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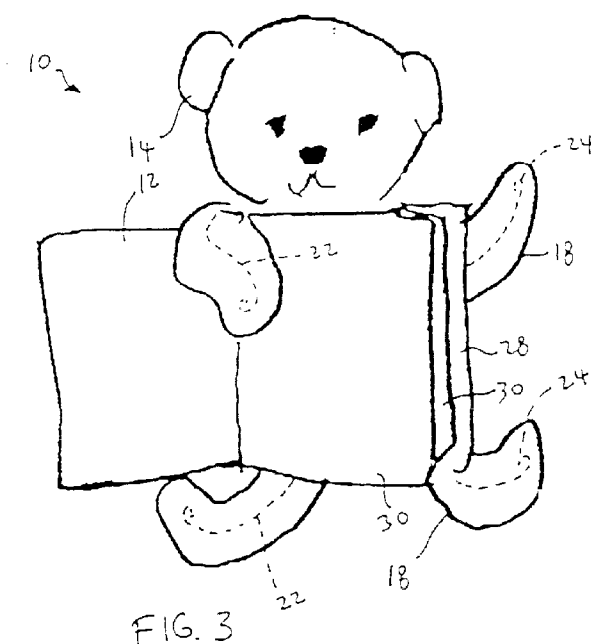
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BOULT WADE TENNANT,
27 Furnival Street
London EC4A 1PQ (GB)**(54) **Book-toy combination**

(57) The disclosure relates to an interactive book-toy combination (10) includes a book (12) affixed to a toy character (14). The toy character includes a torso (16) with a head (20) and a plurality of limbs (18) extending from the torso. The book includes a front cover (26), a back cover (28) and a plurality of leaves (30) therebetween. The back cover of the book is affixed to the torso of the toy character. The limbs of the toy character are extendable beyond peripheral edges of the book. The limbs are pliable and can be manipulated by a child into multiple positions. An interactive book-toy combination (100) in another embodiment includes a plurality of printed octagonal-shaped panels constructed of gener-

ally rigid board material. The panels include a front panel (102), a rear panel (102) and multiple panels (106) between the front and rear panels. The middle panels are each hingedly connected at one side to one adjacent panel and at an opposite side to another adjacent panel, thereby enabling an accordion-like unfolding of the panels. A plush creature head (112) is affixed to the front panel, and a plush creature tail (114) is affixed to the rear panel. Pliable limbs (110) are connected to and extend from the panels to create the appearance of a multi-legged creature such as a caterpillar. The pliable limbs are arranged in pairs, with each pair extending from a different panel. The pliable limbs can be manipulated and shaped by a child into various positions.



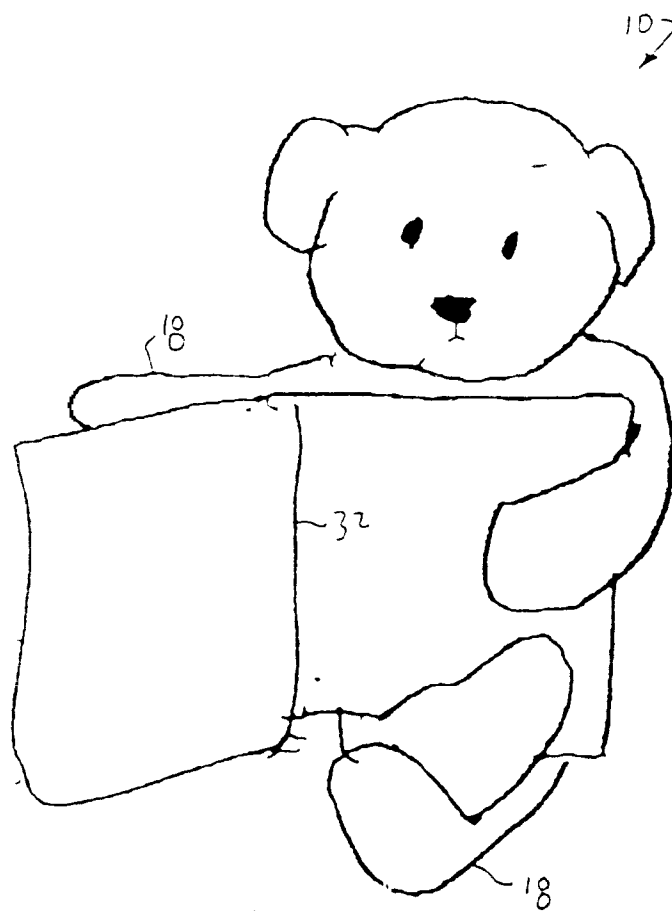


FIG. 4

Description

The present invention generally pertains to children's books and toys. More particularly, the invention relates to a book-toy combination.

