupting snow!</p>	<p>www.stevespanglerscience.com</p>
Solar Powered Car: Age 4+		
	<p>Learn about solar power with a car that moves in the sun.</p>	<p>www.stevespanglerscience.com</p>
Color Changing Beads: Age 4+		
	<p>UV-sensitive beads. Make bracelets, test the effectiveness of sunscreen, or experiment with color while you learn about the power of sunlight. Included is a science activity guide with lots of fun experiments with solar radiation and light.</p>	<p>www.stevespanglerscience.com</p>
Your Body Puzzle: Age 3-10		
	<p>5 layer wooden puzzle which includes the nervous, digestive, muscular, skin and clothed layers, Girl or Boy available.</p>	<p>www.uncommongoods.com</p>

Holiday Gift Guide

Product	Description	Website
The Force Trainer (for all Jedi Knights): Age 7+		
	<p>This wireless headset actually reads and registers your brain waves using the same technology used in EEG medical testing. A focused application of concentration will allow you to make the training sphere rise inside the tower.</p>	http://scientificsonline.com
Plasma Ball: Age 6+		
	<p>This Nebula Plasma Ball is simply the ultimate interactive light show. Blending specially formulated inert gases, it creates a dramatic display of light inside a hand-blown glass sphere!</p>	http://scientificsonline.com
Star Theater Pro: Age 3-10		
	<p>Home planetarium that includes a soundtrack with an audio tour to thousands of motorized rotating stars that are majestically displayed on your walls or ceiling</p>	http://scientificsonline.com

Holiday Gift Guide

SPANISH

Product	Description	Website
En Mi Casa (In My House) CD: All Ages		
	<p>Featuring catchy Spanish lyrics about common activities, this collection of original songs provides a soundtrack for a typical day, helping children learn by incorporating Spanish into their daily lives.</p>	www.singalingo.com
Say and Stick Word Notes: Age 3+		
	<p>60 colorful, fun and educational repositionable notes keep useful words front and center in your casa.</p>	www.singalingo.com

ART, DRAMA & GAMES

Product	Description	Website
Art gallery book, greeting cards, placemats & more: All Ages		
	<p>Mail your child's art to Scribble Press and they will create an exquisite custom book featuring your child's artistic work, a laminated placemat or greeting cards.</p>	<p>www.scribblepress.com</p>
SEDARAHC ("suh-DARE-ic"): Age 4+		
	<p>Charades in reverse. The entire team acts and only one person guesses.</p>	<p>http://www.sedarahc.com</p>
Brain Games In a Jar: Age 6-9		
	<p>101 brain teasers to challenge kids to think and learn.</p>	<p>www.freespirit.com</p>

PRETEND PLAY

Product	Description	Website
Wooden Birthday Cake: Age 3-5		
	Includes 6-slice cake, serving plate, 19 toppings, 7 candles, wooden spatula and storage box.	www.brainwavetoys.com
Joey Magnetic Dress Up: Age 3-7		
	28 piece wood kit adds magnets to make this easy dress up and creative!	www.brainwavetoys.com
Rainbow Cape: Age 3-10		
	Silk cape to spark imaginative play.	www.novanatural.com
Paper Pups: Age 4+		
	Tear-resistant paper puppies — a Chihuahua and a Yorkshire terrier. Their fabulous, punch-out wardrobes include winter and summer outfits, rain gear, and even a bikini.	www.klutz.com
Deluxe Magic Set by Melissa & Doug: Age 8+		
	Easy to learn tricks that are the same ones used by professional magicians; disappearing objects, multiplying coins, magic boxes, prediction tricks, a secret change bag and more.	www.kazotoys.com

MUSIC

Product	Description	Website
Bari Koral Family Rock Band: Age 0-8		
	<p>Singer/songwriter music with kid-friendly songs about popcorn, colors, best friends and more.</p>	<p>www.barikoral.com</p>
The Jimmies <i>Trying Funny Stuff</i> DVD and CD: All Ages		
	<p>Rocking kid music that every parent will love, too! This set includes a live performance CD and a DVD with videos, a performance and behind the scenes commentary.</p>	<p>www.gimmiejimmies.com</p>
Gustafer Yellowgold's Mellow Fever CD & DVD: All Ages		
	<p>Songs about sun creature Gustafer range from mellow to danceable on the guitar based CD. The hand drawn illustrated DVD shows Gustafer meeting new friends and having adventures. Parent friendly.</p>	<p>www.gustaferyellowgold.com</p>
World of Music CD-ROM: Age 5+		
	<p>Compose music with the sounds of four distinct regions of the world: North America, Asia, West Africa and the Middle-East. Change the tempo, copy/paste sections, stretch selections, save composition and work on it later. Beginner and Intermediate options.</p>	<p>www.alfred.com (games)</p>
Hearing Music CD-ROM: Age 3-10		
	<p>Fun-filled games break musical concepts down to patterns, visuals and easy exercises. identify different sections of music, nuances in a melody and changes in rhythm—all by listening to songs by famous composers</p>	<p>www.alfred.com (games)</p>



Holiday Gift Guide

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