

YOUNG TESTERS PICK TOP TOYS FOR CHILDREN

By Susan Robertson • December 21, 2011

It's more than fun and games at Williamsburg Goddard School. It's research.

Children from the school, infants to age 5, recently participated in the Goddard School National Toy Test to help determine what toys would make its Top Ten list of preschooler approved toys for 2012.

The test was conducted in late September in order to submit results to Goddard Corporate in time to get the list out for the holidays. Toys came in from several major manufacturers, including Fisher-Price, Mattel and Lego Duplo.

The Williamsburg Goddard School was one of 20 franchises across the country participating in the test.

"We got the toys, set up a specific time for the kids to play with them and then reported back," said Janie Lisagor, owner of the Williamsburg Goddard School. "It's really the kids who decide."

April Melton, director of the school, said they tested the toys with two classes. Each day they rotated, finishing the toy test within a week. Lisagor said the kids went straight for the toys they wanted.

Younger kids gravitated toward toys that made noise or were textured or brightly colored, according to Melton. Older children preferred things they could build with, like block sets.

Melton noted that during testing one student called the blocks "cool." Another called her over to say "Look what I made." Infants enjoyed a plush bunch of musical flowers called "Soft Chime Garden" that lit up when touched.

A tractor toy, called the "Animal Sounds Hay Ride," was popular among children ages 2-3. She recalled they argued over the toy, saying, "My turn! My turn!"

They received results of the nationwide test just before Thanksgiving.

"It was great," Melton said. "Our Top Ten were actually all the toys that ended up on the national Top Ten list."

THE TOP TEN

- * Sassy Sensory Ball Set, by Sassy, ages 3 months & up.
- * Elemenosqueeze by Toys by Battat, ages 6 months-3 years.
- * Little Shopper Playset by Earlyears, ages 6 months & up.
- * Soft Chime Garden by Lamaze, ages 6 months & up.

- * Animal Sounds Hay Ride by Learning Curve, ages 18 months & up.
- * Bristle Block Stackadoos by Toys by Battat, ages 2-6.
- * CitiBlocs Little Builder Rattle Blocs by CitiBlocs, ages 2 & up.
- * CitiBlocs Camouflage 100 Piece Set by CitiBlocs, ages 3 & up.
- * Count Your Chickens! Board Game by Peaceable Kingdom, ages 3 & up.
- * Hoot Owl Hoot! Board Game by Peaceable Kingdom, ages 4 & up.