

Toys at Christchurch Mansion



Wooden Skittles

Children's toys, similar to skittles, were found in Ancient Egyptian excavations, dating back 5000 years. Skittles has been played in England since at least the 1300s and was usually played outdoors. In the 1800s it became a popular sport in pubs, with competitions and trophies. Did you know the ball thrown at the skittles is sometimes called the 'cheese'?



Wooden Wiggly Snake

This is a very clever toy. There are small cuts all the way along the snake's body which means that it wiggles about when you hold it. Because it moves, we call it a kinetic toy. These were popular in the 1970s.



Glass Marbles

Marbles have been around for thousands of years and were originally made of clay and stone. The Ancient Egyptians and civilisations from the Indus Valley made them from glass, real marble and agate stones over 2000 years ago. Modern marbles were first machine-made in the 1900s. There are lots of games you can play with marbles and there is even a world championship competition!



Wooden Yo-Yo

Yo-yos are a fun toy and were even enjoyed by the Ancient Greeks; a vase painting shows a boy playing with a yo-yo in 440BC (nearly 2,500 years ago). Yo-yos have been spotted in lots of paintings from the 1700s across the world. There are lots of tricks you can do with a yo-yo, and they became very popular in the 1930s, the 1960s, and again in the 1990s. It seems like the yo-yo will be around for many more years to come.

Wooden Animals

Wooden animal toys have been found in the tombs of Ancient Egyptians from over 2000 years ago. Not only were they fun to play with but we think they were also used to teach children about how to look after farm animals. By the 1800s wooden toys could be mass produced so were more popular, however when plastic became used more from, the 1960s onward, wooden toys were less popular. Today we see wooden toys as eco-friendly and natural, so more children are playing with them again.



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Doll stuffed with sawdust Original from the 1800s

Dolls have been found across the world since ancient times (including Ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome and Japan) made from wood, clay or even bone. They were for children to play with, to learn from, and might even have been considered magical or for protection. This doll has a porcelain (fine clay) head and a fabric body which is stuffed with sawdust. Her eyes open and close as you pick her up and lay her down. After 1945, most dolls were made from plastic. The clothes worn by dolls were usually those fashionable at the time.



Acrobat Monkey

Acrobat toys became popular in Europe in the late 1800s and were a favourite Victorian toy. This is a mechanical toy meaning it has been designed to have moving parts. When you squeeze the sticks together, the string between them moves and the monkey spins around.



Metal Music Box

This is a clockwork toy. You turn the handle which makes the mechanism inside turn and the music plays. The speed of the music changes as you turn the handle faster or slower. Music boxes were probably invented in the 1700s but these hand-cranked versions were introduced in the 1950s and are still popular today.



Bobbing Clowns Cam Toy

This toy moves using a cam mechanism which turns a 'round and round' movement into an 'up and down' movement. Automata, or moving toys, are known from Ancient Greece and China, but simple ones like this one were particularly popular in the 1930s-1950s.



Metal Spinning Top

Spinning tops have been around for thousands of years. The oldest dates to 6000 years ago - a clay top found in Iraq. This one is a pump-action 'gyro spinner'. You pump the handle (push and pull quickly a few times) and the top spins. These spinners were really popular in the 1950s. These are scientific toys that can help us to understand the physics of movement, gravity, and rotational motion (moving round and round).



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Stuffed Toy Lamb

Original from the 1900s

Stuffed toys are made from soft fabric and designed to be cuddled. They have been popular since the late 1800s and are usually in animal form. This little lamb must have been well-loved as his fur is not fluffy anymore. We know he is old as he is stuffed with sawdust, which is quite hard, unlike modern soft toys. Before 1915 toys were stuffed with sawdust, horsehair or even straw.



Pop-Up Paper Theatre

Toy theatres were first introduced in the 1850s and became popular with Victorians. They were originally made as souvenirs of live theatre performances, but once at home, they were fantastic entertainment for families at a time well before film and television.



