



Children's
TECHNOLOGY
REVIEW EXCHANGE

Our amazing
LittleClickers
topic this
month...



July 2018

Toys to Life

They've mastered
Zelda.

They're no longer little kids.
But they're not yet adults.
What can they play?



On the cover: Starlink -- a new "Toys to Life" franchise from Ubisoft.

Children's Technology Review **July 2018**

Volume 26, No. 7 Issue 221

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Fiete Soccer
Florence*
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Hero Vision Iron Man AR
Experience
Peter Rabbit: Let's Go!
Poké Ball Plus
Starlink: Battle for Atlas
Super Smash Bros. Ultimate
World of Hex*



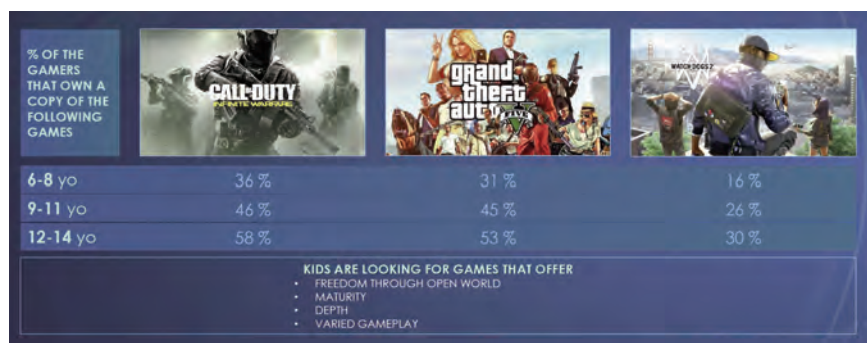
* Denotes "Editor's Choice."

"My own daughter is seven, and she's beaten a lot of big games, including *Zelda Breath of the Wild*. She's looking for something else. A lot of older kids are finished with kids games and they're looking for the next thing. Unfortunately that next thing was never designed for their age group." Matt Rose, Product Manager, *Starlink* (Ubisoft Canada)
<https://youtu.be/KIAUXsvquWA?t=8m40s>

DIGITAL AND PHYSICAL PLAY BLUR AT THIS YEAR'S E3

The intersection of concrete forms of play (stuff like sand, clay, blocks and physical manipulatives) and abstract/symbolic experiences (like books, apps, video games or other forms of screen media) has always been a fascinating space. Thanks to improvements in technology on the toy/controller side (namely accelerometers, batteries and bluetooth), the space has become even more interesting. Case in point, Nintendo Labo, the Poké Ball Plus and *Starlink*. Five years ago, Matt Rose and a team at Ubisoft Toronto started designing a "Toys to Life" game to compete with Disney Infinity amiibos and *Skylanders*. The result is *Starlink*, a new set of collectible figurines and a snap-together starship specifically designed for older children who are ready for a mature theme, but aren't ready for the raw violence and language. Ubisoft's research has found that over 30% of children aged 6 to 8-years have turned to M rated games, like *Call of Duty* or *Grand Theft Auto*. Ubisoft hopes *Starlink* will capture some of this market. See the research summary <http://childrenstech.com/blog/archives/18115> (keep in mind this appears to be a pre-Fortnite report).

Watch Matt Rose describe his game <https://youtu.be/KIAUXsvquWA>



LITTLECLICKERS: A DINOSAUR FACTS

True or false -- Dinosaurs were the largest living things on earth. The answer is false. In fact there's a creature alive — right now — that's a lot larger than even the largest dinosaur. What is it? Find out on page 3 or visit www.littleclickers.com/dinofacts



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Dust or Magic

Save the date!
www.dustormagic.com

Nov 4-6, 2018 • Institute The 18th Annual fall institute will once again take place at the Inn at Lambertville Station. \$1480/seat.

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Dino-facts

5 (or so) sites & 10 videos

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How much do you know about dinosaurs? Find out with this simple dinosaur quiz.

1. Could you have a dinosaur as a pet? Most -- like the large meat eaters -- would eventually eat you. The Irish news explored this question <http://bitly.com/2NogqAd> and determined that perhaps the plant eating, horse sized Psittacosaurus might work if you raised it from an egg.

