



Pat Bordman

Toys should challenge as well as entertain

This is the first of a five-part series examining children's playthings.

Toys. There are more than 150,000 of them to choose from. Each year 5,000 new ones become available. With such a selection, it should be easy to acquire the right ones. Yet, it is difficult to match the right toys to the right child.

Toys represent the child's earliest contact with the exciting and enriching world outside the crib. They are the means through which the child tests and enhances his or her developing abilities. They are the tools of intellectual and sensory stimulation.

The first two years of life represent, perhaps, the biggest leaps in ability. Never again in so short a time will there be such great advances. The baby undergoes so many changes so quickly that it is difficult to keep up with an expanding need for toys.

The developing infant becomes socially responsive and moves from one who spends most of the time sleeping, to a toddler who is an active explorer. Physical abilities are rapidly expanding along with efforts at communication.

It is important to try to find toys that will span needs over a long period of time, and have elements of complexity that will challenge being faced by a developing individual.

THE CHILD of this period is beginning to amuse himself for longer and longer periods of time. He or she is alert, watchful, curious. No longer content just to be acted on, a child exhibits apparent efforts to take an active part in living, to touch, squeeze, feel, bounce, reach out for, finger, move things from hand to hand.

The child from newborn to 2 years enjoys toys that can be pulled, bitten, grasped, taken apart, stacked and carried. This requires toys that do something, react or respond in some way when the child does something to the toy. The child at these stages needs toys that reflect these very intense needs, as well as assist him or her in reaching the next stages of development.



It is typical for a 7-10-month-old to sit alone and concentrate intently on matters at hand. A rubber ball that can be picked up, tossed about, squeezed, kicked and licked develops not only coordination but the senses, too.

The toys acquired for this stage should be washable, too big to swallow, with no sharp or rough edges.

Suggestions: squeeze toys that make a sound when squeezed, rattles, strings of large beads, brightly colored rubber balls, rubber chew toys, colorful musical mobiles, mirror, nesting toys, soft blocks, toys that float in water, books with either cloth pages or hard cardboard pages, stuffed animals, toy bike or other vehicle that the child can sit on and scoot along.

Patricia Bordman, a free-lance writer and photographer, has taught elementary school and conducted workshops and lectures on education. She is a master's degree candidate at Oakland University specializing in early childhood.

Write her c/o the Observer & Eccentric Newspaper, 30251 Schoolcraft Road, Livonia 48150.

Disconnectedness shows objectivity

Dear Mrs. Green,

I've often wondered how unusual my handwriting is, why some words come out with all the letters connected and then others stop and go? I'm not a frequent letter writer but I've noticed this for some time now. It would be interesting to know what personality traits this may reveal. Thank you.
M.W., Garden City

Dear M.W.,

The degree of disconnectedness in a handwriting sample reflects primarily to the writer's lack of interest in emotional responses or needs of others. By actual count only eight words in your letter had all of the letters of a whole word connected.

When this is considered with your wide word and line spacing it suggests you are quite an objective person. You often choose not to become involved in the needs of others. Your orientation is more toward areas of interest to you personally than toward altruism. You are more concerned with facts than emotions.

To quote from a new and excellent graphology book, "Getting Control of Your Life: A Study in Behavioral Graphology" by Leslie King, "The higher the degree of disconnectedness, the less people-oriented you are and the less you need participation, or involvement with others on an emotional level."

It appears that you are seeking to become a more independent person. A desire to move away from the past and towards new and perhaps different experiences seems evident. There seems to be some conflict here, though. Dependence or attachment to the mother figure is apparent. Perhaps you are experiencing some difficulty becoming as independent as you might like to be. Margins, signature, small leading lower loops and pressure pattern all combine to suggest this.

In relationships with people you usually seek to avoid friction since it is distasteful to you. In the area of personal criticism, however, you seem to be quite sensitive, even to the point of becoming rather assertive when you feel criticized. This would probably be in the areas of weight, height, manner of dress or speech. You do have a nice sense of humor and this could be very much of an asset to you at times like this.

You are quite a well-organized person, who makes efficient use of her time. You tend not to become involved in more than you can handle.

Lorene C. Green is a certified graphologist. If you have a question about your handwriting, write to her c/o Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 30251 Schoolcraft Road, Livonia 48150. Please use a full sheet of unlined white paper and write in the first person singular.



graphology

Lorene Green

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Deaf education to be explored

Dennis Cokely, author and research linguist at Gallaudet College in Washington, D.C., will be the main speaker at a conference Dec. 5 and 6 at Madonna College.

The conference topic is "Bilingual and Bicultural Education: Implications in Deaf Education."

Hours are from 7-9 p.m. Friday and from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday.

Open to the public, the conference will examine the history, terminology and implications of the multi-cultural movement on education for the hearing-impaired.

Participants may register in the science lecture hall on campus an hour before the session they plan to attend. The fee for the event is \$5, or \$50 if college credit is desired.

For more information call 591-5128.

OCC students exhibit

"Art on the Ridge," the student art guild sponsored by Oakland Community College, will hold its first exhibition and sale from 7-9 p.m. Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday.

The exhibit, comprised of the work of 26 artists will be in J Building at the Orchard Ridge Campus, 27055 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington. Opening reception is Friday night.

Save with windows?

Homeowners planning to add storm windows or shutters can figure their energy savings by following the guidelines of a publication from the Michigan Department of Commerce/Energy Administration.

The free leaflet, "Calculating Energy Savings from Window Modification," explains how heat losses from windows are measured.

The publication is available by calling the toll-free Energy Hotline, 1-800-292-4704.

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