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PARENTS' CHOICE AND ACADEMICS' CHOICE JUDGES EXPERTLY EXPLORE THE WONDERS OF THE YOUNG SCIENTISTS CLUB

Clifford's Three Themed Kits, Magic School Bus Explore The Wonders of Nature & Magic School Bus Weather Lab Each Bring Home Toy Honors

Jamestown, RI (May 22, 2013) – The Young Scientist Club is all about the exploration of new concepts and new things to ponder. When Parents' Choice Foundation Spring 2013 Award judges needed to explore the best new toys on the market, it was no surprise that they discovered the "wow" factor again and again and again with science kits designed for ages 3 and up. The judges awarded Silver Honor, Recommended and Approved seals for a total of three awards to the consistently winning Club. **Clifford The Big Red Dog series** exploring rainbows, kitchen and bubbles, **The Magic School Bus Wonders of Nature** and **The Magic School Bus Weather Lab** each brought home a Spring 2013 Parents' Choice Foundation Award in the Toy category.

Likewise, judges at Academics' Choice Awards searched for "the best thinking-based products on the market." They were enchanted by the three **Clifford The Big Red Dog science kits** that had kids experimenting on topics up in the sky and around the kitchen with guidance by Clifford and his pal, Emily Elizabeth. Added up, this marks three Spring 2013 honors for Clifford as "he" took home a *Tillywig Brain Child* earlier this month for his three-kit series. Now a *Parents' Choice Foundation Silver Honor* and an *Academics' Choice Award* are added to his mantle.

What's not to love when you invite kids to explore with endearing characters Ms. Frizzle or Clifford? Kids naturally clamor for more, even when school is out. "The reasonably priced kit, well designed guidebook and activities delivered hours of exploration," one Parents' Choice Foundation reviewer summed up. "And with summer vacation fast approaching, this will be a fun way to avoid the summer slide."

Indeed, as parents and grandparents get ready for summer fun, consider stocking up any of these engaging (and shhhh! educational) toys that will inspire kids long after the summer season!

The Parents' Choice Foundation follows a few simple principles when judging juvenile products: children deserve material to sharpen young minds, not blunt them; children learn most easily when they enjoy it and learning is fun! Academics' Choice Awards bring recognition to the best brain-boosting, genuinely effective learning tools that stimulate the mind and provide potential for the student to fully develop higher order thinking skills and superior decision-making ability.

Listed below is a sampling of the many glowing toy contest reviews.

Clifford The Big Red Dog Bubble Science • Ages 3+ • \$19.99
Clifford The Big Red Dog Rainbow Science • Ages 3+ • \$19.99
Clifford The Big Red Dog Kitchen Science • Ages 3+ • \$19.99
Spring 2013 Tillywig Brain Child Award
Spring 2013 Parents' Choice Foundation Award • Silver Honor
Spring 2013 Academics' Choice Award



"The charm of Clifford the Big Red Dog will have children as young as three engaging in meaningful science activities. Our reviewers thought these kits were perfectly designed for introducing science to preschoolers. Not only do they provide nearly all necessary materials to complete each experiment, they also provide clear explanations of what happens in each one. The well-illustrated manuals will benefit parents and children. As one reviewer noted, 'Sometimes I find it difficult to explain things on my child's level when it's something I 'just know'. The 'explanation' is the perfect tool to help me explain and elaborate on the experiment so that my son understands.' Another remarked that the kit prepares children for what a science lesson in school will be like. 'We begin each lesson talking about science, chemicals and really stress safety, then we do an experiment or two,' she explained."

-- review by Parents' Choice Foundation

"The favorites among the experiments were the 'milk rainbow' and its mesmerizing show of color swishing and swirling in milk. It was asked for again and again. The 'exploding volcano' was a hit. Anything 'exploding' for a 6-year-old boy is a sure winner. We had 'lava' dripping onto our kitchen table and floor by the end of it. 'Colored bubbles' was also very simple but unique. In fact, I don't think we will be able to have plain bubbles for blowing ever again. We made many colors of bubbles which naturally led to making fun 'bubble prints.' With 42 experiments in all, these kits have extensive use and reuse. The best part of this product is the inquiry about the world inspired by so many experiments."

- review by Academics' Choice Awards

The Magic School Bus Explore the Wonders of Nature • Ages 5+ • \$19.99
Spring 2013 Parents' Choice Foundation Award • Approved

"Each activity is guided by the fictional Ms. Frizzle and her students. Although the supplies included in the kit are inexpensive, and could mostly be found at home, it is convenient to have them collected in one place; many other materials are needed from around the home, but our testers had no trouble finding what was required.



"The real value in the kit comes from the guidebook. Activities included building a bug house, soaking the shell off an egg, pressing flowers, rubbing leaves, and making an ant farm, among many others. The manual provides in depth scientific discussion appropriate for ages 8 and up, but younger children can do the activities and learn from them, too.

"Our tenacious science testers were concerned that the manual identifies 'activities' as 'experiments.' Minimally, the scientific method calls for a hypothesis and a control group. Here, the learning activities simply pose a question as the start of a learning activity. For example, 'What will make a good bug house?' is followed by a list of components and instructions for one bug house, not a comparison of different materials or colors. 'Why would pressing flowers preserve them longer?' is an interesting question but does not answer itself in the activity; pressing flowers may indicate that this will, indeed, preserve them, but it does not answer the 'why.' Yes, they reported, the solutions page at the end of the manual answers the questions, but real experiments must follow protocol.

"That said, this is a solid jumping-off point for exploring the outdoor world. The reasonably priced kit, well-designed guidebook and activities delivered hours of exploration. And with summer vacation fast approaching, this will be a fun way to avoid the summer slide."

The Magic School Bus Weather Lab • Ages 5+ • \$39.99
Spring 2013 Parents' Choice Foundation Award • Recommended

"The now iconic bus-shaped kit includes a variety of experimental components, 28 illustrated activity cards, a weather station, weather chart, stickers and a data notebook for recording observations and results. There are a wide variety of activities and projects including making a thermometer, creating a cloud and a tornado in a bottle, and making a wind vane; there are also explanations of experiments and discussions of scientific concepts such as evaporation and condensation. The kit is a simple and fun-filled way to introduce young children to basic scientific concepts of observation and recording data, as well as those specific to the study of weather. While our younger testers needed (and enjoyed) adult guidance, those eight and up were pleased to be the principal investigators and report their findings to anyone who would listen."



Year after year, The Young Scientists Club continues to enthuse children with unlimited possibilities, parents with age appropriate (and fun!) learning tools and toy industry judges with phenomenal products that empower children to explore and wonder. See the entire line of science games and kits created for young minds at www.theyoungscientistsclub.com.

ABOUT THE YOUNG SCIENTISTS CLUB

Esther Novis, a mother of five and a former Harvard-trained biologist, started The Young Scientists Club 14 years ago as a summer science camp for her then 5-year-old son. Friends from other parts of the country told Novis they wanted to duplicate her concept and the idea for a science subscription service was born! The subscription kits are now mailed monthly to thousands of children around the world and the company's retail kits are sold in hundreds of specialty stores. In addition to developing new products for The Young Scientists Club, this wise mom has many years of experience teaching at Phillips Academy, Andover and has written the science column for Parents Magazine plus wrote science experiments for the new science curriculum by McGraw-Hill Publishing.