2. How many years ago was the last dinosaur alive?

- a) 100 years
- b) 100,000 years
- c) 1 million years
- d) 66 million years

Answer: At the Natural History Museum

<http://bitly.com/2NoRQ1Z> you learn that the last dinosaurs were alive 66 million years ago.

3. What killed the dinosaurs? Most scientists agree that dinosaur life ended suddenly when a six mile wide asteroid struck the earth. The dust from the impact blocked the sun and changed the climate, starving the dinosaurs. See <https://www.psi.edu/epo/ktimpact/ktimpact.html>

4. What living creature today most resembles dinosaurs?

- a) A crocodile
- b) A sturgeon
- c) A chicken
- d) All of the above.

The correct answer is d) all of the above, although the crocodile might be the most similar looking. Learn more at <http://bitly.com/2NokQad>

5. T/F The biggest dinosaur was larger than a whale. False.

The largest land dinosaurs, the sauropod Argentinosaurus was about half the size of today's adult blue whale. Land animals have to support their own weight, whereas sea creatures get some help from the water, so they can grow bigger.

<https://bbc.in/2t1BVUc>

APPLICATION: HOW MANY DINOSAURS CAN YOU NAME?

Here's a nice list of dinosaurs, with facts https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_dinosaurs

Here's a National Geographic Kids dinosaur fact quiz <http://bitly.com/2ISy8Zg>

See how many dinosaurs you can name at Quiz Biz: <https://www.quiz.biz/quizz-722947.html>



Dinosaurs on YouTube

Want more? Here's a video playlist that go along with this column:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLcBVHzUUEKwmmF9HV_TswFzykJbGVCaKG





Feature Reviews and New Releases

JULY 2018

Here's an alphabetical listing of both the feature reviews (with ratings) and the new and future releases. "Entry Date" refers to the date we first learned of the product.

Emile Maths Games

From UK-based Manchester Met University comes an affordable, comprehensive but hard to use math curriculum (from a UX point of view). For \$3.99 you get 80 games covering , set in an outer space setting. By helping Emile solve math problems, you collect stolen gems. We couldn't figure out how to launch an activity from the main menu.

Details: Emile Education/Cyber Coach Smart, <https://www.emile-education.com>. Price: \$3.99. Ages: 10-11. Platform: iPad, iPhone, Android, Windows. Teaches/Purpose: Geometry, Place Value, Measurements, Fractions, Addition & Subtraction, Multiplication & Division and Statistics. Rating (1 to 5 stars): 3.4 stars. Entry date: 6/24/2018. []



Ease of Use	3	68 %
Educational	8	
Entertaining	7	
Design Features	7	
Good Value	9	

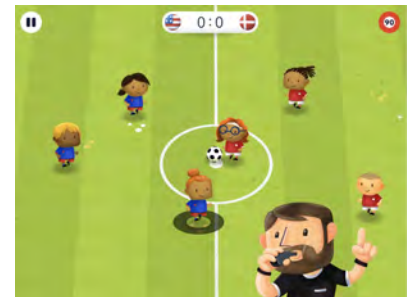
Fiete Soccer

Looking for a simple, one player game of soccer on your touch screen? This one isn't the best we've reviewed (see the now obsolete Backyard Sports series), but it's worth a second look if your young soccer fan has a tablet. It is easy to choose a pre-configured team from a diverse cast of characters and get started. It's fun to see if you can get the ball down the field, and the app makes you feel powerful when you swipe to try for a goal.

The matches are short (90 seconds) and your team ranking is recorded. Weaknesses include hard to control defense system, and a lot of random ways to lose the ball. Features let you make your own team which involves setting a name, a flag, designing a uniform and choosing from 150 players that vary by ethnicity and gender. There are three challenge levels.

Note that the app is free to download, but costs \$2.99 to edit the team, another \$2.99 for championship mode, or the combo pack for \$4.99. We tested the full unlocked version. Note that the free version used to have a blocked, resulting in some bad reviews. The publisher has revised the game so that there is a free practice stadium. All additional features are available for an IAP.

