

# Resource Round-Up

*Resource Round-Up is a regular department in which we review and feature books, toys, games, CDs, videos, learning kits, and other materials that parents may find helpful in raising their high-potential youngsters. Resources included in this department have been reviewed and evaluated by the editors of Parenting for High Potential. Submit products that are intended for children, youth, or family use to: Karen Yannacio, PHP Resource Round Up Coordinator, 8 High Point Circle, Apt 301, Quincy, MA 02169.*

*We also publish reviews of books intended specifically for parents if we find that they will have interest and value for parents of high-ability children. Send books to be considered to Dr. Donald J. Treffinger, Editor, PHP Magazine, 4921 Ringwood Meadow, Sarasota, FL 34235.*



## Annual Holiday Toy List 2006

by Karen Yannacio

Every year we wait in eager anticipation for what is new, hot, and exciting on the toy market. What unique games have the manufacturing companies tempted us with now? What twist on a classic has been reinvented? In what ways will our mind be wrapped around the latest craze that we simply can't get enough of? The toys reviewed in the 2006 Annual Holiday Toy List have made great impressions and have proven to be among the best of the best for this year. Among more than 300,000 new toys introduced in a year, it can be a challenge to narrow down all of your choices into those that might be a great fit in your family. The toys included in this year's list represent the great features that a game should include to truly captivate and challenge the mind; they build skills, build interests, and provide opportunities for creativity and fun.

Through the testing done by our toy testers we have created a list of the "best of the best"—toys and games that our testers wanted to play again and again, that were mentally challenging, that were creatively challenging, and that offered a unique twist to the gaming world.

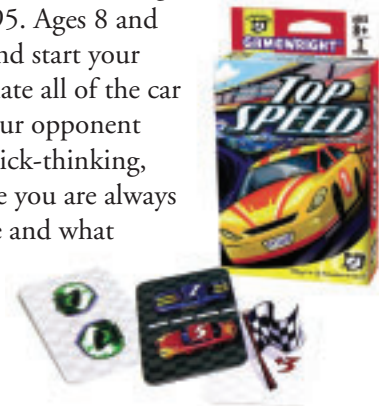
The toys are grouped into four categories: Interactive Games, Board games, Hands-On Games, and Miscellaneous Games. The "Interactive Games" involve group discussions and talkative moments, emphasizing interaction among players. The classic "Board Games" involve a board or game-playing surface and might also employ cards, dice, or other manipulative items. The "Hands-On Games" are played mainly through manipulation and movement of parts. Some of the games in this category are more exploratory in nature and might not necessarily have a winner or a loser, but instead encourage discovery and critical-thinking skills. Finally, the "Miscellaneous Games" category includes games that can be played through the use of a computer, a book, or a new gadget.

Information about all the toys from the list is in the online Resource Directory (<http://www.nagc.org/resourcedirectory.aspx>), which you can visit to learn more about the toys or to link directly to the manufacturers' websites to locate retailers in your area or to place an order online.

### Interactive Games

*Top Speed* by GameWright ([www.GameWright.com](http://www.GameWright.com) or 617-924-6006). \$9.95. Ages 8 and Up. Grab one other friend and start your engines as you race to eliminate all of the car cards in your hand before your opponent does. This is a fast-paced, quick-thinking, memory-making game where you are always checking what card you have and what card your opponent just played. This is a matching game in which you must be certain NOT to double up on matches of color or

car parts in the same row. For example, if there is a purple cone or a yellow muffler in a row then you cannot play any other orange or purple or any other muffler or cone. It's fun, it's fast, and it keeps your mind thinking of new arrangements of cards. Each player does not wait for his or her turn, but all play simultaneously, which makes hand-eye coordination and quick thinking always essential.



*Combo King: The Shake, Rattle 'n Roll Dice Game* by GameWright (www.GameWright.com or 617-924-6006). \$14.99. Ages 8 to Adult.

Not only is this a skill-building game, but one that also tests your luck. With a variety of challenge cards, some betting chips, and lots of dice, your probability and problem-solving skills kick into play, literally. Try to complete one of the 60 dice challenges to earn chips. The challenges could be to complete a “countdown,” rolling a six in the first roll, a five in the second roll, a four in the third roll, and so on, or you might need to complete a “full house” where you need to roll any pair and any three of a kind. If some challenges are too outrageous for you then you can cash in some chips to bring more luck your way. Be the first player to complete all the challenges required and you will be the “Combo King.”

