

A Playful Past, Present, and Future

PART 1 – In this activity, you will be exploring games and toys from the *past*, *present*, and *future*. Start by thinking about your favorite game or toy. Then answer the questions below on a piece of paper or in the space provided using words, drawings, or both.

QUESTIONS	MY ANSWERS
What is your favorite game or toy?	
What materials (fabric, paint, plastic, wood, etc.) is your favorite game or toy made of?	
Why do you like to play with your favorite game or toy?	
What does your favorite game or toy look like? Make a sketch (a simple and quick drawing) of your favorite game or toy.	

Glossary

Future: the period of time that is to come; something that is going to happen

Past: the period of time before right now; something that has already happened

Present: the period of time that is right now; something that is happening now

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PART 2 – Games and toys are an important part of our *culture*. Not only are games and toys fun to play with, but they also teach us about the world around us. The people of the American West have been playing with games and toys made of materials found in their homes and in nature for thousands of years. Learn more about some of the games and toys that different people played with in the past by looking at the games and toys from the Autry Museum of the American West on the left-hand side. Then read the descriptions that give more information about these games and toys on the right-hand side.



Ball: This Inuit seal skin ball was made out of leather and strips of seal skin with fur. Leather is a material that is made from animal skin.



Doll: This Mexican doll was made from corn husks, reeds, and string. Reeds are tall, thin plants that are part of the grass family. The outer leafy coverings that protect ears of corn are called corn husks. The colors on the corn husk doll were added using paint.



Figure: This Arctic Indian toy of a person paddling in a kayak (small boat) was made of animal skin, leather, wood, and felt. Felt is a thick, soft cloth.



Game: This Mission Indian ring and pin game was made of acorns, cord (string), and wood over 100 years ago. Players try to catch the acorn rings on the carved wooden pin (stick).



Rattle: This Hopi toy rattle was made out of clay. The colors on the rattle were added using paint.

Glossary

Culture: a way of life that is shared by a group of people

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PART 3 – Now it is your turn to create a game or toy made of materials found in your home and in nature. Choose a game or toy that you would like to make. With the help of an adult, look for materials in your home and in nature that you can use to make the game or toy. Before you create it, make a plan for your game or toy by answering the questions below on a piece of paper or in the space provided using words, drawings, or both. Then create the game or toy using your plan.

QUESTIONS	ANSWER EXAMPLES	MY PLAN
<p>What type of game or toy will you create?</p>	<p>Ball Doll Figure Game Mask Rattle Other game or toy</p>	
<p>What materials will you use to create your game or toy?</p>	<p>Clay Cloth Colored pencils Crayons Glue Markers Paint Paper Paper towel rolls Pens Pencils Plants Popsicle sticks Rocks Scissors Sticks String Tape Wood Other materials</p>	
<p>What will you be able to do with the game or toy?</p> <p>How will the game or toy work?</p>		
<p>What will your game or toy look like? Make a sketch of what your game or toy will look like.</p>		

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PART 4 – After learning about different games and toys from the past and making a game or toy in the present, it is time to think about the future of games and toys. Imagine what games and toys will look like in the future. Then make a drawing or painting that shows what you think one game or toy will look like in 10, 50, or 100 years from now on a piece of paper or in the space below. Write a description about this game or toy below your drawing or painting. Include the following information in your description:

- The name of the game or toy
- The materials the game or toy will be made of
- What you will be able to do with the game or toy/how the game or toy will work
- Why the game or toy will be fun to play with

My Drawing or Painting

In the future, I think people will play with this (add game or toy) _____

The name of it will be _____

The materials it will be made of are _____

People will be able to play with it by (add what you will be able to do with it or how it will work)

It will be fun to play with because _____

Resources

Images

Inuit sealskin ball, collected by Gladys Knight Harris, Alaska, 1949. Strips of sealskin with fur sewn together and attached at top to a round piece of leather. Autry Museum; 2306.G.59

Mexican corn husk doll, acquired by the Museum 1936. Painted costume with a box on her back. Autry Museum; 257.L.6

Arctic Indian toy kayak with doll holding double paddle in hands, collected Alaska, acquired by the Museum 1976. Kayak is oiled animal skin over wooden frame, spear lashed to boat; doll has a leather face and felt body. Autry Museum; 2124.G.14

Mission Indian ring and pin game, with acorn rings, collected by Dr. Lucius A. Wright, circa 1900. Autry Museum; 873.G.5

Hopi toy rattle, acquired by the Museum 1932. Autry Museum; 421.G.303

Do you want to see the game or toy you created on our Instagram or Twitter? Then send a photograph of the game or toy you made along with some basic information (your name, your age, type of game or toy, materials used to make the game or toy, etc.) to outreach@theautry.org for a chance to be featured on our social media!