



Children's  
**TECHNOLOGY**  
REVIEW EXCHANGE



Sites and videos to learn

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**December 2018**



**I won a KAPi!**  
Announcing the 2019  
KAPi Awards  
**9 products and 2 people**

On the cover: JIMU Robot Expansion Kit

**Children's Technology Review**  
**December 2018**

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ARcheology - Dig Up History  
Crayola Create and Play  
JIMU Robot\* Expansion Kit  
PBS Kids Video\*  
Pinkfong My Body  
Russian History in Cats

Shine: Journey of Light\*  
Sing & Play: Wheels on the Bus  
Toca Life: World\*  
Trilo Music ABC\*  
Wiggles, The: Fun Time With Faces



\* Denotes "Editor's Choice."

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"We're seeing an effort by the kids' community to develop more open-ended, low-cost opportunities for play, and that's a good thing. Of special note this year is the use of technology that has 'no screens' attached and uses voice as an input device." Robin Raskin, President and Founder of Living in Digital Times. "



#### ANNOUNCING THE 2019 KAPi Awards

The KAPi (Kids at Play Interactive) Awards recognize the most innovative games, software, devices and apps for educating and entertaining today's children.

More than 500 children's technology products were considered, all released in 2018. The products were nominated and evaluated by an independent jury of 13 industry and editorial experts, under the direction of CTR Editor Warren Buckleitner.

#### The 2019 KAPi Award winners

##### Lifetime Achievement: Fred Rogers (Posthumous)

This is the year of Fred Rogers for good reason -- two movies, a biography and a U.S. postage stamp. Beneath Rogers' quiet demeanor was a fearless advocate for quality and ethics in children's media. In this age of data harvesting, pop-up ads and in-app purchases, the KAPi jurors recognize that every media producer needs to put a little of Fred Rogers' philosophy into every project. Just as important is to honor the individual child and take care of every child as if he or she was your own. The 2019 KAPi jurors voted unanimously for Mr. Rogers to receive this year's award. He's no longer with us, but his message of universal acceptance of every child still resonates.



##### Pioneer: Jesse Schell, Schell Games

Teacher, author, speaker, but most importantly a dreamer, Jesse Schell is a self-admitted "VR-aholic" who teaches in the Entertainment Technology Center at Carnegie Mellon University. Jesse does more than teach, he makes -- a point that was noted by several of this year's jurors. Schell Games, his Pittsburgh-based studio, has been the force behind many noteworthy products including Happy Atoms, a 2016 KAPi winner, and I Expect You To Die, a VR spy thriller.



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Dust or Magic

Save the Date!  
[www.dustormagic.com](http://www.dustormagic.com)

Nov 3-5, 2019 • Institute The 19th Annual fall institute.

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5 (or so) sites & 10 videos

# Sketching



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*This is an update to the column from the September 2012 issue of Children's Technology Review. All links and videos have been refreshed.*

When Walt Disney a young he loved to draw. After studying at the Chicago Art Institute, he made drawings for newspapers before experimenting with animation. See one of his first drawings <https://daily.mai/2G8jl0i>. Want to learn to draw like Walt? Here are some sites and videos to show you how.



**1. How can a wire help you learn to draw?** At Artsy you'll learn how a 15 inch length of wire can help you pay attention to drawing lines. You can also try sketching something upside down. Here's the link <http://bitly.com/2rrWiU7z>.

**2. How do I draw a horse?** There are a lot of sites dedicated to drawing creatures ... birds, cats and dogs. If you like horses or ponys, visit <http://bitly.com/2G783JJ> for some good tips.



**3. How do you make curly hair?** At Creativebloq <http://bitly.com/2rtmVYL> you can discover some easy visual sketching tricks, like how to make any two lines look like curly hair.



**4. How do I make a cartoon?** Start with a sack of flour, and then start adding features. Learn more at <http://bitly.com/2G5TQN6>

**5. Draw a cartoon of yourself** At the Artist's Network [bitly.com/lc1218link1](http://bitly.com/lc1218link1) you'll learn how to turn a selfie into humorous cartoon. Once you learn this trick, you'll have an endless supply of birthday gifts.