Various book-toy combinations are known in the art. For example, U.S. Patent No. 5,059,149 issued to Stone discloses a stuffed animal including a storage compartment containing a book. Also, U.S. Patent No. 4,909,542 issued to Marks discloses a "creature book" comprising a creature toy on the front cover of a book. U.S. Patent No. 5,383,684 issued to Smath discloses a book with stowed panel that can be extended to enable the book to stand up-right and to create the impression that a character illustrated on the book cover is sitting on a surface.

However, none of these references discloses a book-toy combination that includes an interactive toy to actively engage a child, particularly for enhancing enjoyment of the book. It is therefore an object of this invention to provide such a book-toy combination.

In accordance with one embodiment of the invention, an interactive book-toy combination is provided including a book affixed to a toy character. The toy character includes a torso with a head and a plurality of limbs extending from the torso. The book includes a front cover, a back cover and a plurality of leaves therebetween. The back cover of the book is affixed to the torso of the toy character. The limbs of the toy character are extendable beyond peripheral edges of the book. The limbs are pliable and can be manipulated by a child into multiple positions.

In accordance with another embodiment of the invention, an interactive book-toy combination is provided including a plurality of printed octagonal-shaped panels constructed of generally rigid board material. The panels include a front panel, a rear panel and multiple middle panels between the front and rear panels. The middle panels are each hingedly connected at one side to one adjacent panel and at an opposite side to another adjacent panel, thereby enabling an accordion-like unfolding of the panels. A plush creature head is affixed to the front panel, and a plush creature tail is affixed to the rear panel. Pliable limbs are connected to and extend from the panels to create the appearance of a multi-legged creature such as a caterpillar. The pliable limbs are arranged in pairs, with each pair extending from a different panel. The pliable limbs can be manipulated and shaped by a child into various positions.

The following is a description of some specific embodiments of the invention, reference being made to the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a book-toy combination (with the toy in a four-legged standing position) in accordance with one embodiment of the invention.

Figure 2 is a front view of the book-toy combination shown in Figure 1 with the toy in a two-legged standing position.

Figure 3 is a front view of the book-toy combination with the toy in one sitting position.

Figure 4 is a front view of the book-toy combination with the toy in another sitting position.

Figure 5 is a perspective view of a book-toy combination in accordance with another embodiment of the invention.

Figures 1-4 illustrate a book-toy combination 10 in accordance with one embodiment of the invention. The book-toy combination 10 generally comprises a book 12 attached to a toy character 14.

The toy character 14 shown in the drawings has the form of a teddy bear. However, a nearly limitless variety of toy designs can be used in accordance with the invention. For example, the toy may take the form of various animals, dolls or other figures as desired. In many cases, the toy will be a book-based character, *i.e.*, it will be the subject of a story in the book.

The toy character 14 includes a torso or central body portion 16 with four limbs 18 and a head 20 extending from the torso 16. In accordance with the invention, the limbs 18 are pliable and can be shaped as desired. Accordingly, the toy can be manipulated into various positions, including the standing and sitting positions shown in Figures 1-4.

The toy 14 comprises flexible, molded plastic containing malleable material therein. The malleable material may comprise a metal wire 22 extending through the limbs 18 as shown in phantom in only Figure 3. The wire includes child-safe folded or rounded ends 24. The plastic material of the toy 14 can be printed to provide surface detail and/or coloring. It can also be partially, or completely covered with plush material commonly found on stuffed toy animals.

The book 12 comprises a front cover 26, a back cover 28, and plurality of leaves 30 therebetween. The covers and leaves are hingedly connected at the book spine 32. The book 12 preferably is a board book, *i.e.*, the covers and leaves comprise generally rigid sheets of board material. The back cover 28 of the book is affixed to the torso 16 of the toy character.

The book-toy combination 10 provides an interactive experience for children; they can actively play with the toy character 14 while reading the book 12. In some cases, playing with the toy character 14 will be in response to directions in the book story line.

Figure 5 illustrates a book-toy combination 100 in accordance with another embodiment of the invention. The book-toy combination 100 comprises a plurality of printed octagonal-shaped panels constructed of generally rigid board material. The panels include a front panel 102, a rear panel 104 and a plurality of middle panels 106 between the front and rear panels. The middle panels 106 are each hingedly connected at one side 108 to one adjacent panel and at an opposite side 108 to another adjacent panel, thereby enabling an accordion-like unfolding of the panels.