Zoetrope

Original from the late 1800s

The zoetrope dates from the 1800s and is an early form of animation. A set of drawings is placed inside a cylinder; as you spin the cylinder and look through the slits you can see the pictures appear to move. This became another popular Victorian form of entertainment.



Metal Wind-Up Duck

Metal, or tin, toys date back to the 1850s, but became especially popular in the 1950s when they were made in Japan. However, by the 1970s plastic had replaced tin. Replica tin toys are made today and are charmingly simple. This duck on a tricycle is a clockwork toy. Turn the key to wind it up and see it zoom along, with propellers on its head spinning!



Wooden Cup and Ball

The simple ball and cup toy was first invented in the 1300s. Hold the handle, toss the ball into the air and try to catch it in the cup. It's a simple but fun game. It was popular across Europe and South America, and probably came to England in the 1800s. This is a test of hand-eye coordination and requires skill and determination to succeed.



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Metal Wind-Up Bus

Metal, or tin, toys date back to the 1850s, but became especially popular in the 1950s when they were made in Japan. However, by the 1970s plastic had replaced tin. Replica tin toys are made today and are charmingly simple. This toy is an old fashioned omnibus and works using clockwork. Turn the key to wind it up and see it zoom along, taking the passengers for a ride!



The Speaking Picture Book Original from the 1890s

This book has survived for almost 150 years and is still wonderful to read. There are beautiful pictures and poems about seven animals and a baby. On each page, you pull a string to hear their voice - a baa, a moo, or even a cuck-oo! A set of bellows open and close to pass air through them to make each sound. This must have been a magical experience for any children lucky enough to own such a book.



Rubik's Cube Original from the 1980s

This puzzle toy was a worldwide craze in the early 1980s. Twist the sides of the cube to make just one colour on each of the six sides. People had competitions to see who could solve the puzzle the fastest. International competitions still happen today. Can you solve the cube?



Darth Vader's TIE Fighter

Star Wars was the first series of films in the late 1970s and early 1980s to have a hugely successful dedicated toy line. The director, George Lucas, made more money from toy sales than from the films themselves. Modern versions are still being made today. This spaceship was made in the 1990s, and belongs to the evil villain, Darth Vader.



Weebles and Car Original from the 1970s

These egg-shaped people are Weebles. Released in the 1970s, for young children, the tag line was 'Weebles wobble, but they don't fall down'. Can you push one over, or does it wobble back up again? Here they are in a rescue car, ready for adventure. You can still buy Weebles today, but they are in the form of modern characters, like Bluey and Peppa Pig.



