

Curious Toys

Dragon Bonz

DISABILITY CATEGORY	RATING (1-5)
Physical	★★
Sensory	★★★
Communicative	★★★★
Cognitive	★★★★

Detailed review at www.ableplay.org

Play products for children with special needs
Independent evaluation by National Lekotek Center

Curious Toys: Dragon Bonz

Price: \$21 - \$40

Box Age Range: 5+ years

of Pieces: 51-100

Washability: Surface Wipe

Storability: Self Storing, Disassembly Required,

Directions: Pictorial,

Play Locations: Indoor, Outdoor,

Adjustability: Several, Position, Size,

Levels of Play: one level

Batteries: none needed

DESCRIPTION

Colorful, abstract plastic dragon parts, such as fiery tongues and scaly wings connect to form unique creatures. The set contains special hook connectors and fishing line to help make your creature fly.



APPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Physical ★★

Description

- Dragons can be created while sitting on the floor or standing at a table.
- The differently-sized pieces have components that make them easy to grasp, such as long thin legs, body with bumpy segments, wings with holes.
- The set comes with fishing line to hang a completed design which is perfect for visual enjoyment for children with physical limitations.
- Some of the pieces are large enough for a caregiver to stabilize as the child attaches an appendage.
- The size of the pieces is conducive to use on a wheelchair tray.

Skills

- Bilateral coordination and two-handed play are used as children hold a piece in one hand and connect another piece with the other hand.
- Eye-hand coordination is practiced as children construct a creature by inserting small rods into the holes that are in the body parts.
- Lifting, twisting, and manipulating the dragon parts encourages fine motor development.
- Creating Dragon Bonz figures promotes two-handed play and finger and hand control.
- Hand and arm strength is used as children disassemble a structure by pulling pieces apart.
- Wrist rotation and finger dexterity are used as children add the body components to their creatures.

Adaptation Ideas

- To lessen the startle response from a child, place a towel on the play surface or use the toy on a tablecloth to help muffle loud sounds when pieces are dropped.
- Limit the number of pieces given to the child for play. Gradually increase that number as a child's ability and frustration levels permit.

Sensory ★★★

Description

- Brightly colored pieces make this toy appealing to those who require visual attention.
- Some body parts rattle when shaken. Children with visual impairments may enjoy the rattling when they make the dragons fly.
- Pieces have unique shapes and textures. Some are bumpy, spikey and smooth. The fiery tongues are rubbery, which makes this feature even more appealing to young children and those with visual impairments and/or sensory needs.
- Play with this activity set does not have a specific duration of play enabling children to play as their attention spans permit.

Skills

- Tactile discrimination skills can be heightened as children feel the difference in shapes of the various body parts.

PlayIdeas

- Use the dragons in a sensory or water table to add to the excitement of the dragons, as well as open up a whole new world for the dragon experience!

Adaptation Ideas

- Using a solid color surface for the foundation to play with the Dragon Bonz will help eliminate visual distractions and will provide high contrast to see the pieces better.
- Limit the number of pieces given to the child for play. Gradually increase that number as a child's ability and frustration levels permit.

Communicative ★★★★★

Description

- A plethora of shapes encourage manual exploration.
- Imaginative play creates opportunities to express and process experiences from real life.
- Play with this activity set does not have a specific duration of play enabling children to play as their attention spans permit.

Skills

- Early literacy can be incorporated into play as children create stories to accompany their creatures.
- There are many pieces in the set providing ample opportunity for parallel play, cooperative play and social interaction.
- Imaginative play promotes the use of vocabulary and social exchanges.
- Children can practice verbalizations of counting and color naming.
- Asking the child, "Can you find a pink head?" or to, "Hand me the yellow wing," will help the child learn the names of the colors and enhance receptive language skills.

Play Ideas

- Create homes for the dragons, and let the children come up with play scenarios. Encourage language development and vocabulary building as well as creativity, imagination and cooperative play.
- Have children determine and demonstrate what sounds their dragons make.
- Target receptive language skills by describing pieces for the child to use to create a dragon.
- Have the child construct a dragon then have a him write a story about his dragon. Act out the story using the dragon.
- Create names for newly created dragons. This can help encourage imagination, language and pretend play.
- Incorporate pretend play scenarios using completed dragons.
- Match up wings, feet, legs, etc. Place one of each matched set in a bag. Have the child close his eyes and reach in to match a piece by touch.