Details: Ahoiii Entertainment UG, www.fiete-app.com. Price: \$4.99 (with Free preview). Ages: 6-up. Platform: . Teaches/Purpose: sports, soccer, temporal relations. Rating (1 to 5 stars): 4 stars. Entry date: 6/13/2018. []



Ease of Use	6	80 %
Educational	7	
Entertaining	9	
Design Features	9	
Good Value	9	



Florence

Delightful multi-touch interactive design meets a the story of Florence Yeoh -- a young adult girl who is about to have her first serious boyfriend relationship.


Content includes 20 chapters theme-related narrative chunks each covering a stage of life, including Dreams, Exploration, Groceries, Routines, Driving and so on.

In the first chapter, you help Florence get out of bed by turning off her alarm clock (with a tap) and brushing her teeth (by swiping the toothbrush back and forth). About midway in story, she meets a cello player named Krish and her endless routine of work, sleep, and social media comes to an end. You participate in the relationship through a series of mini-game vignettes - from flirting to fighting. The app draws inspiration from 'slice of life' graphic novels and comics. The illustrations are simple and clear, and work will to support the narrative. Especially noteworthy is the way that text bubbles are illustrated through increasingly complicated puzzle shapes. Progress is bookmarked automatically. Apple gave this app it's highest honor at WWDC 2018 (the Apple Design Awards) and we have to agree that it is an excellent selection.

Despite the focus on a male/female relationship, there is no inappropriate content. The app was designed by the creators of Monument Valley.

Details: Annapurna Interactive, <http://annapurna.pictures/interactive/>. Price: \$2.99. Ages: 11-up. Platform: iPad, iPhone. Teaches/Purpose: fiction, relationships, teenage years, adolescence, writing. Rating (1 to 5 stars): 4.8 stars. Entry date: 6/6/2018. []



Ease of Use	8	96 % 
Educational	10	
Entertaining	10	
Design Features	10	
Good Value	10	

FurReal Friends Ricky the Trick Lovin Pup

We had a look at one of the three new (2018) FurReal toys from Hasbro at this year's Toy Fair. The FurReal line is always worth a look because the toys consistently deliver some of the best technology in a durable, squeezable platform. Ricky knows 100 sounds, has a moving mouth and neck, eats and poops (plastic food/poop pellets, included). He has sensors in his nose, back, mouth and checks. His legs can be posed, so he can sit or stand. If you push his paw, he sings. A magnetic bone can sit on his nose.

Three FurReal pets will range from \$50 to \$130. The other two new products are Rock-A-Too (a bird), and Munchin' Rex (a dino).

Details: Hasbro, Inc., www.hasbro.com. Price: \$130. Ages: 3-12. Platform: Smart Toy. Teaches/Purpose: . Entry date: 6/7/2018.





Helen Keller Archive, The

Search a free, online archive with 163,878 items from Helen Keller. You learn that she managed to live a long, productive life despite the loss of both her sight and hearing as a toddler. The archive is part of the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) web site, at www.afb.org/HelenKellerArchive.

As of June 2018, the searchable database includes 163,878 items.

These include correspondence, speeches, press clippings, scrapbooks, photographs, albums, architectural drawings, audio recordings, audio-visual materials and artifacts.

Because Keller lived from (1880-1968) and corresponded with many historical people, the collection reflects 80 years of social and political change. We found the collection to be easy to search, and each item has been annotated and tagged. Historical researchers will appreciate the use of standard archival practices for the arrangement and description of historical collections. Children will want to follow the online Kids Museum link, to The Helen Keller Kids Museum Online, is at <http://braillebug.afb.org/hkmuseum.asp>. Support for the work by The American Foundation for the Blind came from the National Endowment for the Humanities (www.neh.gov) and American Express.fs

Details: American Foundation for the Blind, <https://www.afb.org/HelenKellerArchive>. Price: \$free. Ages: 9-up. Platform: Windows, Mac OSX, Chrome, Internet Site. Teaches/Purpose: history, Helen Keller, blindness, hearing loss, special needs. Entry date: 6/20/2018.



Keep Talking and Nobody Explodes

Can you work with a partner to defuse a bomb -- before it blows up? Designed for older children or adults, for non-tablet platforms (including VR), this collaborative problem-solving puzzle mixes a timed screen experience with printed instructions. One player -- who can't see the screen -- uses the printed instruction manual to deliver the essential information (cut the second yellow wire) while the second player describes the situation and executes the instructions. The briefcase-sized bomb contains several types of puzzles. There are different challenge levels, and the rounds take up to five minutes.