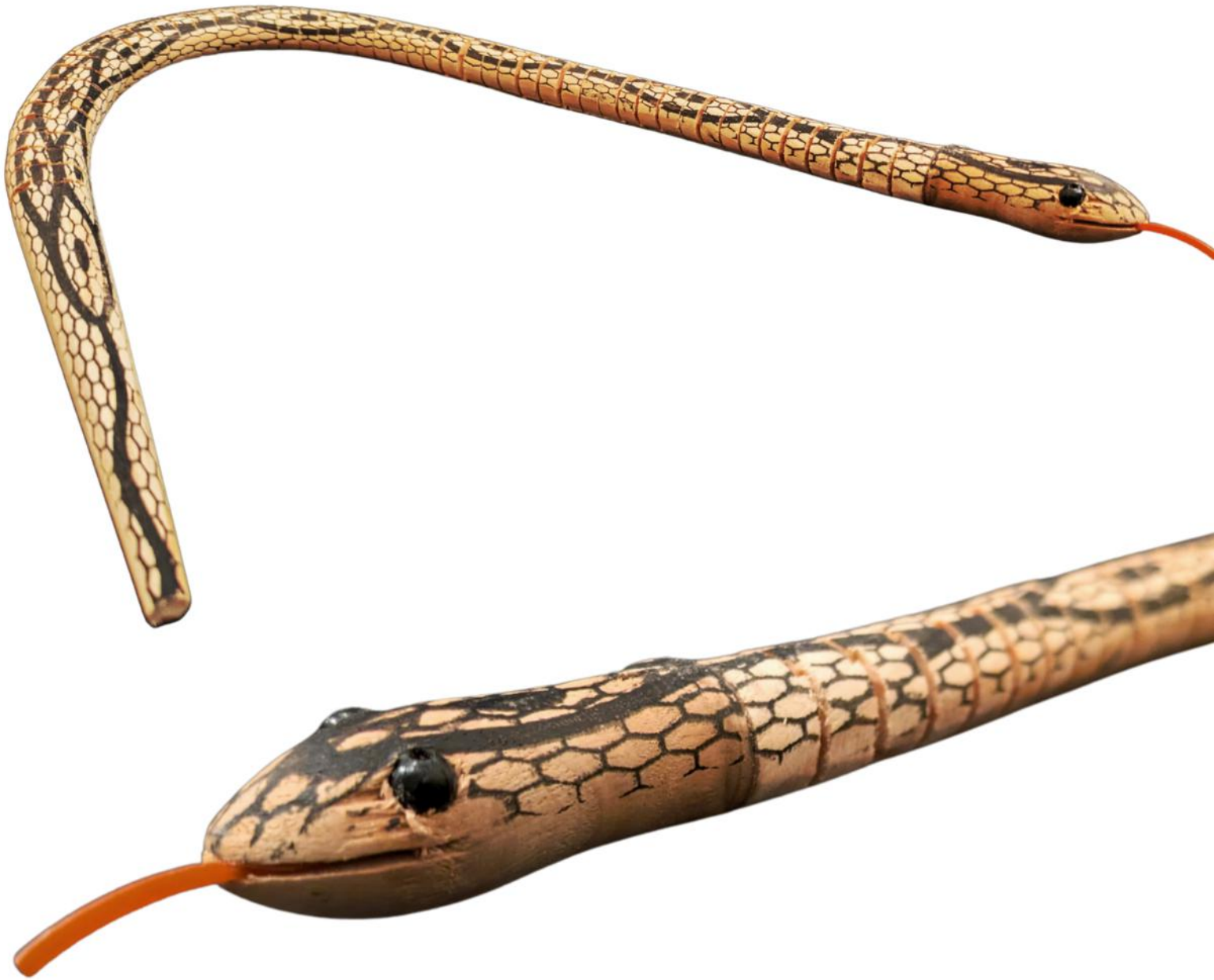
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wooden skittles