APPLICATION: Grab some oil paints (here's an affordable kit for \$30 from Amazon.com <https://amzn.to/2rv002o>, and follow along with artist Bob Ross. He's the guy who appeared on the PBS television series "The Joy of Painting." See <http://bitly.com/lc1218link2>. If you want to try a follow along with watercolors instead of oils, we found this winter scene <https://youtu.be/VmHc3xbqcGA>



## Sketching on YouTube

Want more? Here's a video playlist that go along with this column:  
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL3E93B068869BDB26>



# 2018 KAPi Awards, Continued

## Nine products and two people...

Continued from page 2

**Best Hardware: Echo Dot Kids by Amazon.com.** Alexa, what's the best smart speaker for kids? Don't bother answering, it's the Echo Dot Kids, with baked in parental management tools so you can customize your speaker for your child, and not the other way around. The device puts 300 Audible books, like Beauty and the Beast and Peter Pan, thousands of songs, kid-favorite games and COPPA compliant kid skills, all awaiting your child's verbal command.



**Best Overall Tech: Nintendo Labo by Nintendo**  
Who would've thought sheets of stamped cardboard could be so fascinating? Nintendo Labo merges maker play with screens. Jurors called it "a gutsy, slightly insane merger between concrete and abstract that reminded us all how screens can support any type of play." Every aspect of this project has been expertly produced, resulting in a level of innovation that our jurors applauded.

**Best Maker Spirit: Itty Bitty Buggy by Microduino, Inc.**  
This CPT (Code Programmable Toy) lets you program a buggy to trace lines on a map and recognize colors and voice commands via bluetooth, using your own device as a remote. Jurors loved that the kit supports mainstream computing languages, including Scratch, Python and Arduino. The LEGO compatible parts increase the creative possibilities even more.

**Best Robot: JIMU Overdrive Kit by Ubtech**  
What's 8 inches tall, can walk, dance and obey your commands? This year's jurors liked the possibilities offered by the most recent addition to the JIMU line, with 400 parts, speedy servo motors and a variety of sensors for light and motion.

**Most Novel Tech: When In Rome by Sensible Object**  
It was only a matter of time till some creative game designer leveraged the power of Amazon's Alexa into a game. When in Rome is an engaging trivia game for the whole family that relies on Alexa to provide clues, guide game play and add real-world information. Moreover, because the game can be continually updated, it's different every time it's played. Jurors liked the ability to keep the game different every time it's played.

**Best Mixed Reality: Untamed/Battle ARena by WowWee and HappyGiant**  
As any toy-shopping parent will tell you, in 2017 WowWee's Fingerlings were a big deal in the toy world. This year, Untamed Dinosaurs take the play a step further with the ability to step into Augmented Reality, thanks to an accessory app. Jurors liked the new play possibilities added onto an already solid toy.

**Best Educational Product: Snap Circuits BRIC Structures by Elenco** The classic Snap Circuits have been mixed up with a com-

### The People Behind the Choice

*The volunteer judges for this year's KAPi Awards consisted of a panel of leading journalists and publishers who are immersed in the world of children's digital publishing as part of their daily jobs. They debated over a series of conference calls using shared documents and Trello to — in some cases — agree to disagree. Each juror had one vote. Here are the this year's jurors.*

Warren Buckleitner, *Children's Technology Review*  
Amanda Gummer, *Fundamentally Children*  
Ahren Hoffman, *ASTRA*  
Christopher Byrne, Independent analyst and author, aka The Toy Guy  
Mary Couzin, *Chicago Toy and Game Group*  
David Kleeman, *Dubit*  
Dan Nessel, *Dad Does.com*  
Robin Raskin, *Living in Digital Times*  
Reyne Rice, *International Toy Trade Magazine Association*  
Mark Schlichting, *Noodleworks*; creator of *Broderbund's Living Books*  
Tonda Bunge Sellers, *Living in Digital Times*  
Valerie Vacante, *Collabsco*

patible set of construction bricks. Jurors were impressed by the diverse projects and open-ended potential of the play.

