

A CTREX Survey

Top 10 Duck Duck Moose Apps to Download Immediately

By the CTR Editors and Reviewers

The news that the Khan Academy acquired one of the world's best children's app studios -- **Duck Duck Moose** (DDM), for only \$.99, and that the entire library of apps are now free raises the question, which should you download? CTREX has the answer. While all 21 of the apps are excellent, here are ten too good to pass up. See the complete list, with ratings and links to the various app stores, at <http://bit.ly/2bSeAcc>.

Wheels on the Bus, (iPhone, Android, Kindle), ages 2-6.

This is the app that started it all for Duck Duck Moose, back in 2009. Simply drag your fingertip across the screen of your iPad or iPhone to flip through this interactive version of the Wheels on the Bus song. While on a page, you can tap an item to see it animated. For example, when the bus is shown, you can tap on the steering wheel to make it spin, or open and close the doors. There are five languages, plus it is possible to record your own voice. Read more at <http://reviews.childrenstech.com/ctr/fullreview.php?id=13237>



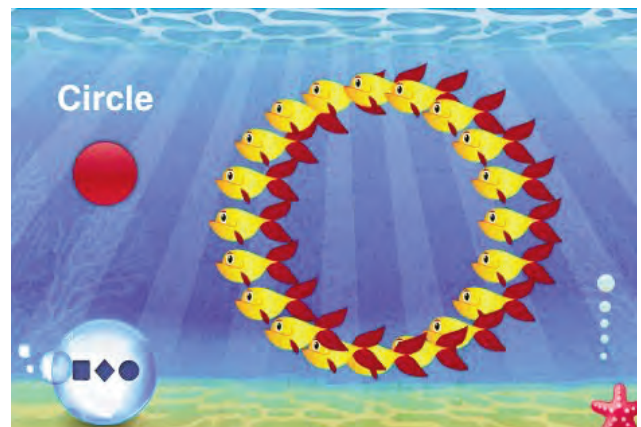
Draw and Tell HD (iPad), ages 2-12.

The title says it all with this exciting creativity app for young children -- the first to successfully mix a full featured drawing program with narration, by way of the iPad's microphone. Now you can think of your iPad or iPhone as a drawing/flannel board and story telling machine. The drawing is just one part of what this app does well. It is paired with a narration feature that makes it easy to do a "color commentary" on the picture you just made. The end result is a powerful language experience. After you finish your picture, you tap a microphone, and are told to "record your voice -- 3-2-1-Go!" As a recording light flashes, you can describe your work. Note that this is a very different process than apps like Doodlecast, where you redraw your picture and talk in real time. With this app, an innovative highlighter is layered over your drawing, letting you highlight features as you talk; a nice touch. Read more at <http://reviews.childrenstech.com/ctr/fullreview.php?id=15396>



Fish School, (iPad, iPhone), ages 2-5.

Children explore with their fingertips, in this colorful underwater playground, where a school of quick swimming fish illustrate numerals (up to 20), the alphabet song, and a set of shapes. At any point, a child can tap a bubble in the corner to jump to a new game, which makes the chances good that he or she will encounter something interesting to explore. In the alphabet song, children can swipe forward or backward, hearing the alphabet backwards if they like. If they stop at a letter, such as U, they hear "U is for Umbrella." The number line works the same way, only the quantity is presented along with the numeral, in the form of a line of small eggs on the bottom of the screen. Tapping an egg releases a tiny fish; a game in itself. The "Playtime" activity fills the screen with dozens of differently colored fish, of every shape, size and pattern. Children can rearrange the fish, tap to make them swim faster, or hold their finger over a fish to make it get bigger. Other more structured activities include a game of concentration, and a discrimination game, that asks children to find the fish that doesn't belong. Read more at <http://reviews.childrenstech.com/ctr/fullreview.php?id=13703>



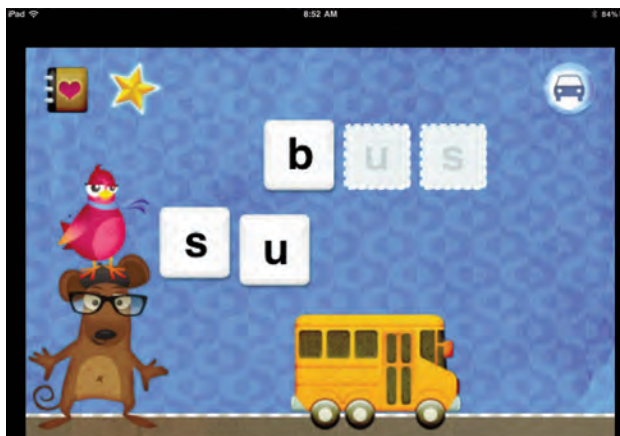
Park Math (iPhone, iPad) ages 3-up.