*Luck of the Draw* by GameWright (www.GameWright.com or 617-924-6006). \$19.99. Ages 10 to Adult.



Creative? Imaginative? Artistic? Yes or no, it doesn't matter because when you play this game you will either improve or strengthen those skills in a matter of about 30 minutes. As our toy testers said, “You don't have to be a great artist to have a blast with this game! And it's hilarious!” It's a matter of picking a card and then quickly (within 45 seconds) drawing your rendition of it. You might get to draw Bart Simpson, a Grandpa, or even a Lawn Mower. Once the time is up, you place all drawings from all players randomly down on the table. Next you pull the category card(s) out to determine HOW you are going to

judge the drawings. For example, you might be judging based on “Most Frightening” or “Does Way Too Much Doodling” or even “Most Sophisticated.” The winner of that round earns a point and the final winner is the one who wins the most votes.

*Cranium Whoonu* by Cranium (www.cranium.com or 877-272-6486). \$14.99. Ages 8 to adult.

Did you know that your friend prefers flip-flops over sandals? Did you know that your dad likes to read comics rather than watching sports on TV? Who knew? Well, with Whoonu, you now will know! In this game you will find out all kinds of random facts and information about your friends and family as you rank order your favorite things ranging from bubble gum, to sitting in the first row of the movies, to pickle preferences. To play, each person gets a turn to be the Whoozit. The other players pick one card from the four in their hand that they believe will be the Whoozit's favorite thing. They then place that card in an envelope. The Whoozit takes all the cards out of the envelopes and orders them from most to least favorite. It's interesting to see the unique things the players

like— or dislike. You earn points by how well you know each other's favorite things, but the fun isn't all in the winning; it's really in the discovering and laughing as the game is played.

*You're Pulling My Leg* by Morning Star Games (www.morningstargames.com). \$24.99. Ages 13 to adult.

How well do you really know your friends and family? Think you could tell if they were telling you the truth or pulling your leg? In this hilarious, fast-paced, and truly entertaining game you will be put to the test as you tell stories while trying to figure out other players' truths from the lies. First you pick a card (from more than 600 questions) with a direction on it, such as, “Tell me about something you got away with as a kid.” Next, you will secretly roll the true/false die and discover whether you are to tell the truth about the question or to make up a story. After you tell your true or false story, your opponents need to wager whether or not it was a true story. If they are correct they win tokens, and if they are incorrect, they lose tokens. It's a seriously creative game and one that kept our toy testers wanting to play more and more rounds.

*JabberJot* by Morning Star Games (www.morningstargames.com). \$29.99. Ages 10 to adult.

If you are a storyteller, you will love this game. In only 90 seconds it will be your challenge to create a story based on three pictures, three words, and one theme. Choose four to 10 other players and get ready to be creative as you try to come up with the best story based on the cards that are drawn. The winner of each round is the person who won based on the judging of the Jabber. The Jabber judge chooses the most entertaining or creative or hilarious story. What our toy reviewers especially loved about this game was that they didn't seem to notice who was winning or losing because they were having too much fun hearing their friends' creative stories and becoming enchanted with the fast-paced nature and funny atmosphere of the game.

*Pick Two Deluxe* by Outset Media Corporation (www.outset-media.com or 250-592-7374). \$19.99. Ages 8 and older.

This game was quite a challenge for our toy reviewers, but the fun and excitement was amazing! Ever get tired of waiting for your turn? Well, you don't have to wait when you play this fast paced and exciting word game. As soon as you and the three to eight other players draw your tiles, you are off building your criss-crossed array of words as fast as you can assemble the letters. Think quickly, move fast, and lay down those tiles as soon as you think of words to create. Once you use all your letters you yell the game's name of “Pick Two” and then everyone playing gathers two more tiles to their collection. However, you must now place these two new tiles into your crosswords. Having the chance to change your crosswords makes the game more flexible and more interesting. The winner is the person who finishes her or his pile of letters when the center pile is empty.

## Board Games

*Bubble Brain: It's the Thought that Counts* by Patch Products ([www.patchproducts.com](http://www.patchproducts.com) or 800-524-4263). \$29.99. Ages 10 to Adult.