**Best Physical Play: Nerf Laser Ops Pro by Hasbro**  
This device takes old fashioned tag up a notch, with the ability to shoot an IR (infra-red) beam up to 300 feet. You can add your own smart device for real-time battle "intel," solo play mode or GPS tracking of teammates and opponents.

**Best Video Game: Starlink: Battle for Atlas by Ubisoft**  
This is a deep, narrative-based, open world game that combines physical toys with the story. Connect pilots and ships to the game controller to see changes in the game instantly. The combination of physical and digital play is well done and very much on trend for today's kids.

#### The 2019 KAPi Award Honorable Mentions

**StoryBall:** Jurors liked the physical and digital open-ended story play that uses games, stories and challenges to encourage children to play using their bodies instead of a computer screen.

**Novel Effect:** This great new literacy product brings families together with reading, storytelling magic and sound effects.

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# Feature Reviews and New Releases

DECEMBER 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.

## ARcheology - Dig Up History

Point your camera to a flat area of the room, and start tapping on the screen to "dig" up a fossil, using AR (augmented reality). The basic idea of this app is solid -- it's fun to see what you'll find. But there's not much content, and the interface has a few snags. For example once you're in a "dig" you can't escape until you've examined each of the hot spots. While the replicas of the fossils are scientifically accurate, the other illustrations are limited.

Details: Uprooted Software, [www.uprootedssoftware.com](http://www.uprootedssoftware.com). Price: \$1.99. Ages: 7-12. Platform: iPad, iPhone. Teaches/Purpose: science, archeology. Rating (1 to 5 stars): 4.2 stars. Entry date: 11/27/2018. []



Ease of Use	8	84 %
Educational	9	
Entertaining	8	
Design Features	8	
Good Value	9	

## Crayola Create and Play

Easy to use and control, this variety pack of Crayola-themed games offers plenty to do. But the cost can be a lot (up to \$40/year, as an auto-renewing subscription). So while this app is fun and well designed, we're not sure it's worth that much. There is no login, although there is no way to play any part of the app from the "free" download. You have to start the free trial, which iTunes makes much easier to start than to end. There are five areas: Art Station, Pet Park, Color Lab, Classroom and Arcade. The more you play, the more eggs you unlock, which hatch into pet creatures. The coloring options are well design, offering a lot of templates. There is a camera option, so you can put stickers on any photo you take. Underlying the sugary narration is the ability to actually create. After you subscribe, the app is free of ads or IAP, but there are embedded Crayola logos. The first download is free and fast. Subscriptions are \$6/month or \$40/year.

Details: Crayola, LLC, [www.crayola.com](http://www.crayola.com). Price: \$40/year. Ages: 3-5. Platform: iPad, iPhone, Android. Teaches/Purpose: creativity, coding, logic, logic, letters, cc theory. Rating (1 to 5 stars): 4.3 stars. Entry date: 11/14/2018. []



Rubric used	Contains IAP	
Ease of Use	9	86.67 %
Educational	9	
Entertaining	9	
Design Features	9	
Value	7	
Ethical	9	



## JIMU Robot

Standing about 8 inches tall, the JIMU Robot is a sophisticated, rechargeable snap together, app controlled mechanical humanoid creature that can walk, dance, or move in a wide number of ways. This is more of an assembly (rather than a creative) experience although it is possible to program the robot's moves. The app download is free.

Our testers (aged 14 and 17) took about an hour to put the robot together, reporting that the app "takes about 10 minutes to download." They really liked it, found it very satisfying to complete and control.

Details: Ubtech Robotics, <https://ubtrobot.com/>. Price: \$130. Ages: 12-up. Platform: iPad, iPhone, Android. Teaches/Purpose: robotics, assembly, programming. Entry date: 9/20/2016.



## PBS Kids Video


Turn your tablet into a TV, with this well designed video viewer, designed specifically for PBS Kids content. You can either watch WHYY live, or play one of the 34 channels.

