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THREE SPRING 2013 TOY CONTESTS SMITTEN WITH HABA & LOCO LINGO GAME SERIES

*HABA Wins Six Prizes In All From Parents' Choice, Academics' Choice & PAL Awards Praising **Loco Lingo** Plus PAL Awards For Puppet Theater, My First Play World Farm: Stacking Cubes And Ophelie and Her Chicks*

Skaneateles, NY (May 21, 2013) -- With so many new toys coming to market each season you'd think it unlikely that toy judges with different criteria could each choose the same game to praise. Not if it's made by HABA. Spring 2013 judges from Parents' Choice Foundation Awards, Academics' Choice Awards and PAL Awards each pointed to HABA's cleverly designed three different **Loco Lingo** games -- **Kindergarten**, **Fastgrasp** and **Building Site** -- as the best of the best! Global toymaker extraordinaire HABA is that rare company that creates, every time, inspiring games, toys and play things.

The trio of games that won a trio of prizes were not the only HABA toys to catch the eye of Spring 2013 judges. An additional three toys -- Puppet Theater, My First Play World Farm: Stacking Cubes and the Lilliputiens product Ophelie and Her Chicks also earned praised by PAL Awards.



"Your creativity, hard work and developmental focus is evident in these outstanding toys," wrote the PAL Awards reviewer, smitten with four of HABA's spring offerings. "Your toys are great examples of what parents should look for in a fun, versatile, learning experience that offers loads of repeat play in new and different ways! Ophelie is one of my favorites as is that incredible puppet theater. You will see in my review what a hit it was with kids."

For those unfamiliar, The PAL Award is the only industry recognition focusing on the best toys, games and books that not only entertain, but also inspire kids and caregivers to engage in rich communication and interaction. The three Loco Lingo games pack five different language skills sessions into one box and each game can last 10-20 minutes. Concentration, imagination and memory are developed through play with wooden figures and illustrated cards.

Likewise, Academics' Choice Awards bring recognition to the best thinking-based products on the market. As they wrote in their awards letter to HABA, "We help buyers find and promote 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. We believe mind-building, eye-opening products are worth sharing, as do the millions of academic-minded buyers excited to learn about your product."

The Parents' Choice Foundation follows a few simple principles when judging juvenile products, including "children deserve material to sharpen young minds, not blunt them; children learn most easily when they enjoy it and learning is fun! The Parents' Choice Recommended Seal indicates that judges found the product distinguished enough to give it a notch above an "Approval" rating -- given to wholesome products that help children enjoy developing physical, emotional, social or academic skills."

Here are HABA's four Spring 2013 prize-winning products and the reviewer's own words listed below:

Loco Lingo Kindergarten • Ages 3+ • \$11.99

Loco Lingo Building Site • Ages 3+ • \$11.99

Loco Lingo Fastgrasp • Ages 3+ • \$23.99

Spring 2013 Parents' Choice Foundation Awards • Recommended Games

2013 Academics' Choice Awards • Brain Toy Award in recognition of Mind-Building Excellence

Spring 2013 PAL Awards

"HABA's suite of three Loco Lingo games provides parents with a fast, fun and effective way to help build language skills in young children who are ready to learn. Loco Lingo Kindergarten is a fun learning tool for preschoolers. One tester family reported using the game to help a 5-year-old improve retelling the events of his day. The silly stories had all players laughing and learning how to properly sequence the events. Fastgrasp helps preschoolers work on listening skills, building vocabulary, and reaction times. The easy-to-follow instruction guide offers sample games and stories that can accommodate up to six players. Our parent testers enjoyed the challenge to get creative and vary the games to encourage kids to think in different ways. Much like Fastgrasp, Building Site offers five fun word games. From being the first to grab the object mentioned in the story, to being the one who remembers which objects from the story are not in the pile of objects, the games all help build concentration, reaction times and language skills."

-- highlights from extensive *Parents' Choice Foundation* review

"HABA's new product, Loco Lingo, would be a great addition to any parent, teacher, or homeschooler's reading curriculum. The series offers manipulatives to aid in the development of a young child's reading comprehension skills. The children and teacher choose one of the 5 games to play (for each of the three styles of Loco Lingo). After they have chosen the game, they pick a story, poem, or riddle to be read aloud. As the teacher reads aloud the children have to listen to the passage carefully and be ready to grab a figure as soon as that figure is mentioned in the story. For instance, Loco Lingo Fastgrasp comes with small wooden figures that resemble horses, turtles, cows and squirrels. Once the reader mentions one of these animals the listener must grab the figure before the others. This game-like activity could work well with children that need a bit more competition in class. The approach aids in the development of concentration and focus. Without a doubt many children need to physically do something while being read to. Many like to be more active while hearing a short story, poem or riddle. If you are looking for something that will help keep a child's attention on the story while being read to, this would be the learning game to purchase."

-- one of many *Academics' Choice Awards* reviews

HABA Puppet Theater and Toy Shop • Ages 3+ • \$129.99

Spring 2013 PAL Award

"Rarely have I heard such an explosion of talking as when I unveiled HABA's Puppet Theater to three sisters! Each had her own puppet on hand and was parting the curtain to get some dialogue in before the next one-stepped forward. Everyone loved the easy setup as we hung our puppet sign



over the stage, announced our show and started the story. The girls couldn't believe that our theater could easily transform into a shop with two boxes to attach to the sides. These flexible containers could hold tickets for the puppet show or veggies, toys, cupcakes or money for the shop. This versatile 2-in-1 toy can provide hours of entertainment and language learning."

My First Play World Farm: Stacking Cubes • Ages 12 months+ • \$14.99

Spring 2013 PAL Award



"Kids loved following the story, as the animals made their way to the top of the 9 stacked cubes. Little cues in the beautiful illustrations help you match the rope ladder, dangling rope from a hot air balloon and ladder as the donkey, sheep, pig, dog, cat, rooster and hen climb up to reach the little chick at the top. Rotate your completed tower to a new side and count down from 9 as farm objects are pictured—milk pails, bees, socks on the laundry line or watering cans—ready to count. Take another turn to describe the different animals outside their homes, while the final side pictures a rose vine making its way up the tower with decreasing numbers of flowers on each cube. The colorful illustrations invite lots of conversation and description as kids build their tower, and of course, knock it down!"

Ophelie And Her Chicks by Lilliputiens • Ages Newborn + • \$39.99

Spring 2013 PAL Award

"Mama Ophelie is the perfect teacher for kids 6 months and up as she sits down to offer a lesson in describing her fuzzy face, crinkly wings and rattle as she moves. Keep exploring as you pull out the soft shape-sorter ball in her tummy. Reach into one of the ball's 4 color-coded sections, to pull out a baby chick finger puppet of the same color, providing a different sound when squeezed. Kids especially loved the one that went "Cheep, cheep!" Ophelie has room for a mom-sized hand to play puppets with her chicks or pretend as plush friends. So much language learning is available as children stuff the chicks in Ophelie's pockets, play in their ball or "talk" to each other."



Look for these games and more toys online at www.HABAUSA.com or on specialty store shelves coast to coast.

ABOUT HABA

HABA products can be found nationwide at over 1,000 U.S. specialty retail stores and in specialty catalogs and websites. Many of its products have been recognized with German and American awards including Parents' Choice Foundation, National Parenting Center, Creative Child, and Dr. Toy. HABA received Best Toys of the Year recognition from the TODAY Show Toy Test and has been featured in national magazines such as American Baby, Baby Talk, Fit Pregnancy, Parenting, Parents and Working Mother. For more details, visit HABA's informational website at www.HABAUSA.com.