

TESTIMONIALS



Giant Light and Sound Spinning Top (EY11701)

Raploch Nursery shares their experiences of using the Giant Light and Sound Spinning Top to engage and inspire young learners.



About the nursery and our reasons for choosing the Giant Light and Sound Spinning Top

Raploch Nursery is based in central Scotland, in the city of Stirling, and currently provides care and learning for 140 children. We were drawn to the spinning top as an additional resource to facilitate learning within our playroom spaces and to enhance our sensory room experience and environment. The spinning top provides a broad range of opportunities to support children's learning, whilst also supporting emotional regulation. We also see great value in the benefits this resource brings to children who have additional support needs.

The benefits of the Giant Sound and Light Spinning Top

The spinning top is supportive of children's emotional regulation, as well as providing a fun and curious sensory experience, making this an open-ended resource for many children. Children demonstrated increased curiosity and engagement through access to the resource, spending long periods of time exploring and discovering. This resource has been increasingly supportive for children who benefit from sensory experiences, supporting them to regulate feelings and emotions. In the short time of use, this resource has demonstrated fantastic opportunities for open-ended learning, exploration, and discovery, and can be used across a wide range of learning experiences.

Learning observed

Currently, we have the resource set up in our sensory room, however, this is transferrable in response to children's needs and interests. The resource is easily accessible to children and many can independently transfer the resource between play spaces, in line with their own ideas and interests. Older children have put the resource to the test during science experiences, supporting their prediction skills and then observing to see if their predictions were correct. This resource provides excellent learning experiences in relation to cause and effect for babies, toddlers and young children. It has also been supportive for developing children's core arm strength and gross motor movements.

This resource has shown many more benefits than the initial intended purpose of supporting emotional wellbeing and regulation. Children demonstrate increased engagement when accessing the spinning top as a sensory experience, compared to some other sensory-based resources. The features on the spinning top, combined with the sounds and movements, stimulate growing interest, leading to increased exploration, curiosity, and engagement. We continue to use this resource as a universal experience and acknowledge the benefits this brings for individual children.

Children's voice

When I move it faster and faster, it changes lots of colours.

It makes my body feel calm.

- Many thanks to Leeann Finch at Raploch Nursery for sharing this with us.

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Read about the experiences of children at The Tinker Tent as they learn and explore with the Giant Light and Sound Spinning Top.

Our initial reaction

We already have the light-up twist and turn spinning tops from TTS. They have become a staple, much used, and loved resource in our sensory area, so when I heard about the new Giant Light and Sound Spinning Top we had to get it.

My initial reaction when unboxing was, 'WOW! Look at how chunky this is. It will be great for the younger learners to use independently.' When I added it to our baby class the children did just that. They instantly spotted this giant new resource in the room, crawled over to it, used it to pull themselves up and were delighted when it made a "bong" noise back at them. This encouraged them to repeat that action to get another response. They became more interested in the resource when they then produced a different "chiming" or "zooming" noise. Whilst observing the children use it initially without adult interference, they pushed, pressed, tapped, rocked, and tried lifting it. Each time receiving some form of light or sound (or both) response from the spinning top. The large surface area of the giant spinning top made it easy for the children to use their whole flat hand to rock, spin, and get a response from the spinner. I found it to be very sensitive to the slightest of movements which is great for our youngest learners developing motor control.

From babies and toddlers to our pre-schoolers

When given to the children in the preschool class to observe how they used it independently, they had to cooperate and use turn-taking skills, as again all the children were drawn to the light and sound of the spinner. The children especially enjoyed investigations around cause and effect. The children were able to lift and carry it themselves around the classroom and I noticed them experimenting with where to put it. Different areas of the room made the light on the spinning top brighter and clearer to see. We had children using their whole hand on the large surface to spin, some using it like the smaller spinners by grasping the top with a more refined pincer grasp, and some children using their feet for cause and effect by kicking or pressing down on it. We had children standing over the top of it with it in between their legs, some stood to the side of it, and some sat down. It became a full-body resource. I found that all children whatever their age, physical ability, or schematic behaviour could interact with the giant spinning top in their own way for cause and effect.

After watching the children's independent interactions with our new resource, I had lots of fun ideas on how to incorporate the spinning top into our learning.

- Listening games - when you hear the 'bong' you have to jump up, 'chime' you have to sway, and when you hear the 'zoom', wiggle.
- Speaking and listening discussions with our older children about the noises and what they sound like and what they could be for imaginative play stories.
- Role-play games and set-ups from the discussions - Spaceship/rocket and woodland fairy/wizard etc.
- Creating a dark den for the spinner for our younger learners to experiment.
- Having the spinner sat on mirrored trays or against mirrored walls to create light effects for our younger learners to track light.
- Including the spinner in a salt tray for mark making creating zooming marks like fireworks.
- Following instructions. Start and stop games. The spinner used to indicate what's coming next e.g. "When the spinner spins and plays the chime let's all stop because it's story time."
- Motor skills with target games and balls (I would use them to light up tactile glow spheres from TTS). Use the spinner as a target to roll the ball to and see if it produces sound. Could incorporate mathematical language into this.

- Many thanks to Kelly at The Tinker Tent for sharing this with us.