The menu lets you tap the picture of the main character from each show, so no reading is required. When the video is playing, you can easily skip ahead or pause, rewind or skip to the next episode. You can toggle closed captioning on/off. Note that you'll need a live Internet connection, and that this app can use a lot of data (not unlike any video viewing app).

Details: PBS Kids, [www.pbskids.org](http://www.pbskids.org). Price: \$free. Ages: 3-up. Platform: . Teaches/Purpose: TV player. Rating (1 to 5 stars): 4.9 stars. Entry date: 11/13/2018. []



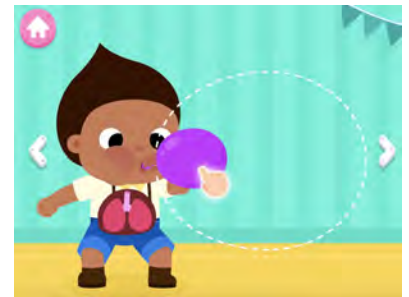
Ease of Use	9	98 %
Educational	10	
Entertaining	10	
Design Features	10	
Good Value	10	



## Pinkfong My Body

Catchy, upbeat animated cartoons are mixed with confusing menus and dead end IAP, in this free app from Korean based Smart Study. Content includes ten songs that introduce body parts, body part games and five language options (English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean and Japanese). As you play, you collect up to 30 types of stickers, from Pinkfong to Baby Shark. The Pinkfong character is a curious prince, who appears in animated videos and a series of apps. Stay away from this Apple recommended app.

Details: SmartStudy, [www.smartstudy.co.kr/about](http://www.smartstudy.co.kr/about). Price: \$free with IAP. Ages: 2-6. Platform: iPad, Android, Kindle. Teaches/Purpose: body parts, music. Rating (1 to 5 stars): 2.6 stars. Entry date: 11/13/2018. []



Ease of Use	3	52 %
Educational	5	
Entertaining	7	
Design Features	6	
Good Value	5	



## Russian History in Cats

Curious about early Russian history? This beautiful but dry app presents 37 printed articles describing the first chapters of medieval Slavic history. The text helps you understand how Russia came to be. The text can be hard to read, in part because the text is presented in italics. The illustrations are excellent but limited. Interactivity is limited to touch-and-hear animations. Every few pages, you are given a word search puzzle that contains words from the story.

Details: Fursquid, <http://fursquid.com/>. Price: \$2.99. Ages: 9-12. Platform: iPad, Android. Teaches/Purpose: history, russia, medieval. Rating (1 to 5 stars): 3.9 stars. Entry date: 11/7/2018. []



Rubric used eBook Non-Fiction

<b>Ease of Use</b>	7	} 72.86 %
<b>Value</b>	6	
<b>Illustration Quality</b>	8	
<b>Information Accuracy</b>	10	
<b>Sound Quality</b>	6	
<b>Narration Quality</b>	N	
<b>Ethical</b>	10	
<b>Innovation</b>	4	

## Shine: Journey of Light

This is a very well designed, relaxing "atmospheric side scroller" that uses a "Flappy bird" control mechanism. You touch the screen to move a glowing light through a maze. To progress you need to stay away from the walls, and capture more spots of life. While the controls are simple, they also come with a learning curve, and some fine motor coordination. The well designed menu presents 40 levels, each with a theme like "dust & magic" or "how do I get out?" The first levels are free. This is a calm game with gentle music, and outstanding illustrations by Oliver Popp

Details: Fox and Sheep GmbH, [www.foxandsheep.com](http://www.foxandsheep.com). Price: \$free with IAP of \$2.99. Ages: 7-up. Platform: iPad, iPhone. Teaches/Purpose: fine motor coordination. Rating (1 to 5 stars): 4.5 stars. Entry date: 11/16/2018. []



<b>Ease of Use</b>	8	} 90 %
<b>Educational</b>	8	
<b>Entertaining</b>	9	
<b>Design Features</b>	10	
<b>Good Value</b>	10	





## Sing & Play: Wheels on the Bus

By tapping on the screen, you can move through an animated version of "Wheels on the Bus." You can tap to wipe mud from the window, or honk the horn to get some chickens from the middle of the road. The lyrics are illustrated using simple graphics, but are not very responsive to the child's touch (hence the lower rating).

