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Review--learning Games, For Infants and Toddlers

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REVIEW – LEARNING GAMES, FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS
By Dr. J. Donald Lally and Dr. Ira J. Gordon
New Readers Press, Division of Laubach Literacy International
Box 131, Syracuse, NY, 13210, 1977, 80 pages

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One would need to be psychologically or emotionally *ready* to spend an appreciable amount of time with *Learning Games*. We recognize the importance of the activities described as background to readiness for reading. However, the book does not spell out the why's of the games and play. This is an unfortunate omission, since mothers are not always aware of the vital necessity of giving their children the experience in multi-sensory play that constitutes the underpinning for interpretation levels in reading.

At the same time, it should be stated that this book adds a great deal to what most young mothers know about beneficial ways to help their infants and toddlers develop. The games are very clearly explained. It is a resource book of ideas, giving new twists to old games, and as such it would be a valuable book to own. Some parents might object to the almost primitive appearance of the illustrations, but it must be noted that simpler pictures almost never depict ethnic groups, therefore never omit and never offend. An indefensible element of the book is the use of baby-talk, which should not be recommended by example.

The format of the book is especially appealing; it is divided into age groups, with eight games or activities suited for children at each of eight different ages up to two years. Games are classified by type, including communication, eyes-and-ears, grouping games, using-a-tool, imitation games, etc. Reading teachers should be aware of this valuable book, and be able to recommend it to new mothers. The importance of such early activities in coordination, organized movement, concept development, and combined sensory experience cannot be over-emphasized.