To win and defuse the bomb you'll need to communicate quickly, clearly, and effectively. The timer makes sinister sounds toward the end, creating more excitement. The actual "explosion" is a dark screen followed by a view of the case report. A VR mode can be used to further isolate you from your instruction reader. Works with Oculus Rift/HTC Vive, PlayStation VR, Samsung Gear VR, Oculus Go and Daydream. You can download a PDF of the The Bomb Defusal Manual at <http://www.bombmanual.com>. It can be printed or viewed on any web-enabled device. Learn more at <http://www.keeptalkinggame.com/#buy>.

Thanks to Barbara Chamberlin for demonstrating this game during Dust or Magic AppCamp 2018.

Details: Steel Crate Games, <http://www.keeptalkinggame.com/>. Price: \$15. Ages: 10-up. Platform: Windows, Steam, Mac OSX, PlayStation 4. Teaches/Purpose: problem solving, collaboration, logic, memory, reading. Rating (1 to 5 stars): 4.4 stars. Entry date: 6/5/2018. []



Ease of Use	8	88 %
Educational	10	
Entertaining	9	
Design Features	8	
Good Value	9	



Marvel Avengers: Infinity War Hero Vision Iron Man AR

This is a set of AR (augmented reality) goggles that snaps into a plastic Iron Man mask, giving you a first person view of Iron Man's world. Your face and eyes are entirely covered, and you "see" through your phone's back camera. A regular sized Android or Apple phone is required, with the associated (free) app installed. Other physical accessories included in the box are three floor QR code floor markers, and a QR tagged bracelet that allows your hand to enter the AR world. As you might expect, the game involves battles with movie inspired characters, as you collect "infinity stones." Hasbro calls this "hero vision." You can also collect physical Infinity Stones that are also sold separately with 6-inch collectible figures. Includes AR mask, AR goggles, bracelet, three AR markers, and one Infinity Stone. There are no batteries required; but you must have iOS 10 or 11 running an iPhone 6, iPhone 6s, iPhone7, iPhone8, iPhoneX. Due to size restrictions with the Hero Vision mask, any 'Plus,' iPad & iPad mini devices cannot be supported. For Android, you can use Android 7 running on a Google Pixel 1, Samsung S7 or Samsung S7 edge. "Plus", "Notes" & Samsung S6 devices are too big.

Details: Hasbro, Inc., www.hasbro.com. Price: \$40. Ages: 8-up. Platform: . Teaches/Purpose: logic. Entry date: 6/27/2018.



Peter Rabbit: Let's Go!

Beautiful 3D Peter Rabbit animation meets confusing navigation. Your objective is to play games to earn food to help three rabbits (Peter, Lilly and Benjamin). This app is based on the Peter Rabbit animated TV series. As you play the nine games you also earn stickers for a journal. Our favorite game was bowling with pine cones, although the bowling game uses a strange top down camera view. From an illustration point of view, this is a beautiful app; from an interactive design perspective is rudimentary. Educational value is limited to some memory (concentration) and counting. The app contains some mild gender stereotypes (on par with the original books). There are no in-app purchases or ads.

Details: No Yetis Allowed, <http://noyetisallowed.com/>. Price: \$2.99. Ages: 5-10. Platform: iPad, iPhone, Android. Teaches/Purpose: counting. Rating (1 to 5 stars): 3.4 stars. Entry date: 6/20/2018. []



Ease of Use	5	68 %
Educational	7	
Entertaining	7	
Design Features	7	
Good Value	8	

Poké Ball Plus

Coming November 16, 2018, a tangerine-sized ball that is actually a bluetooth Joy-Con controller (for the Switch). The solid-feeling ball contains LEDs, a speaker, button inputs and rumble (haptic) features. It lets you make a throwing motion to catch a Pokémon that you can feel and hear inside the ball. The ball works with Pokémon Go running on your smartphone. A two player mode uses two Poké Balls. Works with Nintendo Switch and Smartphones running Pokémon Go. A safety ring tethers the ball to your hand, so you can't actually throw it. The ball has rechargeable batteries that are charged with a USB-C cable. Powered by a USB-C cable. Learn more at <http://e3.nintendo.com>.