A plurality of pliable limbs 110 are connected to and

extend from the panels to create the appearance of a multi-legged creature such as a caterpillar. The pliable limbs 110 are arranged in pairs, with each pair extending from a different panel. The limbs 110 comprise flexible, molded plastic containing malleable material therein. The malleable material may comprise a metal wire extending through the limbs similar to that shown in phantom in Figure 3. The wire includes child-safe folded or rounded ends. The pliable limbs 110 can be shaped and manipulated into various positions.

The plastic material of the limbs 110 can be printed to provide surface detail and/or coloring. It can also be covered with plush material commonly found on stuffed toy animals.

A plush creature head 112 is affixed to the front panel 102, and a plush creature tail 114 is affixed to the rear panel 104. Both the creature head and tail may include pliable elements.

While the present invention is described with reference to specific embodiments, it will be apparent to persons skilled in the art that many modifications and variations are possible. Accordingly, the present invention embraces all alternatives, modifications and variations that fall within the spirit and scope of the appended claims and all equivalents thereof.

Claims

1. A book-pliable toy combination, comprising:
 - a book; and
 - a toy character affixed to said book, said toy character including at least one pliable member extendable beyond a peripheral edge of said book.
2. The book-pliable toy combination of claim 1, wherein said book comprises a front cover, a back cover and at least one leaf therebetween, and wherein said back cover is affixed to said toy character.
3. The book-pliable toy combination of claim 2, wherein said book is a board book with said front cover, said back cover, and said at least one leaf comprising generally rigid board material.
4. The book-pliable toy combination of claim 1, wherein said toy character comprises a body portion and said pliable member extends from said body portion, and wherein said book is affixed to said body portion.
5. The book-pliable toy combination of claim 1, wherein said toy character comprises molded, flexible plastic containing a malleable material therein.
6. The book-pliable toy combination of claim 5, wherein said malleable material comprises a metal wire.
7. The book-pliable toy combination of the claim 6, wherein said wire includes child-safe folded ends.
8. The book-pliable toy combination of claim 6, wherein said wire includes child-safe rounded ends.
9. The book-pliable toy combination of claim 5, wherein said molded plastic is printable.
10. The book-pliable toy combination of claim 5, wherein said molded plastic is covered by plush outer material.
11. The book-pliable toy combination of claim 1, wherein said pliable member comprises a flexible, molded plastic material with a malleable wire extending therein.
12. The book-pliable toy combination of claim 1, wherein said toy character includes a torso and a head extending from said torso, and wherein said at least one pliable member comprises four pliable limbs extending from said torso, and wherein said book is affixed to said torso.
13. An interactive book-toy combination, comprising:
 - a toy character including a torso with a head and a plurality of limbs extending from said torso; and
 - a book affixed to said torso;
 - wherein said limbs are extendable beyond peripheral edges of said book, and said limbs are pliable and can be manipulated by a user into multiple positions.
14. The interactive book-toy combination of claim 12, wherein said book comprises a front cover, a back cover and at least one leaf therebetween, and wherein said back cover is affixed to said torso of said toy character.
15. The interactive book-toy combination of claim 14, wherein said book is a board book with said front cover, said back cover, and said at least one leaf comprising generally rigid board material.
16. The interactive book-toy combination of claim 12 wherein said toy character comprises molded, flexible plastic containing a malleable material therein.
17. The interactive book-toy combination of claim 16, wherein said malleable material comprises a metal

wire.