Adaptation Ideas

- Using a solid color surface for the foundation to play with the Dragon Bonz will help eliminate visual distractions and will provide high contrast to see the pieces better.
- Limit the number of pieces given to the child for play. Gradually increase that number as a child's ability and frustration levels permit.

Cognitive ★★★★★

Description

- Colorful parts are small enough for children to handle comfortably.
- The size of the pieces is conducive to use on a wheelchair tray.
- The toy offers opportunities for open-ended play, since the various pieces can be combined in different ways.
- The toy is suitable for differing levels of interest, i.e. solitary or group play, manipulative or imaginative play, and play for a shorter or longer period of time.

Skills

- Creativity is explored and pretend play scenarios evolve as children build dragon figures.
- Connecting pieces using the holes and "legs" encourage eye-hand coordination.
- Color recognition and identification can be encouraged as children manipulate the colorful pieces.
- Pieces resemble body parts such as eyes, feet, legs and tongues which can promote body part identification.
- Encourage cooperative play and turn taking by having children work in pairs and take turns adding pieces to one creature.
- Matching skills are targeted as children match wings, eyes and legs to create a symmetrical creature.
- Counting can be worked on as children count the number of pieces they used to create a dragon, count the number of eyes, legs, wings, "blue pieces", count the number of segments in a body etc. in the set.
- Sorting wings, legs, feet, heads and bodies can help a child practice organizational and visual skills.
- Children can practice choice making as they decide what pieces to use to create their one-of-a-kind dragon.
- This set teaches sequential thought when the child puts together a structure.

Play Ideas

- Mix and match the body parts to create silly figures.
- Incorporate pretend play scenarios using completed dragons.
- Try to make as many creatures as possible using the entire set.

Adaptation Ideas

- Limit the number of pieces given to the child for play. Gradually increase that number as a child's ability and frustration levels permit.
- Using a solid color surface for the foundation to play with the Dragon Bonz will help eliminate visual distractions and will provide high contrast to see the pieces better.

FEATURES & BENEFITS

- Lightweight
- Durable
- High Contrasting Colors
- Tactilely Stimulating
- Visually Stimulating
- Wide Age Range
- Inviting Due to Uniqueness
- Open-ended
- Can be used independently or with others
- Many accessories
- Connects/assembles securely
- Promotes active play
- Hands On Approach to learning
- Provides pretend play opportunities
- Easy to grasp/hold
- Different shapes and/or colors
- Inviting/whimsical characters
- Easy to store
- Simple
- Game variations/many levels of play
- Fosters imagination/promotes creativity

DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESSES PROMOTED

- Visual Attention
- Visual Processing
- Language Development
- Sorting and Classification
- Action Concepts In/Out, Push/Pull, On/Off, Go/Stop
- Fine Motor
- Eye-Hand Coordination
- Imagination/Pretend Play
- Problem Solving
- Finger and Hand Control and Dexterity
- Two-Handed Play – Midline Focus and Transferring
- Precision
- Wrist Rotation
- Hand and Finger Grasp
- Motor Planning
- Matching
- Cooperative Hand Movements
- Counting/Beginning Math
- Color Recognition and Identification
- Bilateral Coordination
- Patience
- Spatial Relationships - Over, Under, On, Off
- Reaching/Arm Extension
- Functional Finger Movement and Exploration
- Part/Whole Relationships
- Creativity
- Coordinated Movement

What the Rating Means

An AblePlay Rating™ is designed to give you a snapshot of a toys appropriateness for children with special needs. We want to take the guess work out of making choices by providing the details that will give you confidence to find just the right toy for that special child.



- ★★★★★ The toy is **exceptional** for children in that disability category
- ★★★★ The toy is **very good** for children in that disability category
- ★★★ The toy is **good** for children in that disability category
- ★★ The toy is **adequate** for children in that disability category
- ★ The toy is **not suitable** for children in that disability category

Please understand that very few toys have received extremely high ratings in all four [disability categories](#). This is because inherently, most toys have different areas of emphasis. For example, a child with a sensory disability such as a visual impairment may not benefit from a board game that has read-only cards. But, this toy may be a great game for a child with a cognitive disability such as learning delays.

A strong rating in one category makes it a good toy. For example, take a product that receives 2 stars in physical, two stars in sensory, four stars in communicative and one in cognitive. This may be just the choice for those buying toys for children with autism and other communicative disabilities. In this case, a high rating in one category is exactly what this consumer needs.