Details: Nintendo of America, www.nintendo.com. Price: \$50. Ages: 6-up. Platform: . Teaches/Purpose: A peripheral for the Nintendo Switch. Entry date: 7/2/2018.





Starlink: Battle for Atlas

The Toys to Life category of products is getting an important addition this fall. This is a one or two player, open-world action adventure game designed for the three major game consoles. It works with a set of collectible ships and characters that can be physically manipulated as the game is played. Each version has some console specific content and hardware. For example, the Nintendo Switch version has a Joy-Con controller adapter and some exclusive characters.

In Battle for Atlas (the first chapter), you're a pilot who must free the Atlas star system from bad guys. You assemble your fleet, mixing and matching pilots for the best results. Changes to your physical ship instantly appear in-game allowing you to immediately jump into the battle. Each planet has its own identity, ecosystem and wildlife. The world evolves depending on your actions and your choices. Everything you do has an impact on your journey, and enemies will react and fight back intelligently and take over the star system if you do nothing to stop them.

Work on this game started five years ago from Ubisoft Toronto.

Release date: October 16, 2018.

Details: Ubisoft, www.ubisoft.com. Price: \$75 for the starter kit. Ages: 7-up.

Platform: PlayStation 4, Xbox One, Nintendo Switch. Teaches/Purpose: logic, fine motor coordination. Entry date: 7/3/2018.



Super Smash Bros. Ultimate

Coming December 7, 2018, a version of Super Smash Bros. for the Nintendo Switch. The 20 year-old game contains 60 characters from 20 past games. According to Nintendo PR, these include Ice Climbers, Pokémon Trainer, Ridley from the Metroid series and Inkling from Splatoon. At one point in the gameplay, a Nintendog covers part of the screen.

The game will support older GameCube controllers (original or newly designed), Joy-Con controllers or the Nintendo Switch Pro Controller. The game has both handheld and tabletop modes for online play.

All current Super Smash Bros. series amiibo figures are compatible with the game, and any fighter's amiibo figure from other series will also be supported.

Developed by Nintendo, Sora, Ltd. and BANDAI NAMCO Studios; directed by Masahiro Sakurai.

Details: Nintendo of America, Inc., www.nintendo.com. Price: \$60. Ages: 9-up.

Platform: Nintendo Switch. Teaches/Purpose: logic, timing, spatial relations. Entry date: 6/12/2018.

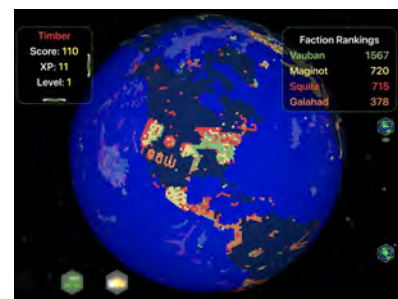


World of Hex

This is a cloud-based, multi-player strategy experience inspired by the 1983 game, Fortress. The "board" is represented by a spinning globe, divided into 9000 hexagon-shaped tiles. You can zoom into a single tile to see another grid of hexagons, where the strategy game takes place. Once you create a screen name you are assigned to one of four factions. You then compete against other from all over the world, to try to help your faction capture territory. So you can claim territory in the world by playing and winning, but you don't only play for yourself; you play for your faction. The faction owning the most tiles controls the world.

The game creates a personal AI agent that defends you when you are not playing the game. When you start playing, your AI will only know a couple of commands. As you play more, it gets smarter. If you like a strategy, turn based game, this game is worth the download. Need to know: This game uses iCloud so you must be logged into iCloud on your iPhone, iPad or Apple TV. Created by Peter Easdown.

Details: PKCLsoft, pkclsoft.com/wp/. Price: \$.99. Ages: 10-up. Platform: iPhone, iPad, Apple TV. Teaches/Purpose: logic. Rating (1 to 5 stars): 4.6 stars. Entry date: 6/12/2018. []



Ease of Use	7	92 %
Educational	10	
Entertaining	9	
Design Features	10	
Good Value	10	