18. The interactive book-toy combination of the claim 17, wherein said wire includes child-safe folded ends.
19. The interactive book-toy combination of claim 17, wherein said wire includes child-safe rounded ends.
20. The interactive book-toy combination of claim 16, wherein said molded plastic is printable.
21. The interactive book-toy combination of claim 16, wherein said molded plastic is covered by plush outer material.
22. The interactive book-toy combination of claim 1, wherein said limbs each comprise a flexible, molded plastic material with a malleable wire extending therein.
23. An interactive book-toy combination, comprising:
 - a plurality of printed, generally rigid panels constructed of board material including a front panel, a rear panel and a plurality of middle panels between said front and rear panels, said middle panels each hingedly connected at one side to one adjacent panel and at an opposite side to another adjacent panel, thereby enabling an accordion-like unfolding of said panels; and
 - a plurality of pliable limbs connected to and extending from said panels to create the appearance of a multi-legged creature.
24. The interactive book-toy combination of claim 23, further comprising a plush creature head affixed to said front panel.
25. The interactive book-toy combination of claim 24, further comprising a plush creature tail extending from said rear panel.
26. The interactive book-toy combination of claim 23, wherein said panels are octagonal-shaped.
27. The interactive book-toy combination of claim 23, wherein said pliable limbs are arranged in pairs, with each pair extending from a different panel.
28. The interactive book-toy combination of claim 23, wherein said pliable limbs comprise molded, flexible plastic containing a malleable material therein.
29. The interactive book-toy combination of claim 28, wherein said malleable material comprises a metal wire.
30. The interactive book-toy combination of claim 29, wherein said wire includes child-safe folded ends.
31. The interactive book-toy combination of claim 29, wherein said wire includes child-safe rounded ends.
32. The interactive book-toy combination of claim 28, wherein said molded plastic is printable.
33. The interactive book-toy combination of claim 28, wherein said molded plastic is covered by plush outer material.