The good news is that there are 20 levels (the first two are free) that use the song to illustrate traffic signs, stop to pick-up children or to let people/ animals cross the street and make sure everyone gets to school on time. The paid version of the app includes Crazy Bus -- drive on curvy roads and stop to pick-up passengers. If you complete all three levels, you can earn a Edoki Academy driver's license. The free version includes three levels of the driving simulation game. Available in four languages.

Details: Edoki Academy, [www.edokiacademy.com](http://www.edokiacademy.com). Price: \$free with IAP. Ages: 3-6. Platform: iPad, iPhone. Teaches/Purpose: music, cause and effect, traffic safety. Rating (1 to 5 stars): 3.3 stars. Entry date: 11/23/2018. []



Ease of Use	6	66 %
Educational	7	
Entertaining	7	
Design Features	7	
Good Value	6	

## Toca Life: World

This is the umbrella app to the entire Toca Life series, that comes with free sample dynamic content and IAP (In App Purchases) for additional Toca Life apps.

The initial 560 MB starter app is free to download, including an area called Bop City (with eight locations and 39 characters). This gives you a good taste of what Toca Life is like.

After you download the app you see a globe that is populated with all the current Toca Life apps you own. In order to add your existing apps to the world, it has to be installed and up to date on the device you are using. To buy more content, you can visit the store, and select an option. The prices are clearly displayed. It is possible to mixing and matching locations and characters. Content will include 50 locations with 300 characters and 125 pets are available. New content will be provided weekly along with seasons and new discoveries.

Details: Toca Boca, <http://tocaboca.com/>. Price: \$free with IAP. Ages: 6-9. Platform: iPad, iPhone, Android, Kindle. Teaches/Purpose: causality, shapes, colors, memory, spatial relations, logic, creativity. Entry date: 11/3/2018.



## Trilo Music ABC

Three responsive, musical games keep children busy as they explore upper and lower case letters and their related sounds.

In Game 1 children match letters to see them come to life, spelling a word. If they beat the clock, they can earn more letters. This is a playful way to experiment with letter sounds.

In Game 2, well known song melodies can be replayed by touching an alphabet keyboard. Game 3 is a musical experience where you drag letters onto the "Trilo Stage" to spell words. Each letter has its own unique sound. There are no ads or IAP; and no information is collected. See also Trilo Spelling.

Details: Trilo Interactive AB, [triloapps.com](http://triloapps.com). Price: \$3.99. Ages: 3-6. Platform: . Teaches/Purpose: reading, language, upper/lower case letters, music, logic, matching. Rating (1 to 5 stars): 4.3 stars. Entry date: 11/21/2018. []



Ease of Use	9	86 %
Educational	9	
Entertaining	8	
Design Features	8	
Good Value	9	







## Wiggles, The: Fun Time With Faces

Are you one of the lucky few with an iPhone that has face scanning features? (iPhone X). If so, check out The Wiggles: Fun Time with Faces -- but be careful if you start the free trial. Note that you have to cancel within a week, or else you are charged (\$1.99/month or \$19.99/year).

Like the show, the music is good and the dances get children moving. If you like the show, you'll like the app.

Powered by ARKit, the app mixes your camera's view into one of the Wiggles songs, allowing you to put the content into a story, narrated by Yellow Wiggle Emma. The videos can be saved or shared.

The free version comes with one sample song; the subscription gives you all the content. Made by Australian-based Weyo.

Details: Weyo Ltd., <https://www.weyo.app>. Price: Sample \$20/year. Ages: 3-9. Platform: . Teaches/Purpose: music, singing, dancing. Rating (1 to 5 stars): 4.3 stars. Entry date: 11/28/2018. []



<b>Ease of Use</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>86</b> %
<b>Educational</b>	<b>8</b>	
<b>Entertaining</b>	<b>10</b>	
<b>Design Features</b>	<b>9</b>	
<b>Good Value</b>	<b>7</b>	