As the title states, it is the thought that counts. Or, at least that's how you will win the game. If you like to think about what other people **MUST** be thinking, or if you see pictures and invent your own wacky thought captions to accompany the images, then this game is for you. With over 300 pictures on over 160 cards it is your goal to write a caption to match the scene on the card. Once you do that, shuffle all the players' thought captions on the table and try to match up the thought caption with the player who wrote it. Think you know your fellow players? Think you can come up with amusing and clever captions? Try out Bubble Brain to become the Bubble Master.

*Zooreka* by Cranium ([www.cranium.com](http://www.cranium.com) or 877-272-6486). \$16.95. Ages 8 to adult.

Before opening day, you'd better have your zoo prepared and animal ready before your opponents in order to win at Zooreka. If you love animals, the zoo, and the "big picture" about taking care of animals you will have a wonderful time with this game! Through racing around the board to gather the right food, shelter, and habitats for your animals you will need to be certain that you collect the perfect cards to build your zoo. In this game, you will really learn about what makes a zoo a zoo and how animals live. It's a fast-paced thinking game that lets you design your unique zoo (appropriate to four different habitats) while also doing some predicting on each turn. What are the chances of landing on a certain space? If you can predict it, you will be closer to your goal of building your habitats. From "Trading Posts" to "Teaming Up" to "Stormy Weather/Clear Skies" on the board, you will have a great time as you create the perfect zoo before opening day.

*Road Trip Quiz Wit, Hollywood Flicks* by Patch Products ([www.patchproducts.com](http://www.patchproducts.com) or 800-524-4263). \$14.00. Ages 10 and up.

This "on-the-go" trivia knowledge game can be played anywhere. Just choose two to six players, be ready with your Hollywood movies knowledge, and you'll be all set for a fun time. As the game says, the biggest "smarty-pants" goes first. Another player takes a card, reads the question, and waits for you to deliver your "smarts" on Hollywood movies for a winning point. The questions are divided into true/false, multiple choice, or question and answer. If you answer correctly, move one space up out of ten possible spaces on the magnetic board game. If you answer incorrectly, just stay put and wait for your next turn. Think the game will be over quickly with only ten spaces to move? Think again! The questions truly test your movie knowledge and range from black-and-white movies to current-day hits.

*10 Days in Europe Game* by Out of the Box ([www.otb-games.com](http://www.otb-games.com) or 800-540-2304). \$19.98. Ages 10 and up.

Ever wish you could just jump up and go to a European city? Maybe even spend 10 days there? Well, now you will get your chance when you play this game. Your goal is to chart a course

using transportation tiles. You might be making your travel connections by plane, or even by boat, but whatever way you travel you will want to outsmart your fellow travelers to reach your destination. The game includes a map of Europe, Destination Tiles representing each of the countries, and Transportation Tiles for making connections by plane or boat. With two to four players, you can really have some fun traveling through Europe. This unique game will allow you to enjoy your travels. This game is one of a series of four.

*Spelling Beez* by Talicor Aristoplay ([www.aristoplay.com](http://www.aristoplay.com) or 269-685-2345). \$25.00 Ages 4-8.

Instead of collecting nectar, you will be collecting letters in this spelling game. With one to four players, it's easy to get a small group together to play. Using a bee game piece, you move around the board trying to collect different letters to help you form words. By forming words you earn points to win the game and practice your spelling skills. This game is easily differentiated into easy or difficult skill levels. Younger spellers can create simpler words while older or more experienced spellers will be required to spell more difficult words within the same game. Additionally, you can add the challenge of learning about real honeybees and collect pollen and nectar points to help you win the game in a different format. Spelling Beez is definitely a way to spell your way to fun.

*Math Animals* by Talicor Aristoplay ([www.aristoplay.com](http://www.aristoplay.com) or 269-685-2345). \$21.99. Ages 5 and up.

Quick! What's 8 x 20? How about 4 plus 35? You'll have to brush up on your math skills to play this fast-paced math board game. With two to four players, the goal is to reach the grand total (a number set at the beginning of each new game) as you roll the dice and move around the board. The board has different cartoon animals, insects, and birds in the shape of numbers, and as you land on any of those numbers you can choose to add, subtract, multiply, or divide that number with the number that was rolled on the dice. There are also six different variations of the game, so the variety keeps the game fresh, alive, and exciting.

*Tsuro, the Game of the Path* by WizKids ([www.WizKidsGames.com](http://www.WizKidsGames.com) or 425-641-2801). \$24.99. Ages 8 and up.