This sixth app from Duck Duck Moose contains seven easy to explore games, each with multiple ways to explore some powerful math concepts -- of the variety that will someday loom at the root of an SAT question. The games include Swing (Count up to 50 as a rabbit swings. You can either watch, or "push" the rabbit with your fingertip); Slide (Help ducks climb to the top of a slide. Quantities are show both visually and in an equation, simultaneously); Seesaw (Balance a seesaw by adding and subtracting mice); Apple Tree (Subtract as apples fall from a tree); Sandbox (Complete patterns by dragging and dropping toys); Bench (put dogs and numerals in order, from smaller to

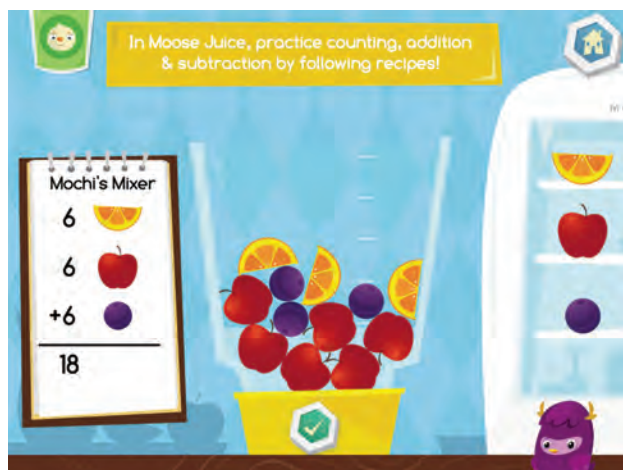
larger. It's especially nice that you can make the order from either left to right or right to left); and Picnic: Counting (Feed a hippo the correct number of food items). It is possible to toggle between two levels of play (preschool and kindergarten); and three on the iPad. Level 1 includes counting up to 20 and addition/subtraction with numbers up to 5. Level 2 includes counting up to 50 and addition/subtraction with numbers up to 10. The iPad version, called Park Math HD includes First Grade, with counting up to 100 and addition/subtraction with numbers up to 20. Read more at <http://reviews.childrenstech.com/ctr/fullreview.php?id=14033>

Word Wagon (iPhone, iPad), ages 1-7.

Designed specifically to prepare a child for a school reading program, Word Wagon is a well-designed letter and word recognition activity that provides structured practice with letters and letter sounds in the context of common words. Unlike other Duck Duck Moose apps, which tend to be on the playful side, this app gets right to business, asking children to spell a word like "dog" or "rocket," one letter at a time. Letters are presented on letter tiles, which are pronounced when tapped. So it is easy for a child to experiment by trying letters out. Wrong answers merely fall out of place, for another try. When the word is spelled, children can earn stars which are used in dot-to-dot (or star-to-star) puzzles. Content includes 103 words (including 44 Dolch sight words), organized into seven categories: Animals, Food, Vehicles, Numbers and Colors, Around the House, Mozzarella and Coco's Favorites, and All Words. It is easy for a child to change themes, toggle the background music on or off, or change levels. The app works fine on either small or large screens. There are 4 Levels, ranged from basic letter recognition to spelling words up to six letters long. If you're looking for a state of the art school readiness app, this is a good choice for either home or classroom use. Read more at <http://reviews.childrenstech.com/ctr/fullreview.php?id=14483>



Above: one of the clean activities in **Word Wagon**. Below, one of the games in **Moose Math**



Duck Duck Moose Reading, (iPad, iPhone), ages 3-7.

Nine fast-paced early reading activities do an excellent job introducing and reinforcing the first sight words, like dog, cat and zoo. The result is an excellent early reading skills activity; for home or classroom use. The games feature Milo the Meerkat and his sidekick Puffs. Children feed and play with flamingos, monkeys and lions; collecting animals to make a zoo scene. The app teaches letter sounds for all consonants, short vowels, long vowels and consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words. It also tracks children's progress and shows which letters have been mastered, per the Common Core State Standards. The reading curriculum was developed in cooperation with Stanford's Jennifer DiBrienza, who is also a former K-2 public school teacher; and the design shows. This is an excellent early language experience, covering concepts found in any early elementary reading curriculum. Read more at <http://reviews.childrenstech.com/ctr/fullreview.php?id=16269>

Moose Math (iPad) ages 5-up.

App number 17 from Duck Duck Moose covers early elementary (Kindergarten and First Grade) math by way of some solid counting, sorting and classifying games. Each game lets children playfully master skills that will provide an excellent foundation for later math learning, and the games are paired with an individualized record keeping system, that stores progress and profiles for each child. Math educators will appreciate the fact that this app is 100% flashcard free, yet still manages a good deal of leveled practice. Need to know: This app can store an "unlimited" number of student profiles, meaning a teacher of 25 could have individual bookmarks and records for every child. Not a bad deal for a \$free app. See also Park Math and Fish School for well designed Duck Duck Moose titles. Read more at <http://reviews.childrenstech.com/ctr/fullreview.php?id=17093>

