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The Three R's... Readin' Ritin' And Robot

**RADAR
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Electronic toys are introducing the children of the nation to an age in which the scientist is becoming ever more important.

Sales of electronic toys for the coming Christmas season are running as much as 100 per cent over last year—a gross retail business estimated at \$50 million—according to the toy industry.

And within the next ten years, says the Toy Manufacturers of the U. S. A., Inc., sales may increase to well over \$100 million.

What makes the electronic toy so much in demand?

Long established toy companies believe the answer must lie in the fascination of the young in helping to perform and control something beyond their grasp of knowledge.

Today, a child can "drive" his small toy automobile in almost any room of the house merely by blowing a whistle at it.

Operated on the radar sound technique, the car runs forward, stops, backs up or makes a turn, all by the pitch of a whistle blown by the child. There are no wires attached.

This car, called the Golden Sonic, is manufactured by Tigrett Industries and sells for \$20.

Of course, all electronic toys aren't so elaborate—or as expensive. For as little as 69 cents, Junior's parents can buy him a reasonable facsimile of that remarkable World War II communications device, the walkie-talkie.

A trade publication reports that 15 companies now manufacture electronic toys, ranging from a walking-talking robot with glowing eyes to a radar rocket cannon, which automatically launches a rocket plane, then tracks its flight on a radar screen.

Ever since the first remote-controlled robot was introduced a short three years ago, this toy has grown in popularity. The latest model of Robert the Robot not only walks, talks and lights up, but also picks up small objects with his pincer-like hands.

For the older or more mechanically inclined boy, there's the five-foot tall robot that he can make himself. Made from an erector set manufactured by A. C. Gilbert Co., this robot operates on electric house current.

Most of the electronic toys today are made of plastic and operate under regular flash-light batteries, making them reasonably safe and easy to handle.

Girls as well as boys—and even some adults—are finding the toys fun to play with.

Like this modern push-button age, today's electronic toys are a far cry from the old days when the first so-called "electric" playthings were introduced commercially some 80 years ago.

These forerunners of the remotely-operated robots, rockets and radar devices simply made use of the principles of magnetism and static electricity.

A toy boat was pulled across a basin of water by a magnet.

or a paper figure was made to move beneath a plate of glass by frictional electricity generated by rubbing the surface of the glass.

These two principles were employed until the advent of electricity and the dry cell battery for everyday use.

Now, however, there is hardly a technological advancement without a toy counterpart.

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