A fast and exciting problem-solving game for two to eight players, it is both a "smart" product that makes you think and an enjoyable and entertaining game. As you place stones, select tiles, and build safe paths, your decision on where your path goes will affect other players, as all the paths cross and connect. Tsuro involves active doing and thinking because you are always evaluating your decisions. You want to make the best of your pieces while cooperating with your ally, but you also need to be alert for potential betrayal.

*Artifact, the Hunt for Stolen Treasures* by Outset Media Corporation ([www.outsetmedia.com/](http://www.outsetmedia.com/) or 250-592-7374). \$29.95. Ages 12 and older.



As the leader of the Interpol's world-class Artifact Recovery Team it is your challenge and your goal to recover the missing



artifacts from around the world in this hunt for stolen treasures. Travel around the board, pick up your clue cards, negotiate potential moves, and make travel decisions; you'll face lots of problem-solving and strategy dilemmas including time-sensitive challenges, memory-testing battles, and the evaluation of informant information. It's a challenging race to the finish, and the winner is never obvious in advance.

## Hands-On Games

*Spider-Man TipOver* by ThinkFun ([www.thinkfun.com](http://www.thinkfun.com) or 703-549-4899). \$17.00. Ages 8 to adult.

An updated and Spidery version of the original "TipOver" game, this new version has Spider-Man on the top of each crate as you think deductively to move him from one side of the board to the other. This three-dimensional game uses rectangular pieces (crates) placed on a square board to get your mind thinking logically about maneuvers, locations



of pieces, and consequences of moves. Choose one of four skill levels (Beginner to Advanced) to start. Then choose a card (out of a possible 40) that matches that level. Build the board with plastic crates to match your card and then start thinking. Try to "tip over" crates with Spider-Man on them to move him across the game board. This involves strategy, critical thinking, and lots of fun.

*Marvel Heroes Slide Puzzles* by ThinkFun ([www.thinkfun.com](http://www.thinkfun.com) or 703-549-4899). \$5.00. Ages 5 and up.

Slide puzzles are fun and allow your brain to scatter images around until you arrive at the correct solution. ThinkFun has created four different Marvel Heroes slide puzzles to entertain you and keep you captivated in a critical thinking mode. From Spider-Man to The Thing to Captain America and even Wolverine, you have several Superhero puzzles to pick from in selecting the final slide Superhero image you want to create. Once you choose the slide puzzle that you want to attempt, just slide the eight puzzle pieces around to mix up the image and then begin the task of re-sliding those same eight puzzle pieces around to get the image to the original picture. It seems simple to slide squares in a 9x9 game board around to re-create the original image, but it definitely takes lots of strategy and problem-solving skills.

*Sudoku the Ultimate Puzzle Game* by Briarpatch ([www.briarpatch.com](http://www.briarpatch.com) or 800-232-7427). \$19.98. Ages 7 and up.

If you haven't been caught up in the Sudoku craze yet, then it's about time to experience the number madness that this game entails. The goal is to create each row, column, and 3 x 3 grid of the numbers 1-9 without repeating any. In this version of the game you have the ease of using number tiles to place in each slot. This fun and versatile way to play stops the frequent erasing in playing the paper/pencil version of the game. There are different

skill levels as well as 100 problems and solutions. Although this is considered a one-player game, younger children could team up as non-competitive partners on a trip, or adults might help build a child's experience with the game by taking turns placing numbers and talking through the thinking process.

*Lego Grand Soccer Stadium* by Lego ([www.shop.lego.com](http://www.shop.lego.com) or 800-453-4652). \$49.99. Ages 7-12.

Our toy testers liked the double bonus of assembling the approximately 350 Lego pieces into a soccer field and then actually playing a game of table soccer with the finished creation. The set comes with many small Lego pieces, stickers, and decorations along with a detailed instruction sheet to help you build your 22-inch by 14-inch soccer field. You can follow their assembly instructions or build on your own to create a playing field to your unique specifications. The players are snapped into their position on the field, much like a foosball game, and the tiny Lego soccer ball is free to roll around on the game board. By using little control pieces on each player you can easily block a shot, move the player around in the playing area, and "kick" the ball.

*NooBoo Symphonic Stacker* by Manhattan Toy ([www.manhattantoy.com](http://www.manhattantoy.com)). \$29.95. Ages 9 mo +.