FIG. 1

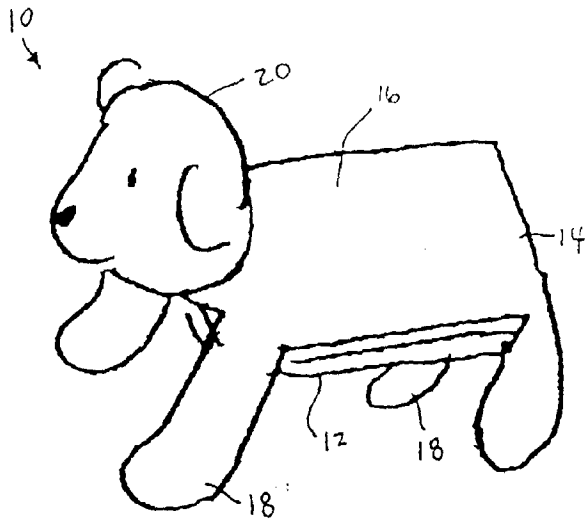


FIG. 2

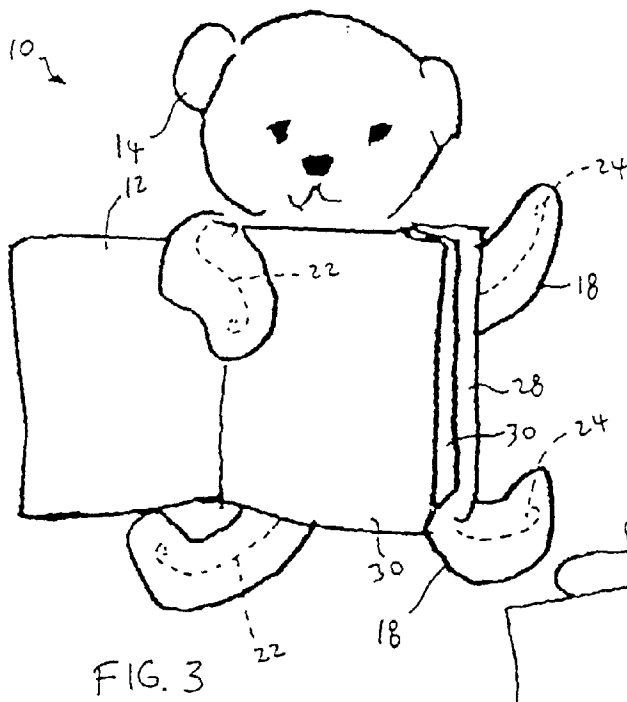


FIG. 3

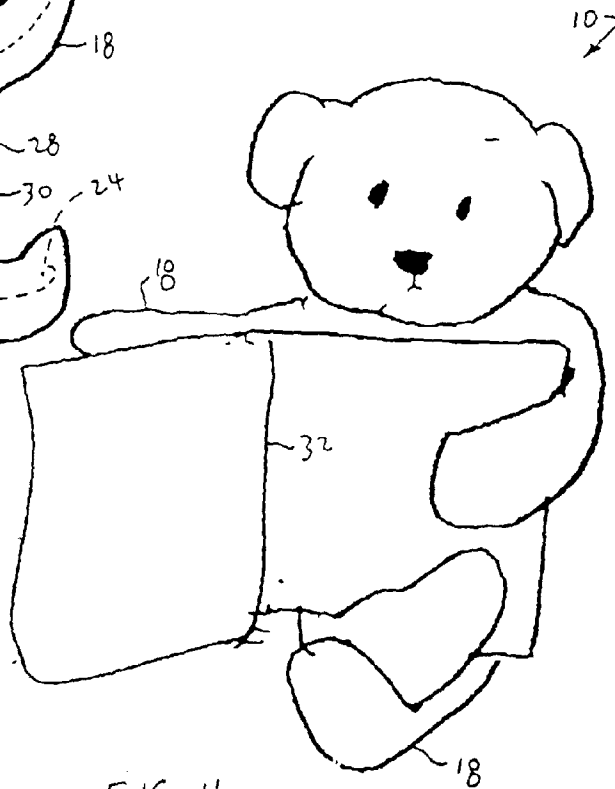


FIG. 4

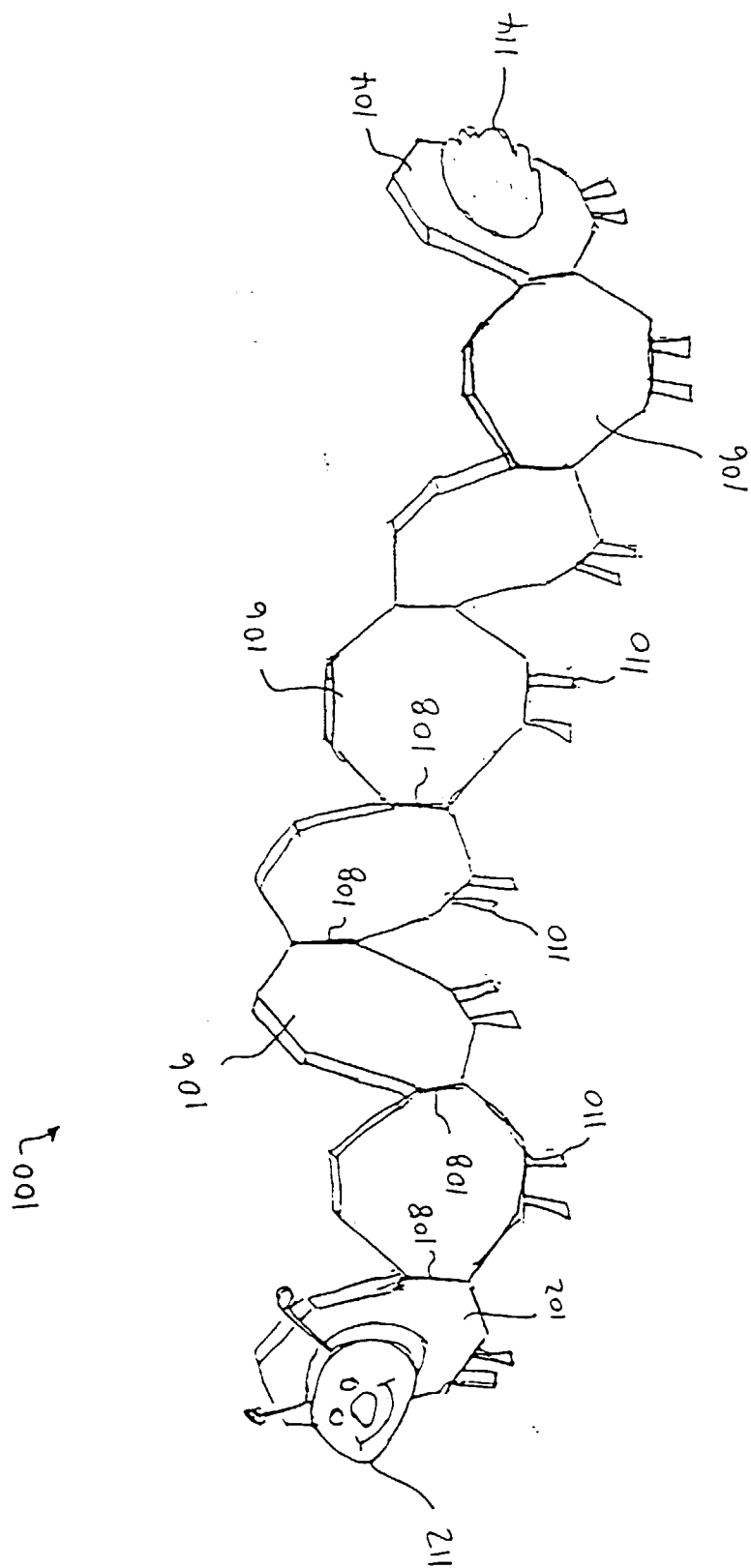


FIG. 5