



**JUNK** Avigo BMW Motorcycle: R2 999.90. 'This is a junk toy. It's not practical and it's expensive; not worth it because a child can only use it alone.'



**GREAT** Just Like Home Shopping Cart: R149.90. 'Children can use this toy in different ways. They can also use it to store things and it is perfect for use when they are shopping with their parents. This will teach them responsibility.'



**GREAT** You and Me Twin Deluxe Set: R299.90. 'It's a great toy because it needs a parent, sibling or friend to play with the child. It also involves imagination, creativity and planning. This toy is recommended for any age.'



**GREAT** Fast Lane Truck Carry Case: R299.90. 'A child can use this for balance when learning to walk. It can also be good for planning and coordination.'



**OKAY** The 107cm Animal Alley Bear: R299.90. 'It's a good toy for children's comfort. It's also good when a child struggles to sleep alone, and most children love to cuddle when sleeping.'



**GREAT** Lego Star Wars T-16 Skyhopper: R399.90. 'This is a great toy. It's fun, but it also helps with creativity skills and concentration, and it helps children to focus.'



**JUNK** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 28cm Talking Turtles: R599.90 each. 'Ninja Turtles are a big thing at the moment, especially for boys, but it doesn't mean they are great toys. They don't require creativity or imagination.'



**JUNK** PS3 or Xbox 360 Disney Infinity 3.0 Star Wars Starter Pack: R799.90 each. 'This is not educational or challenging at all. A child needs a game where he or she will interact with people – not with objects – because that keeps them active and more involved.'

## Choose the best toys for your kids this Christmas

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With 59 days to go until Christmas, toy shopping is top of mind for many parents. But not every toy is a great toy.

Johannesburg educational psychologist Cara Blackie says that when parents shop for toys, they should check if playing with them involves

creative thinking and imagination. Also, the child should be able to involve a playmate, such as a parent, sibling or friend.

Blackie divides toys into three categories. "A great toy engages a child in imaginative play and often involves mutual play between children," she says.

"A bad toy is something that can only be used individually and the child responds to it without

imagination or thinking."

An "okay" toy is something that involves no individuality.

"An okay toy involves no thinking, so possibly a teddy bear, or a car," Blackie says. "But you can't really go wrong with an okay toy."

Top toy retailer Toys R Us sent us its "fabulous 15" list of toys for Christmas. We asked Blackie to rate eight of the toys (above) on the list.