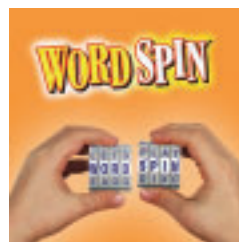
This colorful, fabric baby toy is visually appealing and sounds amazing as well. This soft stacker toy with four different round, plush rings builds on your baby's motor skills and problem-solving skills while additionally offering auditory cause and effect stimulation. Each time you or your baby removes a ring from the core it plays a short, five-second musical sound. Each ring has a different sound and the sound is heard whether you take a ring off of the core or place it back on the core.

*Can You Dig It Sand Tools: Super Deluxe Sand Sculpting Kit* by Days at the Beach ([www.canyoudigit.com](http://www.canyoudigit.com) or 718-273-2239). \$32.99. All Ages.

Finally, tools designed for "seriously fun" sandcastle creation! This set of tools includes a removable, liftable bucket for forming sand into a study base for your creations. Then with the individual sculpting tools such as the sand wedge, the c-shell scooper, and the three sizes of shapers, you can begin the detail work of cutting windows, doors, and ornamentation. There's also a chisel, a brush, and other smart tools to help create the perfect castles. Still sound complicated? It's not, but they also offer a DVD on "How To Build the Perfect Sand Castle" to guide you and show you the skills along with tips and tricks. This is a must-have for your next trip to the beach.

*Word Spin Deluxe Edition* by GeoSpace ([www.GeoSpacePlay.com](http://www.GeoSpacePlay.com) or 206-547-2556). \$15.00. All Ages.

*Word Spin Travel Game* by GeoSpace ([www.GeoSpacePlay.com](http://www.GeoSpacePlay.com) or 206-547-2556). \$6.00. All Ages.



This magnetic wheel of letters is a very engaging and enjoyable game, according to our toy testers. With a simple and fun twist of the letter wheels (held in place through magnetic force), you can arrange a variety of words that can quickly be switched and re-arranged. Each wheel has ten letters or a wild card and it's up to

you to form a word with a high point value. Each letter has a tiny number above it indicating its point value. What's great about this game isn't just the easy set-up or the fact that it's fun to manipulate, but that players at virtually any skill level can play it. Create simpler words with younger children or build more difficult words with high-school-aged players.

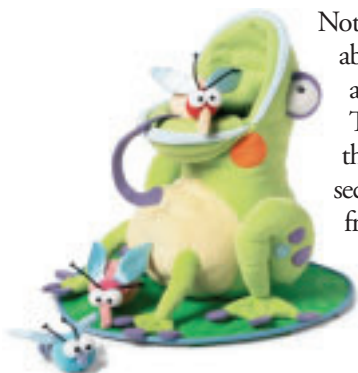
*Rhyme Thyme* by Outset Media Corporation ([www.outsetmedia.com/](http://www.outsetmedia.com/) or 250-592-7374). \$12.99. Ages 5 and older.

Our toy testers had a great time rhyming with this card game. For two to five players, the challenge is to get rid of all the cards in your hand by finding rhyming matches. Each card has a word and a picture on it, such as ant (with a matching picture of an ant), a plant (with a large plant picture), a sail (with a boat graphic), and others. When you see a match of rhyming words in another player's hands, try to be the first to call it out. If you do, you'll be a rhyming pro and win at this really fun and unique rhyming card game.

*Doll Sets* by Girls Explore ([www.girls-explore.com](http://www.girls-explore.com) or 800-450-5952). \$59.99. Ages 8 and up.

Girls Explore offers young girls positive, fun, and attractive individual role model dolls as they explore different women pioneers of medicine, humanities, art, and many other disciplines. From Mary Cassatt to Bessie Coleman to Rosa Parks, young girls can play with one of these many dolls representing different women role models. Each doll comes with a book of information on the woman's life along with different artifacts that represented her passion. For example, for artist Mary Cassatt, you receive a book about her life, a watercolor paint palette, and a sketch pad. It allows young girls to learn about these amazing pioneers, play with the dolls, and practice what they did for their career. It's a very positive and informative product and one that teaches young women about smart choices, setting goals, being determined, and, most importantly, following their dreams.

*Froggy Frenzy* by Manhattan Toy ([www.manhattantoy.com](http://www.manhattantoy.com)). \$40.00. Ages 18 mo +.



