

Designing a toy

[Psychology](#)



Essay, Psychology Topic: Designing a Toy Introduction The energy level of preschool children is amazing. Often their observations beat the imagination of the elders/teachers. They are ready to participate in all sorts of activities play, run, sing, dance and they always demand attention. Even while flipping through the pages of children books, their creative energy is in the offing to find outlets and their comments are novel! Etienne Benson writes, “ Toys are the most frivolous things in the world and, in some ways, the most essential. No culture is entirely without toys; ...Toys can be objects of solitary attention and entertainment or, far more often, centerpieces of social interaction.”

(2006)My design of a toy is a hide-away tent. In this play, I believe the mind and the body of the children remain active and a small group of 4-5 children immensely enjoy this game.

A hideaway tent is like the paradise for the preschoolers to play

A hideaway tent is for fun and imagination. Jim Makowicki writes, “ One of the biggest problems when designing toys is remembering that they are toys, not models.”(5)I have taken this golden rule into consideration while designing my toy. I have used printed cotton canvas in petal damask finish, art paper and plastic sheet and the tent has an inbuilt tunnel made through cardboards for the children to crawl through from one end of the tent to another. The tunnel is detachable, light weight and portable. The tunnel can be rendered flat by removing the plastic screws. Structure expansion is possible and the hide-away tent folds down flat for easy storage and to carry from one place to another. The tent has collapsible aluminum round poles, velcro tabs to open and close the front door, and a matching storage bag. Children would like to share their lunch items within the ‘ secret hideouts’ in the tent. The dimension of the tent is 36” Wx 42” Hx33D.

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A hideaway tent serves multiple purposes of enjoyment for children. It is a great slumber party idea. By spending their time in the tent, the children get a sense of ownership and learn how to maintain their play area in and outside the tent. A good place to celebrate birthday and to store the cake! At night when they play, children enjoy the theme of camping outdoor, even though the tent is installed within the safety of the drawing room/balcony/portico etc.

My tent is intended for the children between the age group of 2-6. With some initial training, the children will be able to install and dismantle the tent of their own as such children will develop a sense of belonging and creativity. The process of assembling the tent adds to the confidence level of the children and they feel that they have accomplished something. Their physical, cognitive and social domains are developed. When two or three children assemble in the tent, it contributes to a sense of togetherness, camaraderie and they understand working with a sense of cooperation and purpose.

With mattresses in three different colors, the floor area within the tent is given a new looking depending on the occasion. For the birthday party, the pink color mattress can be used. Within, there is enough space for teddies, pillow, books, cushions and sleeping bag, and a small box for storing biscuits, jam and bread. This is an ideal group toy and at least 4 children can have a good time to play and have fun. By conducting their activities with tent as the focus, they develop a sense of collaboration, and togetherness. My hide-out tent is a safe toy and yet, to inculcate safety-consciousness, a first aid box containing plasters, small dressings, disposable sterile gloves, cleansing wipes, antiseptic cream, spray to relieve insect bites and stings, cough

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tablets is kept outside the tent in a conspicuous place and the children are given elementary training about their uses.

Conclusion

With the constant use of my hideaway tent for play I have observed children discussing and coming out with innovative ideas to improve it. They love camping in the house/school or at outdoors/picnic spots. It is a great creative play. With some initial guidance children learn erect/dismantle it without adult help. With this play-activity, children become social. They become fascinated in playing with each other instead of choosing to play alone. A hideaway tent becomes props for cooperative play.

Works Cited

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Accessed on March 3, 2015