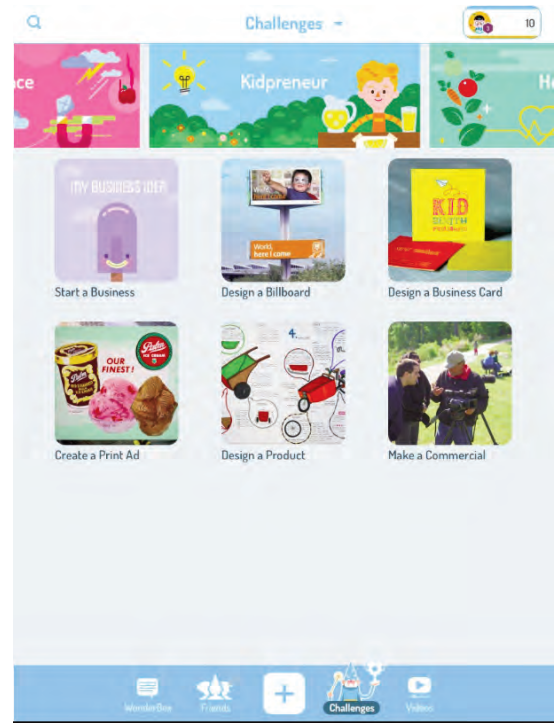
ChatterPix Kids (iPad, iPhone), for ages 4-up.

Talking puppet apps like Talking Tom are common these days. This one takes the concept up a notch, by letting you start with your own photo; to which you can add your own voice. Just trace a line for the mouth, record your voice, and see the lips move, accurately synched to up to 30 seconds of audio. If you've ever wanted to make your dog talk, this is your app. This app could be a perfect prop for a non-verbal child. There are two similarly named apps with the same features, so it's easy to get them mixed up: ChatterPix has social sharing features activated, to help spread the The Duck Duck Moose brand. With ChatterPix Kids, the social media features are turned off. Read more at <http://reviews.childrenstech.com/ctr/fullreview.php?id=17373>

HELP US UPDATE THIS LIST. Whenever a new app is submitted, it is considered for one of our "Custom Picks" lists. This list is continually tweaked and updated. Just use the custom picks tab in CTREX (www.ctrex.us) and pick the custom pick you want. Here's a shortcut link to all the Duck Duck Moose apps <http://bit.ly/2bSeAcc>.

Wizard School (formerly called **WonderBox**), Windows, Mac, iPad, iPhone, ages 8-up. The concept of providing children with a "safe social media" experience is hardly new. But many services have tried and died in recent history. What kills 'em? Trying to be too safe, too cute, or offering watered down features that pale in comparison with real features. Call it COPPA disease -- meaning it's so safe you can't use it (COPPA stands for the Children's Online Privacy Protection act). In reality, even young children know about Google and YouTube, which are COPPA free, and many leave preschool with their own email address. So they can already send photos and movies to parents and Grandparents, thank you very much.

That said, WonderBox may stand a chance, in part because it's "free" (we'll get to that later) and because it contains amazing curated content from YouTube... stuff you'd have to spend days searching to find. It also helps that it comes from Duck Duck Moose, a bay area, venture-backed company run by parents who have kids that are the same age as those this app targets. Finally, this "free" (another plus) app is richly infused with maker-inspired content. You don't just watch an amazing video of a treehouse. You're given a sketch pad for making one. It's as if there's a creative teacher living inside this app. There are some snags to note -- the biggest being the need for a solid, continual online connection. This app won't even start if your device isn't online; and slower connects result in some icons loading slowly. The app sells the idea that it is easy to share content, but in reality the experience can be sticky and stubborn. You can do it, but it requires requesting permission, remembering a passcode, and some other hoop jumping keeping security high, but decreasing use. There's also a built in currency system, rewarding you with coins for rather unnecessary things (like drawing a picture). If you have an iPad, good Wi-Fi, and your child is connected to others who are also willing to jump through a few hoops, WonderBox can work. And the quality of the curated content is definitely a plus. But you have to invest a bit of energy in the process. Full Review: <http://reviews.childrenstech.com/ctr/fullreview.php?id=18748>



More Trucks HD, (\$free on iPhone, iPad <https://itunes.apple.com/app/id609771588>), for ages 3-7.

Why we like it: This sequel to the first Trucks from Duck Duck moose offers four fun and playful vehicle-themed activities. Our testers especially liked putting out the fires, playing tic-tac-toe against the firehouse dog, and racing the drag racers.

Need to know: Girls, don't be put-off by the truck theme. The play patterns driving this app will appeal to both genders and all ages. Some of the activities are tricky at first, so be on hand the first time through.

Video review: <http://youtu.be/aQhmzWyggM4>

Full Review: <http://reviews.childrenstech.com/ctr/fullreview.php?id=16715>

An advertisement for 'Dust or Magic' in NJ. The top part features the title 'Dust or Magic' in a large, purple, stylized font with a colorful starburst above the 'i' in 'Magic'. To the right of the title, it says 'Keep the conversation going! Don't miss the 16th Edition of Dust or Magic NJ, to be held November 6-8, 2016 in in Lambertville, NJ'. Below the title is a large group photograph of many people, mostly men, holding up their tablets or smartphones, showing various screens. At the bottom of the photo, there is white text that reads 'Save your seat this fall!' followed by the website 'www.dustormagic.com/institute'.