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wooden wiggly snake



Toys at Christchurch Mansion



glass marbles



Toys at Christchurch Mansion



wooden yo-yo



Toys at Christchurch Mansion



wooden animals



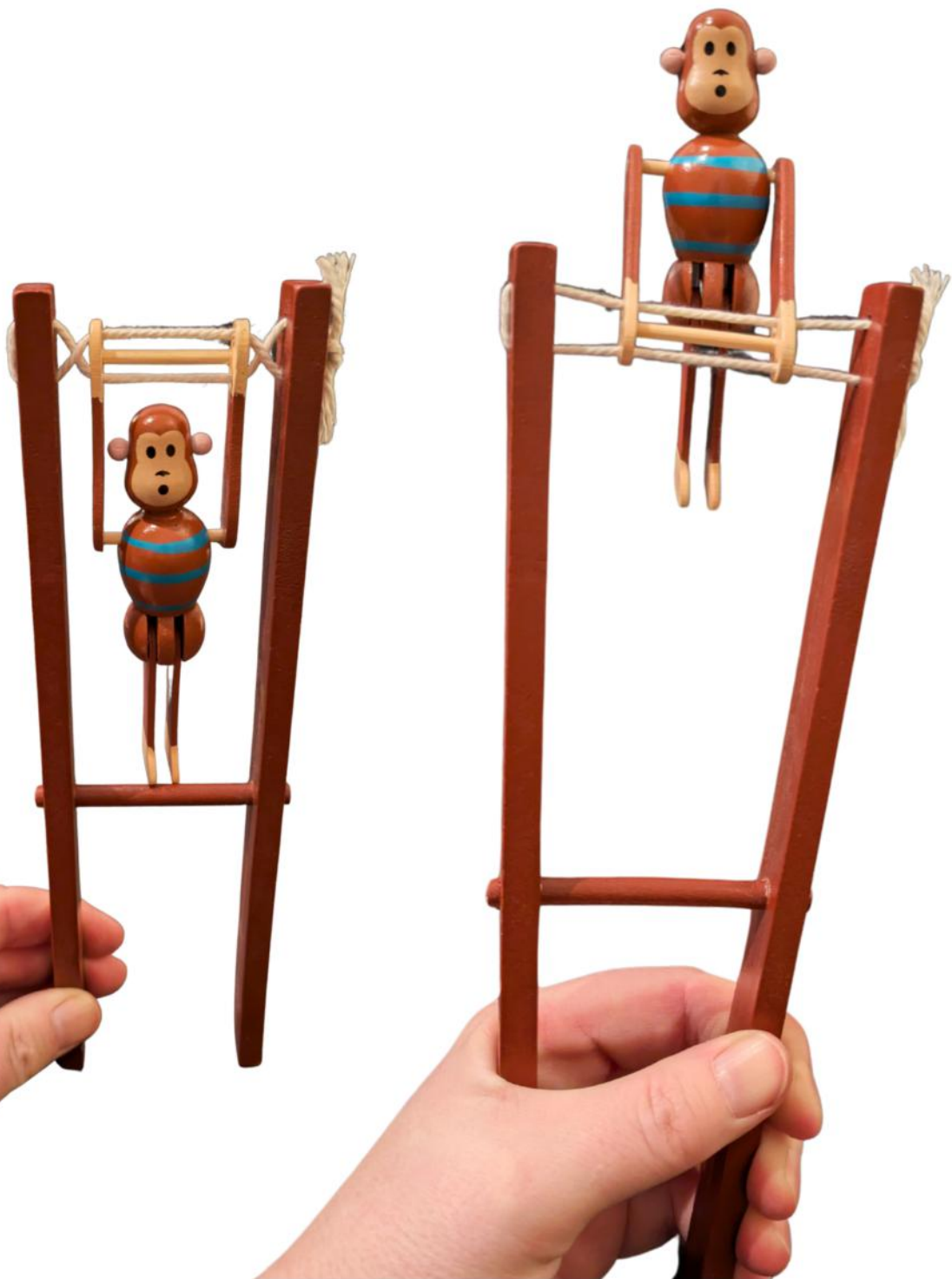
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**doll stuffed
with sawdust**