Not only is this large, plush "froggy" adorable, it also helps develop motor skills and provides auditory stimulation. Toddlers can hear real frog noises as they place three smaller, plush toy insects into the large mouth of the stuffed frog. Then they can easily remove the insects from the frog through the trap door on the frog's belly to feed the frog again and again. Strengthening a cause and effect relationship as well as providing lots of giggling moments, the Froggy Frenzy is one toy that toddlers won't stop ribbiting about.

*Quagnet* by Quirkle ([www.quirkle.com](http://www.quirkle.com) or 201-447-9120). \$19.95. Not recommended for young children due to choking hazard of small parts.

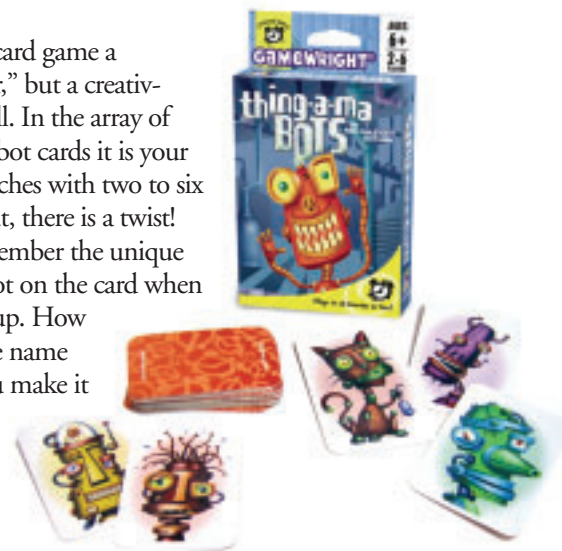
If you love to fiddle with things or have a fascination with magnets you should check out this new gadget. A set of ten small, dime-sized super-charged magnets becomes a futuristic yo-yo as you assemble the magnetic pieces into various shapes and positions to do tricks. You can spin the shapes around, or you can create a wagging head of an animal, or you can create your own unique shapes. It kept our toy reviewers mesmerized by the open-ended qualities along with the simple and creative directions that were provided. The reviewers commented that this is something "so cool" that they've "never seen before."

*Quark Ultra High Performance Spinning Top* by Quirkle ([www.quirkle.com](http://www.quirkle.com) or 201-447-9120). \$49.95.

Try not to get too dizzy as you discover the spinning powers of Quark. This precision-engineered top can spin for not the normal time (about 45 seconds) but for an astonishing 15 minutes! Yes, that's right! Can you believe it? It is based on physics and does take some science and math smarts to really figure out this awesome gadget. Even if you don't, you'll have a blast watching this spinning marvel. Included are counterweights, a round mirror, and a real laser to help in the balancing. If you or your children are interested in physics and love to work with gadgets, this is a great choice.

*Thing-a-Ma-Bots: The Name It to Claim It Card Game* by GameWright ([www.GameWright.com](http://www.GameWright.com) or 617-924-6006). \$5.99. Ages 6 and Up.

Not only is this card game a "memory bender," but a creativity booster as well. In the array of more than 60 robot cards it is your job to make matches with two to six other players. But, there is a twist! You need to remember the unique name of the robot on the card when you see it come up. How do you know the name of the robot? You make it up! When you turn over a card and it's a new robot, you can name it. When it comes up again and you remember that robot's name you can win the stack of cards. If you find another robot match and shout out "Thing-a-ma-Bot" you get to steal an opponent's stack of cards. It's a clever and creative card game that our toy testers felt could never get old.





*Rat-a-Tat CAT* by GameWright (www.GameWright.com or 617-924-6006). \$9.95. Ages 6 and up.

This game is addictive, fun, and clever. Although intended for younger players, our older toy testers couldn't get enough of this fast-paced and entertaining card game. Deal four cards to each player, but don't peek at your cards. Then look only at the two outer cards before the game begins. Once the game starts you will choose a card from the pile in the center and hopefully replace it with one of your cards. Your goal is to have the lowest number in your hand. It's tricky since you don't know two of your cards and you can't hold your cards so memory is key. However, there are "Power Cards" that allow you the opportunity to swap, peek, and super peek at your cards and the cards of your opponents. Keep your poker face on and be the one with the lowest score to win. Rat-a-Tat CAT!