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acrobat monkey



Toys at Christchurch Mansion



metal music box



Toys at Christchurch Mansion



bobbing clowns cam toy



Toys at Christchurch Mansion



metal spinning top



Toys at Christchurch Mansion



stuffed toy lamb



Toys at Christchurch Mansion



pop-up paper theatre



Toys at Christchurch Mansion



zoetrope



Toys at Christchurch Mansion



metal wind-up duck



Toys at Christchurch Mansion



wooden cup and ball



Toys at Christchurch Mansion



metal wind-up bus



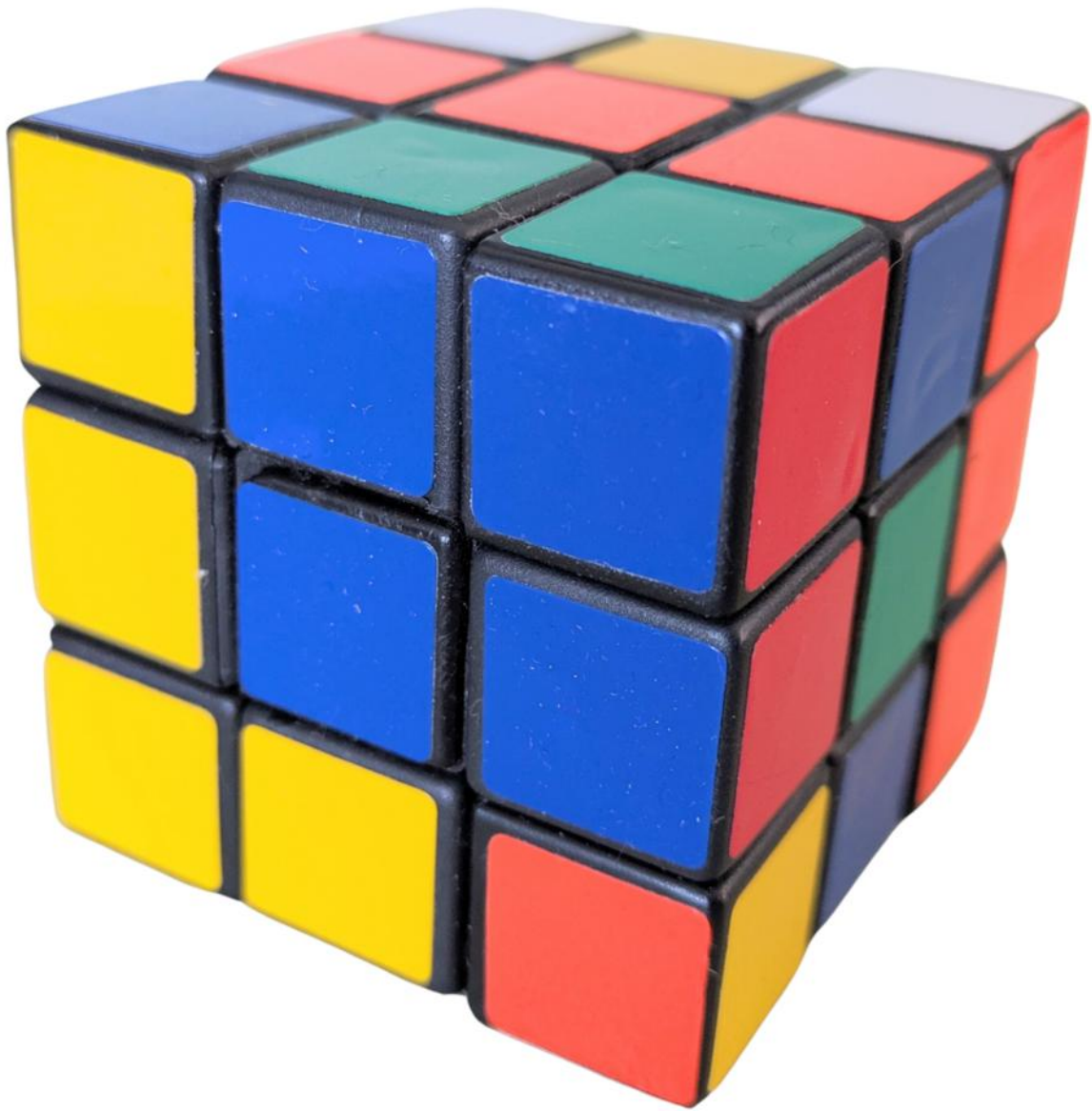
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the speaking picture book



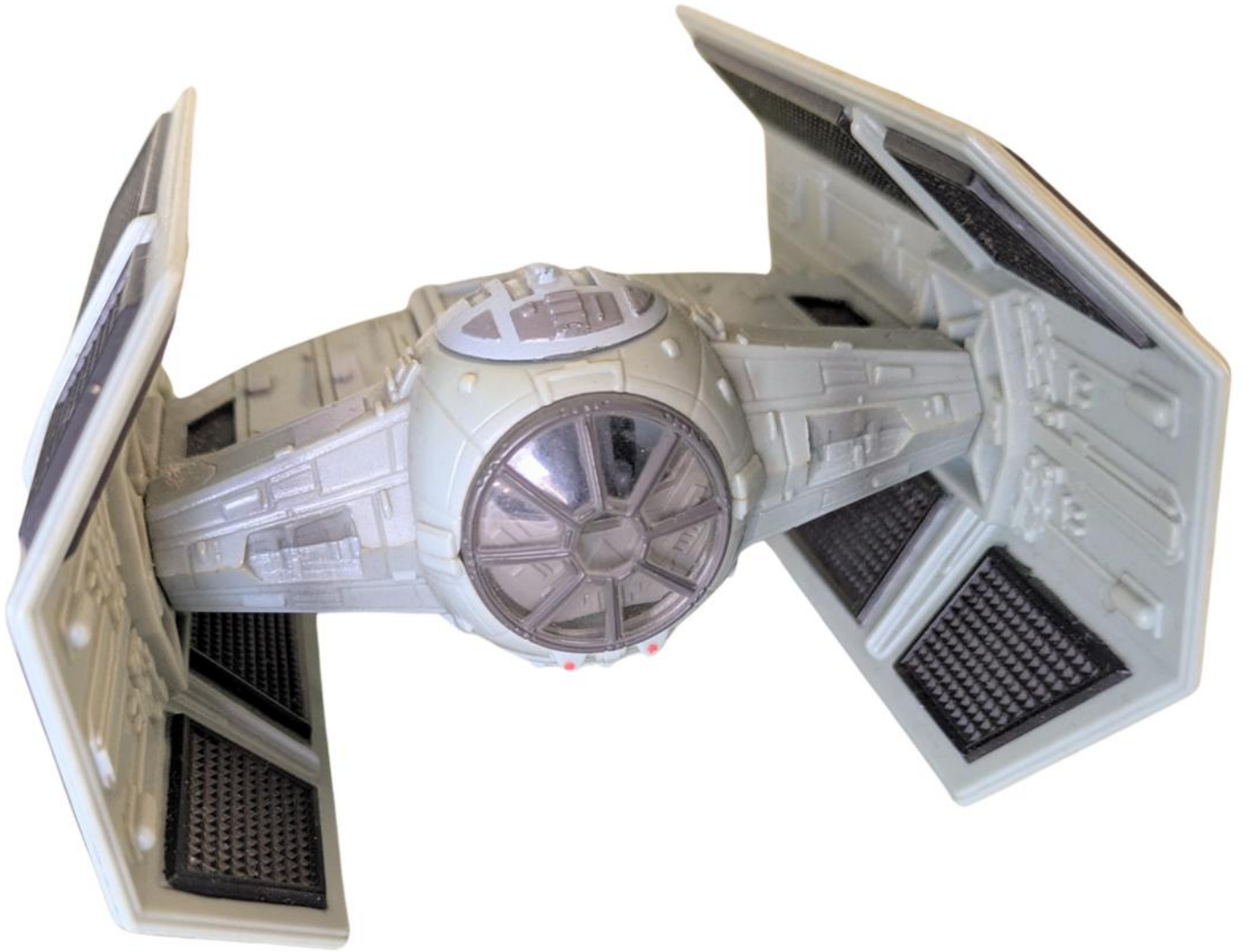
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Rubik's cube puzzle



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Star Wars TIE Fighter



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Weebles and car



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Use the following set of 20 flash cards as a sorting game or for discussion points.

- Does it move or not move?
- How does it move? Drop, spin, roll, slide, push, pull?
- How can we change the movement? Faster, slower, higher, lower?
- What material is it made from? Wood, metal, fabric, plastic, paper, glass, or something else?
- Do you play with it alone or with others?
- Is there a modern equivalent? How is it similar and how is it different?
- Pick two toys. Say how they are similar and how they are different.
- Make a timeline from oldest to newest.
- Which toy is your favourite and why?