*Feed The Kitty* by GameWright (www.GameWright.com or 617-924-6006). \$11.99. Ages 4 and up.

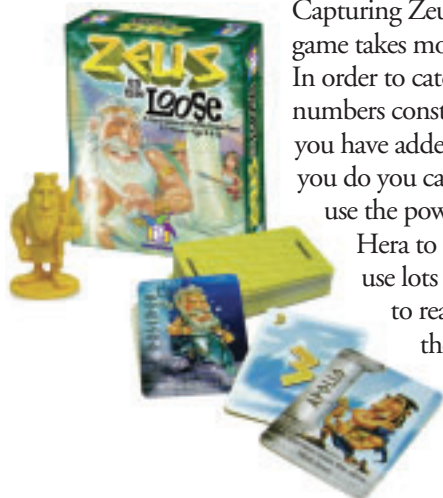
Grab two to five players and get ready to shape up some fun with the dice and the mice. Children will love the fast paced nature of this fun game. Try to keep your mice away from the kitty while rolling the dice. If you roll an arrow you pass one mouse that direction. If you roll a sleeping kitty you are in luck, for the cat won't wake up to eat your mice. But, if you roll the bowl then it's dinner time and your mice are a yummy treat for the hungry kitty. Be the last player with mice and you win.

*Match of the Penguins: A Fun Flippin' Card Game* by GameWright (www.GameWright.com or 617-924-6006). \$9.99. Ages 6 and up.

For two to six players, our toy testers really had a waddling good time with this card game. Your goal is to make matches of penguin cards, but the matches aren't simply in the identical sets of images, but those with common features of the penguins on the cards. It makes you think critically and creatively to determine some common features about the penguins on the cards. When you discover those features you need to shout out to make the match. But, if you do happen to spot two identical penguins, waddle fast to grab the penguin pawns. The player with the most cards wins.

*Zeus on the Loose* by GameWright (www.GameWright.com or 617-924-6006). \$9.99. Ages 8 and up.

Capturing Zeus in this mathematical card game takes more than being Apollo's friend. In order to catch Zeus you need to add numbers constantly and recognize when you have added to a multiple of ten. Once you do you can grab Zeus. You can also use the powers of Apollo, Poseidon, or Hera to help you nab Zeus. You can use lots of strategy to play this game to reach Mount Olympus and be the winner. Taking only about 20 minutes to play a full game, it's a fast-paced and quick counting game that is lots of fun.



## Miscellaneous Games

*The Original Little Hands Card Holder* by GameWright (www.GameWright.com or 617-924-6006). \$3.99. Ages 3 and up.

Want to play a card game but holding all of the cards takes away the fun? No worries anymore with this awesome invention! A plastic fan with one large slot easily slides the cards in so that little hands only need to hold onto the plastic handle of the fan. Cards are easily displayed without the aggravation of trying to balance or assemble or manipulate them. Clever, compact, and convenient!



*Christmas Sing Along Carioke* by David Schiller (2005) New York. Workman Publishing, Hardback, 55 pages. ISBN: 10-7611-3984-2. \$15.95. Ages 8 and up.

Ahem. Dashhhhhhh through the snooooooow... In a one horse open sleighhhhh... How do I sound? Well, I would probably sound better if I were accompanied by this fun karaoke, I mean, CARioke book. Included are lyrics to over 19 holiday songs, a CD of your backup music, extra editions (for extra singers who don't feel like sharing lyrics), way-back edition, and backseat edition. Sing some Jingle Bells and also read some cool trivia about the song in the book. Each song has complete lyrics, trivia, a singer's note (how to sing certain verses of the song for added effect) or other miscellaneous information.

*Fritz 9 Play Chess* by Viva Media (www.Viva-Media.com or 212-431-4420). Ages \$39.99. Ages 10 and up.

If you or your child is a chess buff, you will be thrilled to know that the newest chess game from the world's number one ranked chess software is now available. Fritz 9 gives the player a very challenging and very real gaming experience. With two 3-D opponents to play against, interactive training modules to improve your attack and defense moves, and photorealistic graphics, your chess game just can't get any better. You choose from a variety of types of chessboards, pick your skill level, and learn how to improve your skills through an array of easily understood teaching tools. Additionally, a one-year membership to the online PlayChess.com (a \$24.99 value) is included in your purchase. A definite must for the chess lover.